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Navy plans changes to ship bridges

BY SCOTT WYLAND

Stars and Stripes

The Navy plans sweeping changes to bridges and control systems on its ships to increase crew efficiency and to help them avoid collisions like those that killed 17 sailors on the USS Fitzgerald and the USS John S. McCain.

Bridges are being revamped in response to those two deadly accidents that occurred in busy western Pacific waters two months apart in 2017 — accidents that Navy investigations later deemed avoidable.

Bridge equipment will be upgraded to improve navigation and situational awareness, with the aim of eliminating blind spots and assisting bridge crews in reacting safely to nearby ships, especially in dense traffic.

Navy officials have given no timeline for when the overhauls will begin or be completed, saying the new technology is still being developed.

Last month, Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Bill Moran sent a memo to Congress saying the Navy was following 93 recommendations in two 2017 reports identifying problems that led to the fatal wrecks. Inconsistent bridge configurations, which can confuse sailors, were among the

problems listed.

Bridge equipment and training will be standardized as much as possible so sailors transferring from one type of ship to another — whether it's from an aircraft carrier to a destroyer or from a cruiser to a fast-transport vessel — will operate similar controls and not have to be retrained.

Standardization will include throttles that control a ship's speed, steering, radar and other navigational systems as well as training simulators.

"Across ship classes there are marked differences," said Bryan McGrath, a defense consultant who commanded the destroyer USS Bulkeley in the early 2000s.

Ships within the same class also can vary, McGrath said, recalling that the destroyer he commanded differed from another one he boarded, including the throttle control, radar and how the steering wheel turned.

Sailors from the cruiser USS Antietam who were assigned to the McCain didn't know how the McCain's bridge equipment worked, the Navy's accident report said. Gaps in sailors' training about equipment and procedures contributed to the McCain's collision in August 2017 with an oil tanker in the Straits of Singapore, it said.

The Fitzgerald was impaired by malfunctioning radar. The ship's main naviga-

tional system was run by outdated software that couldn't properly convey information from the program used to track nearby civilian ships, said sailors testifying at court hearings.

The Navy is working toward standardizing equipment, the general bridge layout and simulators used to train sailors, said Colleen O'Rourke, spokeswoman for Navy Sea Systems Command, or NAVSEA.

The new layout, displays and controls will be designed based on feedback from sailors who operate the systems, O'Rourke said. They will include improving the helm console, throttle control and navigational radar as well as developing new operating procedures — all of which will simplify training and streamline the work required to pilot the ship.

New software will be installed that will provide a common electronic charting for sailors navigating ships. The changes will become part of future fleet training and certification, she said.

NAVSEA is consolidating its technical and acquisition divisions under its larger surface fleet branch, Team Ships, to manage the new systems' design and integration across all ship classes, O'Rourke said. The move is intended to strengthen oversight during the transition.

Troops practice seizing of island in the Pacific

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

Marines, airmen and soldiers recently practiced seizing a small Japanese island in an exercise that honed skills some experts say may be necessary in a face-off against China.

The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, along with forces from the 3rd Marine Division, 3rd Marine Logistics Group and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, the U.S. Air Force's 353rd Special Operations Group and the Army's 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, held a

simulated expeditionary advanced-base operation March 11-14, according to a Marine Corps statement.

"This entire mission profile simulated the process of securing advanced footholds for follow-on forces to conduct further military operations with rapid redeployment," the statement said.

It kicked off with a free-fall jump onto Japan's Iejima Island for reconnaissance and surveillance before 1st Battalion, 4th Marines "conducted a 600-mile long-range raid" to

seize an airfield on the island, according to the statement.

Once the airfield was secured, troops turned it into a forward arming and refueling point for C-130J Super Hercules and F-35B Lightning II fighter jets, which were "armed to conduct expeditionary strikes with inert precision Guided Bomb Units" at a nearby range while artillery units elsewhere simulated long-range fire missions.

The event ended with another simulated long-range raid after infantrymen flew 900 miles with the support of aerial

refueling.

Island-seizing will be "critical for us to be able to project power in the context of China," Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing March 14.

"If you look at the island chains and so forth in the Pacific as platforms from which we can project power, that would be an historical mission for the Marine Corps and one that is very relevant in a China scenario," he told the committee."

North Korea's ultimatum: It's us or them

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea—North Korea had a clear message for the South last week — it's us or the United States.

The North's decision to pull out of a recently established liaison office near the border on Friday cast a spotlight on the limits facing President Moon Jae-in's signature policy of engaging with the communist state within the confines of U.S.-led efforts to denuclearize the divided peninsula.

It also underscored concerns that Moon has reached an endpoint in his ability to play mediator after the collapse of the second summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last month.

Instead, North Korea has stepped up efforts to divide the longtime allies by pressuring the South to follow through with an ambitious agenda of inter-Korean projects that have been stalled by international sanctions.

"Moon is in such an awkward place right now because he really does have a credibility gap," said Jenny Town, a Korea specialist at the Stimson Center in Washington. "I think he was overly optimistic and overly positive about being able to engineer the situation."

