

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## USMC integration experiment completed

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Marine Corps' brief and limited experiment integrating female recruits into an all-male unit for their initial training at boot camp came to an end Friday.

And as the recruit class graduated at Parris Island, S.C., officials said they were undecided about whether the Corps, which has long refused to fully integrate its recruit training, will do it again.

This year for the first time, a platoon of female recruits was part of a company that included five all-male platoons. They were all housed in the same complex, but on different floors — unlike the usual practice that has all female recruits living and doing some of their

training on a separate part of the base.

Commanders and Marines in the course said they didn't notice any problems during the brief flirtation with increased integration. But the lack of disaster didn't appear to change minds in a Marine Corps that has steadfastly rejected congressional and other outside pressure to build combined platoons of female and male recruits at boot camp, like the other military services do.

For the recruits, just surviving the rigorous course was all-consuming.

"I showed up to train — everybody trains the same," said Pvt. 1st Class Harley Mesimore, 19, of Greensboro, N.C. "I was focused on myself and

getting through the week and just getting out of here."

Top Marine leaders have argued for years that young, female Marines perform better if they do the bulk of their early training in a separate unit where they can build their strength and confidence.

Brig. Gen. James Glynn, commander of Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, said that this latest move, putting men and women in more frequent proximity, didn't look much different than usual.

He said the intense training needed to "make a Marine" stayed the same. But, because all six platoons in Company I — one all-female and five all-male — were located in the same building complex, they

saw each other a bit more. They ate at the same chow hall and marched to meals together. When they got up for physical fitness in the morning, the platoons lined up together.

Could it happen again?

"The jury is still out on that," said Glynn. "As conditions permit in the future, we could pursue it." But, he added, "no one looked at this and said we don't want to do it again."

The decision to put the female unit with the others this winter was driven by logistics and money. There were fewer recruits in the class, so it made sense to move the roughly 50 females into the complex with the men, rather than bus them or make them march to the main campus for drills or classes.

## Iraqi leader: No 'serious' opposition to US troop presence

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's president said Friday he does not see any "serious" opposition to the presence of American forces in Iraq, provided they continue to be there specifically to assist Iraqi forces in the fight against Islamic State.

Barham Salih said there is "general consensus" that Iraq needs continued collaboration with the forces, which he said can go on "as long as it is necessary." He also warned that the threat from ISIS extremists is far from over, despite the announcement of the group's territorial defeat in Syria recently.

Salih spoke to The Associated Press in an exclusive interview in Baghdad on Friday, a day before traveling to Tunis to attend an annual Arab summit meeting.

Some 5,200 troops are stationed in Iraq as part of a security agreement with the Iraqi government to advise, assist and support the country's troops in the fight against ISIS. The militant group overran large parts of Iraq in 2014 after Iraqi forces collapsed, and it proceeded to declare a self-styled caliphate over territory straddling Iraq and Syria.

U.S. forces, which had left Iraq in 2011 after invading in 2003, were invited back in 2014 to assist the fight against the group. Iraq declared victory over ISIS in late 2017 after a ruinous and bloody war.

"They are here for the specific mission of empowering and enabling Iraqi forces in the fight against ISIS. Nothing else. That is the specific exclusive mission, and in that context, I do not see serious opposition to

the presence of these forces in Iraq today," Salih said.

Salih's comments stand in stark contrast with that of mostly Iran-backed deputies in the Iraqi Parliament who say they are preparing to draft laws calling for a full withdrawal of U.S. troops now that the war against ISIS is over.

An unannounced visit to Iraq by President Donald Trump in December, during which he failed to meet with the prime minister, as well as recent comments in which Trump said he wanted U.S. troops to remain in Iraq to "watch Iran," have also provoked outrage in Baghdad and fueled the debate.

Salih said any mission beyond what has been agreed to by the Iraqi government "is a subject that many political leaders of the country would take objection to."

He said he recently led a

conversation among all the major political groupings of the country, and there is "general consensus that Iraq needs that collaboration." A debate or vote is not scheduled in Parliament for the time being, he said.

While