"He was very successful at the beginning to bring both sides to the table ... but he hasn't been able to influence what they think," she added.

The U.S. and North Korea agreed to a general promise to work toward the "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" during their first summit on June 12 in Singapore. But they have been unable to reach agreement on details as the North demands the removal of crippling sanctions in exchange for steps already taken.

Washington has insisted it will maintain economic pressure on the North, and the Treasury Department on Thursday imposed punishing measures against two Chinese shipping companies accused of helping the North.

On March 15, Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui also dangled the possibility of formally ending participation in nuclear talks and lifting a nuclear and missile-testing moratorium.

North Korea also has rebuilt a launch site at Sohae that it had partially dismantled as part of disarmament steps last year, according to recent satellite images.

North Korean officials informed the South of the plans during a meeting at the liaison office on Friday, saying the decision was "in accordance with instructions from the superior authority," South Korea's Unification Ministry said.

North Korean officials said their South Korean counterparts could stay and promised to give notice about practical matters later.

The South Korean government said it "regrets the decision" and held out hope that the North would change its mind.

Town said the North Koreans were issuing a direct challenge to Moon.

"North Korea was willing to

do some of the humanitarian stuff like family reunions and the sports exchanges and things like that, but again the golden prize in all of this was the economic cooperation," she said in a telephone interview.

"The North Koreans are saying, 'Stop waiting for the Americans. You promised you were going to do this and you need to do this. It needs to be a Korean matter,'" she added.

Moon, who took office in May 2017 promising to pursue peace with the North, has vowed to continue working to get Pyongyang and Washington back to the table.

But experts said the impasse in nuclear talks between Washington and Pyongyang has left him little room to maneuver.

"North Korea sees South Korea is not in a position to play a really meaningful mediator role in this game," said Choi Kang, of the Asan Institute, a South Korean think tank. "They want to make it clear that South Korea must make a choice between the United States or North Korea."

Pentagon IDs 2 soldiers killed in Afghanistan

BY PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN
AND CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Department of Defense on Saturday identified the two soldiers who died Friday in Kunduz province, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained while engaged in combat operations.

Spc. Joseph P. Collette, 29, of Lancaster, Ohio, was assigned to the 242nd Ordnance Battalion, 71st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group out of Fort Carson, Colo.

Sgt. 1st Class Will D. Lindsay, 33, of Cortez, Colo., was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Carson.

The two deaths announced Friday come as Washington

continues direct talks with the Taliban aimed at ending the U.S.' longest war — now in its 18th year. The deaths raised to four the number of American troops killed in Afghanistan this year.

In a telephone interview on Saturday, Caela Marie Collette said her husband, whom she called Joey, was "the most genuine person you'll ever meet."

On Friday, Caela Collette learned her husband had been killed earlier that day.

"He told me that as soon as 9/11 happened when we were kids he knew right then that he wanted to join the Army," Collette recalled. "He was getting out of the Army in February next year and had never been on deployment. He wanted to go on deployment badly."

Collette said that before her

husband left for Afghanistan, "he wrote about 30 love letters and hid them in random places around the house for me to find, which I found most of them. So last night it was really comforting sitting down, reading through those, because it's almost like he was preparing for this exact scenario."

"The 71st Ordnance Group (EOD) is deeply saddened by the loss of Spc. Joseph P. Collette. We extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to his Family and friends," Col. David K. Green, the unit's commander, said in a statement.

Lindsay enlisted in the Army in July 2004 and completed One Station Unit Training and Basic Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga., before completing the Special Forces Qualification Course and getting

assigned to 10th Group in July 2006, Lt. Col. Loren Bymer, U.S. Army Special Operations Command spokesman, said in a statement. He deployed five times to Iraq, to Tajikistan in 2016 and to Afghanistan.

He is survived by his wife and four daughters.

"The 10th SFG (A) Family is deeply saddened at the loss of Sgt. 1st Class Will Lindsay," Col. Lawrence Ferguson, the group's commander, said in a statement.

"Will was one of the best in our formation, with more than a decade of service in the Regiment at all levels of noncommissioned officer leadership. We will focus now on supporting his Family and honoring his legacy and sacrifice."

Dems press for release of Mueller report

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats are pressing for full disclosure of special counsel Robert Mueller's report on the Trump-Russia investigation and vowing to use subpoena powers and other legal means if necessary to get it.

Attorney General William Barr was expected to release his first summary of Mueller's findings on Sunday, people familiar with the process said, on what lawmakers anticipated could be a day of reckoning in the two-year probe into President Donald Trump and Russian efforts to elect him. Since receiving the report Friday, Barr has been deciding how much of it Congress and the public will see.

Democrats were on a hair

trigger over the prospect that some information may be withheld.

"I suspect that we'll find those words of transparency to prove hollow, that in fact they will fight to make sure that Congress doesn't get this underlying evidence," Rep. Adam Schiff of California, chairman of the House intelligence committee, said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

His plan: Ask for information and if that's denied, "subpoena. If subpoenas are denied, we will haul people before the Congress. And yes, we will prosecute in court as necessary to get this information."

Mueller's investigation is known to have concluded without a recommendation for further indictments after having snared nearly three dozen

people, senior Trump campaign operatives among them. The probe illuminated Russia's assault on the American political system, painted the Trump campaign as eager to exploit the release of hacked Democratic emails to hurt Democrat Hillary Clinton and exposed lies by Trump aides aimed at covering up their Russia-related contacts.

Democratic Rep. Jerrold Nadler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, said Democrats won't be willing to wait long for the Justice Department to hand over full information on the probe into whether Trump's 2016 campaign coordinated with Russia to sway the election and whether the president later sought to obstruct the investigation.

"It won't be months," he said

on CNN's "State of the Union." Asked if he still believes Trump obstructed justice, he indicated there has been obstruction but "whether it's criminal is another question."

Although Democrats have stoutly defended Mueller's work against Trump's repeated cries of "witch hunt," Schiff was disappointed that the special counsel did not succeed in interviewing the president personally.

Barr said he wants to release as much as he can under the law. That decision will require him to weigh the Justice Department's long-standing protocol of not releasing negative information about people who aren't indicted against the extraordinary public interest in a criminal investigation into the president and his campaign.

Boeing, FAA nearing end of 737 Max 8 systems overhaul

The Washington Post

Boeing and the Federal Aviation Administration are nearing completion of a long-awaited software and training overhaul for the 737 Max 8 commercial jetliner's flight control systems, both organizations confirmed Saturday.

If the new changes are finalized and approved by the FAA on time, they could mark an early step toward remedying the safety concerns that have gripped the global aviation industry in recent months following deadly plane crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia.

The software and training fixes were announced by Boeing on March 11 after the FAA called for them in an official airworthiness directive. The two organizations have been developing the fixes for months but did not publicly commit to them until after a second deadly crash on March 10 involving a Boeing 737 Max 8 jet.

"We've been working diligently and in close cooperation with the FAA on the software update," a Boeing spokesman

said Saturday in a statement. "We are taking a comprehensive and careful approach to design, develop and test the software that will ultimately lead to certification."

The FAA demanded the software fixes be completed "no later than April" and says it will evaluate the software fixes this week.

The Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System, or MCAS is designed to account for changes to the plane's engines. It is supposed to prevent the plane from stalling by automatically nudging its nose downward in response to information fed from the plane's external sensors. Boeing did not detail the system in pilot training for the 737 Max, however, which pilots said left them in the dark about how to respond to potentially dangerous scenarios.

The circumstances under which Boeing designed the plane and the FAA's oversight of it are the subject of numerous lawsuits, congressional inquiries and a criminal investigation.

Majority in new US poll in favor of stricter gun laws

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A majority of Americans favor stricter gun laws, and most believe places of worship and schools have become less safe over the last two decades, according to a new poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

The survey was conducted both before and after this month's mass shooting at two mosques in New Zealand. It found that 67 percent of Americans support making U.S. gun laws stricter, while 22 percent say they should be left as they are and 10 percent think they should be made less strict.

The New Zealand shooting on March 15 did not appear to have an impact on Americans' support for new gun laws; support for tighter gun laws was the same in interviews conducted before and after the shooting.

While a majority of Americans have consistently said they support stronger gun laws, proposals have stalled repeatedly in Congress in recent years, a marked contrast

to New Zealand and some other countries, such as Australia, that have acted swiftly after a mass shooting. Less than a week after the mosque shootings, New Zealand moved to ban "military-style" semi-automatic weapons and high-capacity magazines.

The new poll suggests many Americans would support similar measures, but there's a wide gulf between Democrats and Republicans on banning specific types of guns. Roughly 8 in 10 Democrats, but only about 4 in 10 Republicans, support that policy.

The poll showed a wide share of Americans say safety in churches, synagogues, mosques and other places of worship has worsened over the past two decades. Sixty-one percent say religious houses have grown less safe over the last two decades.

Nearly 7 in 10 believe elementary and high schools have become less safe than they used to be. And 57 percent say the same about colleges and universities.

Stranded Norwegian cruise ship towed to port; 475 were rescued

Associated Press

STAVANGER, Norway — Rescue helicopters took more than 475 passengers from a cruise ship that got stranded off Norway's western coast in bad weather before the vessel departed for a nearby port under escort and with nearly 900 people still on board, the ship's owner said Sunday.

The Viking Sky carried 1,373 passengers and crew members when it had engine trouble in an unpredictable area of the Norwegian coast known for rough, frigid waters. The crew issued a mayday call Saturday afternoon.

Five helicopters flying in the pitch dark took passengers from the tossing ship in a painstaking process that continued throughout the night. The rescues took place under difficult conditions that included wind gusts up to 43 mph and waves over 26 feet high.

Photos posted on social

media showed the ship listing from side to side and furniture smashing violently into walls.

"We understand 20 people suffered injuries as a result of this incident, and they are all receiving care at the relevant medical centers in Norway, with some already having been discharged," Viking Ocean Cruises, the company that owns and operates the ship, said.

The company said in a statement that before the ship departed for the port of Molde nearly a day after it became disabled, 479 passengers had been airlifted to land by helicopters, leaving 436 passengers and 458 crew members onboard.

An American passenger, Rodney Horgen, of Minnesota, was visiting Norway as a dream pilgrimage to his ancestral homeland when the trip quickly turned into a nightmare.

Horgen, 62, said he knew something was badly amiss when the guests on the tossing cruise liner were all brought to

the ship's muster point. He felt sure the end had come when a huge wave crashed through glass doors and swept his wife, Judie Lemieux, 30 feet across the floor.

"When the windows and door flew open and the 2 meters of water swept people and tables 20 to 30 feet, that was the breaker. I said to myself, 'This is it,'" Horgen recalled. "I grabbed my wife but I couldn't hold on. And she was thrown across the room. And then she got thrown back again by the wave coming back.

Hands and faces of fellow passengers were cut and bleeding from shattered glass, he said. An experienced fisherman, Horgen said he had never experienced such rough boating conditions.

Police said the crew, fearing the ship would run aground, managed to anchor in Hustadvika Bay so the evacuations could take place.

Russian arrested for smuggling orangutan

Associated Press

DENPASAR, Indonesia — Indonesian authorities have arrested a Russian tourist who was attempting to smuggle a drugged orangutan out of the resort island of Bali, a conservation official said Sunday.

Andrei Zhestkov, 27, was arrested late Friday at Bali's international airport after customs officers found a 2-year-old male orangutan sleeping in a rattan basket placed in his luggage, said Ketut Catur Marbawa, an official with Bali's conservation agency.

Marbawa, whose agency is part of the Environment and Forestry Ministry, said customs officers also found allergy pills wrapped in plastic, two geckos and five lizards in Zhestkov's suitcase. All the animals were alive.

He said Zhestkov told authorities he fed the orangutan allergy pills mixed with milk, causing the animal to lose consciousness for up to three hours.

He said Zhestkov also told officials he bought the orangutan for \$3,000 from a market on Indonesia's main island of Java after being told by a friend that he could take it home as a pet.

Marbawa said Zhestkov had yet to be charged because police were still investigating to see if there were links to international syndicates involved in wildlife trafficking.

Marbawa did not know whether Zhestkov had a lawyer. He said the Russian mission in Bali had been informed about the case.

Orangutans are listed as critically endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Only around 13,400 Sumatran orangutans remain in the wild.

A 2018 comprehensive study of Borneo's orangutans estimates their numbers have plummeted by more than 100,000 since 1999.

Australia braces for second cyclone

Associated Press

SYDNEY — Residents of Australia's northwest coast were bracing for a torrid night of fierce winds and heavy rain on Sunday as the country's second major cyclone of the week-end slowly wound toward land.

A day after Cyclone Trevor hit a remote part of the Northern Territory coast, slow-moving Cyclone Veronica settled just off the coast about 1,000 miles to the west in the Pilbara region of Western Australia state.

While that area is also lightly populated, residents were warned that because the cyclone was moving unusually slowly — at less than half a mile per hour — they would likely have to shelter for several hours.

A Category 3 storm on a scale

in which 5 is the strongest, Veronica had winds of up to 136 mph. It initially had been forecast to strike the coast Sunday afternoon, but its movement slowed appreciably for several hours, its center sitting some 18 miles out to sea as coastal areas were battered by wind and rain.

James Ashley, a senior forecaster with Australia's Bureau of Meteorology, said Veronica was unique because of its slow speed, which would bring a long danger period.

"We are expecting a prolonged period — 12 hours or more — of destructive winds near the core of the cyclone," Ashley said.

On Sunday evening, the Bureau predicted Veronica would weaken and start heading west, passing briefly over the coast as a Category 1 storm near the

town of Dampier on Monday afternoon, before heading back to sea.

Some 60,000 people live in the area most affected by Veronica, but the region is said to be generally well-prepared for cyclones.

With Trevor downgraded Sunday to a tropical low pressure system as it moved inland, the more than 2,000 people evacuated from Northern Territory coastal areas in its path began moving back home.

Officials were awaiting word on any damage to property and livestock. Flood warnings were still in effect for inland areas as the system moved southeast.

Cyclones are frequent in Australia's tropical north but rarely claim lives. Still, two large storms such as Trevor and Veronica hitting on the same weekend is rare.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man uses mannequins to send a message

CA SANTA ROSA — Jason Windus gave his California neighbor something to look at during a dispute over the height of a backyard fence — naked mannequins having a garden party.

Four of the fashion dummies are seated in wicker chairs around a matching table. Another is standing with its arms over its head and shamrocks over its breasts.

A hand-scrawled sign on top of a nearby wooden barrel reads, “Reserved seat for the nosey neighbor that complained about my fence to the city.”

“They wanted me to tear down my fence to see inside my yard, and now they get to,” Windus said.

Thief removes 140 maple sap buckets

VT ST. ALBANS — A sap bucket thief has brought a sour note to Vermont’s maple sugaring season.

Fred Hopkins told MyNBC5 that someone took 140 of his sap buckets.

Hopkins makes award-winning maple syrup at his home in the town of St. Albans and gifts it to friends and family.

He said he has replaced many of the buckets that were near a cemetery and the Franklin County Sportsman’s Club.

K-9 named Trump featured in meme

FL ORLANDO — A Florida sheriff’s agency may tell its deputies to stop naming K-9s after real people after a dog named Trump was featured in a Facebook meme.

The Orlando Sentinel re-

ported a picture showing an Orange County sheriff’s patrol car which has a decal featuring the dog’s name and picture was posted Wednesday by the Facebook page “Cop Hunter.” The text overlaid on the image said “Atta boy, Trump! Making a difference.”

The pro-law enforcement conservative group’s meme had 1,200 likes on Friday.

Golden Gate toll to cost \$9.75 by 2023

CA SAN FRANCISCO — A trip across the Golden Gate Bridge is about to get more expensive.

The (Santa Rosa) Press Democrat reported Golden Gate Bridge officials voted Friday to raise tolls to \$9.75 by 2023.

The first increase will come in July when a trip from the North Bay from San Francisco will rise from \$7 to \$7.35.

The toll increases are expected to raise an estimated \$100 million over five years and help transportation officials buy another ferry boat to meet growing demand buy another ferry boat to meet growing demand and add service between Larkspur and San Francisco.

Officials: Teens hack school’s computers

NJ ELIZABETH — Officials said several high school students hacked into their schools’ computer systems to try and change their grades.

Parents were notified Wednesday about the data breach in the Elizabeth school district.

Schools spokesman Pat Politano said one student gained access to the system by stealing a teacher’s password. He said other students accessed atten-

dance records and tried unsuccessfully to change grades.

District Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer said the consequences for those involved are “likely to be severe.”

Ex-restaurant manager sentenced for theft

CT NORWICH — A former manager at a Connecticut McDonald’s restaurant who conspired with a cashier to steal more than \$25,000 has pleaded no contest.

Jolene Rochester, of Lebanon, received a suspended prison sentence Thursday after her plea to a reduced charge of second-degree larceny. A judge also ordered Rochester, 31, to pay \$10,000 in restitution.

Police said co-workers used Rochester’s manager codes to override expenses and pocket cash during a nightly computer shutdown when all transactions were cash only.

The thefts occurred on a weekly basis at the Norwich restaurant from June to December 2017.

Coyote carcasses found; ban is weighed

NM SANTA FE — Some animal activists and state officials are pushing for New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to sign a bill outlawing coyote-killing contests.

The Santa Fe New Mexican reported Los Lunas resident Elisabeth Dicharry was informed of discarded coyote carcasses by a friend who came across them Wednesday.

Dicharry said duct tape tags dated Jan. 12 were found on some of the animals’ snouts, indicating they might have been targeted in a coyote-killing contest.

The discovery of the carcass-

es comes as Lujan Grisham contemplates whether to sign Senate Bill 76, a bipartisan measure that would prohibit coyote-killing contests on both public and private lands in New Mexico.

Convicted murderer sued by cellmate

MS BILOXI — A man who confessed to beheading his mother with his teeth and a butter knife is being sued for allegedly biting off the nose and lips of a fellow inmate three years earlier.

The (Biloxi) Sun Herald reported that Terrelle Johnson was sued this month by Jaron Stubbs, who said he has post-traumatic stress whenever he looks in the mirror.

Also named is the Federal Bureau of Prisons because Stubbs was in the Stone County Jail on federal charges when the attack happened.

Stubbs said jail guards knew Johnson had mental health issues but put the men in the same cell anyway.

The jail warden didn’t immediately respond to the paper’s request for comment, and federal officials said they don’t comment on pending lawsuits.

Sheep rescued from a tree in Brooklyn

NY NEW YORK — A soaking wet sheep was found tied to a Brooklyn tree.

That’s what New York City police discovered in Coney Island Creek Park on Thursday night. Authorities don’t know how the sheep ended up there, but they responded to a 911 call.

The animal is now in the New York City Animal Care Center.

From wire reports

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Clarke, Gonzaga power past Baylor

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Next stop on the Brandon Clarke Dunk 'n Swat Festival: The Sweet 16.

The Gonzaga forward had five monster dunks, five blocks, matched a career-high with 36 points and enjoyed the overall kind of night that earns potential NBAers millions, while leading the top-seeded Bulldogs to an 83-71 rejection of Baylor on Saturday.

"Is 'Wow' the word you say?" teammate Josh Perkins said. "Dunking the ball, blocking shots. He just plays the right way."

Gonzaga (32-3) is into the second weekend of the NCAA Tournament for the fifth straight time, the longest current streak in the country.

Clarke, a junior transfer from San Jose State, started the fireworks with a windmill jam on a breakaway that gave Gonzaga an early 16-7 lead.

A few possessions later, Clarke took a bounce pass on the break from Perkins for a two-handed flush that had the

Gonzaga kids in the Kennel going ga-ga.

Clark's final dunk of the first half came at the end of a 5-second clinic on how to deal with Baylor's floor-clogging 1-3-1 zone. Starting at the perimeter, all five Bulldogs touched the ball in the span of those 5 seconds; it ended with Killian Tillie's hook-flip to Clarke for a jam. It was as gorgeous a display of basketball as you'll see all year, and it put the Bulldogs ahead 35-16.

"That's players having great feel for the game and just playing," coach Mark Few said.

Ninth-seeded Baylor (20-14) scored the first 10 points of the second half to draw within six, and keep the game in range.

But Gonzaga held on, and when Clarke took a bounce pass from Perkins, who finished with six assists, it led to an easy bucket that put the Bulldogs up 13 with less than 4 minutes left.

Clarke also had eight rebounds and two steals. He lifted his season blocks total to 110 — now good for best in the nation.

West Regional roundup

Michigan's defense shuts down Florida

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Michigan's biggest concern against Florida was facing the Gators' lockdown defense.

The solution? Beat Florida at its own game.

Michigan is back in the Sweet 16 for the third consecutive year after pulling away for a 64-49 win in the second round of the NCAA Tournament on Saturday. The Wolverines held Florida to its lowest point total of the season.

"Holding this team to 49 points is incredible," Michigan coach John Beilein said. "That's how we won the game."

The 10th-seeded Gators (20-16) shot just 29 percent in the second half and 34.5 percent for the game as Michigan, the No. 2 seed in the West Region, advanced to the Sweet 16 for the fifth time in the last seven years. The Wolverines are the 2018 national runner-up.

Jordan Poole scored 19 points and the Wolverines took charge in the final minutes as Florida became the eighth Michigan opponent to fail to crack 50 points.

Florida State 90, Murray State 62: Scribbled in black marker on Terance Mann's left shoe was all the inspiration he needed: Mike Cofer, 3-21-19.

Just a couple of days ago, Mann's close friend and Florida State teammate, Phil Cofer, found out his father had died after a long illness. Mann and the rest of the Seminoles vowed to play this game, this NCAA Tournament, for "something bigger."

"We knew how much of a fighter [Mike Cofer] was and we kind of wanted to embody that and play just like he would out there," Mann said.

Mann had 18 points, eight rebounds and six assists, Mfiondu Kabengele scored 22 points and fourth-seeded Florida State ran Ja Morant and 12th-seeded Murray State out of the tournament to advance to the regional semifinal.

The Seminoles overwhelmed the Racers (28-5) with their size, speed and depth. Morant scored 28 points but had only four assists, one in the second half, after getting 16 against Marquette.

Edwards lifts Purdue past defending champ Villanova

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — Purdue's Carsen Edwards said he was getting tired of answering questions about his shooting slump.

The Boilermakers' junior star had all the answers Saturday night. He scored a career-high 42 points as Purdue knocked reigning national champion Villanova out of the NCAA Tournament in an 87-61 rout.

Matt Haarms added 18 points and nine rebounds for the third-seeded Boilermakers (25-9), who advanced to their third straight Sweet 16. Ryan Cline added 12 points, all on three-pointers.

Eric Paschall had 19 for Villanova (26-10), which saw its quest for a third national title in the last four seasons end during the tournament's first weekend. Fellow senior

Phil Booth scored 15 points, putting him over 1,500 for his career.

Edwards has battled a sore back and coming into the tournament had hit just 32 percent from the floor in his previous 11 games.

Against Old Dominion in the first round, he was not much better, scoring 26 points but on 7-for-23 from the floor and 4-for-12 from behind the arc.

He found the bottom of the net early and often against 'Nova, making 12 of his 21 shots and nine three-pointers on 16 attempts.

"I wouldn't say I knew I had a career night until the game was over," he said. "I was just so focused on trying to get the win, especially in games like this where you value every possession."

Purdue shot 54 percent while holding Villanova to just 20 baskets on 58 shots (34 percent). It was the worst tournament loss in Villanova's storied NCAA Tournament history and the largest blowout of a defending champion in nearly three decades, dating back to Loyola-Marymount's 149-115 dismantling of Michigan in 1990.

"This game is a humbling game," Villanova coach Jay Wright said. "We didn't get up on Edwards early, didn't get up on Cline early and when great shooters get hot, you're in trouble."

Purdue jumped out early, building a 13-point lead thanks to Edwards' outside shooting and Haarms' work down low.

The 7-foot-3 Dutchman towered over the shorter Wildcats, who didn't start anyone over 6-8.

Midwest Regional roundup

Auburn gets by KU

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Bruce Pearl and Auburn made another unexpected leap in its rebuilding process Saturday night, putting on a dazzling offensive display to take down a college basketball blue blood.

A year after an unexpected SEC title and one NCAA Tournament game victory, the Tigers are headed to the Sweet 16 for the first time in 16 years.

Poised under college basketball's brightest spotlight, Auburn ran over Kansas 89-75 in the Midwest Region to earn one of the biggest wins in program history.

"It's a big step," Pearl said. "I know the SEC is proud of us. That means a lot to me."

Auburn (28-9) had to overcome late-game blunders to hold off New Mexico State in its NCAA Tournament opener. The fifth-seeded Tigers had no such trouble against Kansas, pouncing on the undermanned Jayhawks and not letting them up.

Auburn had a 17-point lead before the midpoint of the first half and kept pouring in shots, hitting 13 three-pointers while shooting 53 percent against one

of the college basketball's premier programs.

Bryce Brown scored 25 points and hit seven three-pointers, and Jared Harper had 18 points to send Auburn to the Sweet 16 for the fourth time — first since 2003 under Cliff Ellis.

Next up: top-seeded North Carolina or No. 9 Washington in Kansas City.

Kentucky 62, Wofford 56: Everywhere Fletcher Magee turned, there was a hand in his face, a body in his way, a relentless wave of blue that was intent on making sure he never found any alone time.

Kentucky completely shut down the most prolific three-point scorer in Division I history.

Magee missed all 12 attempts from long range in his final college game Saturday, and Kentucky held off Wofford in the second round of the Midwest Region in Jacksonville, Fla.

"We wanted to make him put the ball on the floor and make a basketball play," said freshman guard Ashton Hagans.

East Regional roundup

LSU holds off Terps

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — It's probably the same play suspended LSU coach Will Wade would have called.

After all, it worked several times during the regular season. And now it has the Tigers in the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2006.

Tremont Waters drove by three defenders and scooped in a banking layup with 1.6 seconds remaining to give third-seeded LSU a 69-67 victory over sixth-seeded Maryland in the second round of the NCAA Tournament on Saturday.

"Great players make great plays, and he made a great play," interim coach Tony Benford said.

After Maryland's Eric Ayala failed to get off a shot from midcourt before the final buzzer, LSU players mobbed Waters under the basket. They could have done the same to Skylar Mays, who scored 16 points and hit a huge three-pointer with 40 seconds remaining that put the Tigers (28-6) up 67-64.

Jalen Smith answered on the other end, sending the packed crowd into a frenzy and prompting LSU to call timeout.

Benford dialed up the final

play for Waters, a dynamic sophomore who has been terrific all season.

"The players knew exactly what was coming," Maryland coach Mark Turgeon said. "We all knew what was coming. It was whether we were going to be able to stop it or not."

The 5-foot-11 Waters got a pick from big man Naz Reid, drove into the lane and somehow got off the winner.

"I was in the bottom of the dog pile, and just the feeling, it feels amazing," said Waters, who laughed off those who questioned whether he traveled. "I'm going to continue to do everything I can to help this team win and just keep pushing for my guys."

Wade could only celebrate from afar. The head coach was banished indefinitely after details emerged about him talking to a recruiting middleman about a "strong ass offer" he made to a high schooler.

Michigan State 70, Minnesota 50: Michigan State is back in the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2015 after rolling past Minnesota.

The Spartans (30-6) came out making shots at a blistering pace and were never seriously threatened.

Pac-12, ACC dominating women's tourney

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Pac-12 and Atlantic Coast Conference showed conference supremacy in the opening round of the women's NCAA Tournament.

The two power conferences combined to go 13-1 in the first two days. The Pac-12 won all six of its contests, while the ACC went 7-1. The lone loss came in a matchup between the two conferences, with Cal rallying to rout North Carolina.

"I'm not surprised at all that the Pac-12 teams went 6-0. I just have so much respect for the players, teams and coaching in our league," Cal coach Lindsay Gottlieb said. "We knew we'd have a tough first-round game with UNC and that the ACC is really strong, so we tried to take a little extra pride in representing our league and get-

ting the job done."

It's the third time in four years the Pac-12 has gone unbeaten in the opening round of the tournament. The conference is 23-1 in the first round over the past four seasons.

The top two conferences will square off once in the second round, with Arizona State playing at Miami. Seven other teams will advance to the Sweet 16 on Sunday. UConn will be trying to make its 25th consecutive trip to the regional semifinals when it hosts Buffalo. One team that won't be moving on is Tennessee, which lost to UCLA on Saturday. The Lady Vols failed to make it out of the first round for the second time in their storied history. The only other time that happened was 2009. They also failed to win 20 games for the first time since 1975-76.

With all the talk of parity this year only

three double-digit seeds advanced to the second round. That doesn't mean the first round wasn't exciting. Three games went to OT — equaling the total of the entire tournament last year. A total of 10 games were decided by single digits, double the first round last year.

Seven of the top eight teams advanced fairly easily, with Iowa being the lone one or two seed to struggle in the first round.

Mississippi State and Louisville will try to reach the Sweet 16 on Sunday. The Cardinals hope to have senior point guard Arica Carter back. She practiced and awaits clearance to play after missing the past two games with an injured left knee. Cardinals coach Jeff Walz will also be back on the bench after serving a one-game NCAA suspension.

NHL roundup

Avalanche roll to 4th straight victory

Associated Press

DENVER — Colin Wilson scored his first goal in more than a month, Philipp Grubauer stopped 29 shots and the playoff-chasing Colorado Avalanche earned their fourth straight win by holding off the Chicago Blackhawks 4-2 on Saturday.

J.T. Compher and Sven Andrighetto also scored. Derick Brassard added an empty-netter as the Avalanche moved into position for the second wild card in the Western Conference.

Colorado had an array of forwards step up with All-Star Mikko Rantanen missing the game with an upper-body injury. Wilson came through with his first goal since Feb. 7.

Grubauer kept up his torrid play by winning his fourth straight start. He's allowed four goals over stretch.

Jonathan Toews and Erik

Gustafsson scored for Chicago, and Corey Crawford stopped 21 shots.

Jets 5, Predators 0: Kyle Connor had three goals and an assist in his first NHL hat trick, helping host Winnipeg clinch a playoff spot.

Kevin Hayes had a goal and three assists for the Jets, and Andrew Copp also scored.

Blues 4, Lightning 3: Vladimir Tarasenko had a goal and an assist, Jordan Binnington made 39 saves, and host St. Louis snapped Tampa Bay's seven-game win streak.

Canadiens 7, Sabres 4: Brendan Gallagher had two goals and an assist, and host Montreal earned its third straight win.

Devils 2, Coyotes 1 (SO): Blake Coleman and Pavel Zacha scored in the shootout and host New Jersey hurt Arizona's playoff chances, send-

ing the Coyotes to their fourth straight loss.

Hurricanes 5, Wild 1: Teuvo Teravainen had a goal and two assists, sending host Carolina to the win.

Bruins 7, Panthers 3: Patrice Bergeron, David Pastrnak, Brad Marchand and Zdeno Chara each had a goal and an assist as Boston clinched a playoff berth with a road win.

Islanders 4, Flyers 2: Josh Bailey scored twice 1:23 apart in the third period, stopping a 12-game drought and leading New York to a win at Philadelphia.

Rangers 2, Maple Leafs 1 (OT): Ryan Strome scored 1:48 into overtime, and New York won at Toronto to stop a five-game losing streak.

Senators 4, Oilers 3 (OT): Brady Tkachuk scored 2:09 into overtime for his second

goal of the game, lifting Ottawa to a win at Edmonton.

Penguins 3, Stars 2: Jared McCann scored twice, including the go-ahead goal on a spinning short-handed play in the third period, and Pittsburgh won at Dallas.

Red Wings 3, Golden Knights 2 (OT): Anthony Mantha scored the tying goal midway through the third period and got the game-winner 19 seconds into overtime, lifting Detroit to a win at Las Vegas.

Kings 4, Ducks 3 (SO): Anze Kopitar scored the only goal in the shootout, and host Los Angeles beat Anaheim in a low-stakes edition of the Freeway Faceoff.

Flames 3, Canucks 1: Mark Giordano had a goal and two assists, leading Calgary Flames to a win at Vancouver.

NBA roundup

Doncic's triple-double, Nowitzki lift Mavs over Warriors

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Luka Doncic had a triple-double, Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-best 21 points in a rare start and the Dallas Mavericks capitalized on Stephen Curry's absence to beat the Golden State Warriors 126-91 on Saturday night.

Golden State dropped out of the top seed in the Western Conference to a half-game behind Denver. With Curry resting, Kevin Durant had 25 points and DeMarcus Cousins scored 19. The Warriors were 4-for-30 from three-point range, with Durant going 0-for-8 and Klay Thompson missing all four of his tries.

Doncic had 23 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists. Dallas had dropped 12 straight in Oakland.

Hawks 129, 76ers 127: Trae Young scored 32 points, including a last-second, go-ahead floater, as Atlanta ended visiting Philadelphia's six-game winning streak.

With 3.5 seconds remaining, Young took the inbound pass from Kevin Huerter and dribbled past Jimmy Butler before sinking

the short, soft jumper for the lead with 0.1 seconds remaining. Butler missed a long attempt as the final buzzer sounded.

Jazz 114, Bulls 83: At Chicago, Rudy Gobert had 21 points and 14 rebounds, and Utah rolled to one of its most lopsided wins of the season.

The 31-point margin of victory was just three shy of Utah's season high. The Jazz raced out to a 70-36 halftime lead and never looked back in winning for the sixth time in seven games.

Timberwolves 112, Grizzlies 99: Karl-Anthony Towns had 33 points and 23 rebounds, and Minnesota ended a five-game slide with a win over host Memphis.

Andrew Wiggins added 22 points and rookie Josh Okogie had 17 as Minnesota, eliminated from the playoffs Friday night, ended its longest losing streak of the season.

Heat 113, Wizards 108: Dwyane Wade scored 11 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter, helping visiting Miami remain alone in eighth place in the East.

Wade also had nine rebounds while scoring in double digits for a ninth consecutive game.

Hornets 124, Celtics 117: Kemba Walker scored 18 of his game-high 36 points in the fourth quarter and Charlotte rallied to beat visiting Boston.

It was Walker's 23rd game of 30 or more points this season. He added 11 rebounds and nine assists.

Trail Blazers 117, Pistons 112: Damian Lillard had 28 points, nine assists and six rebounds as Portland beat visiting Detroit for its third straight win.

Al-Farouq Aminu scored 22 points, including nine points in the fourth quarter as Portland rallied from a six-point deficit.

Kings 112, Suns 103: Buddy Hield had 25 points and set the franchise season record for three-pointers in host Sacramento's win over Phoenix.

Hield made 7-for-14 from beyond the arc, giving him 245 three-pointers this season, surpassing the mark of 240 set by Peja Stojakovic in 2003-04.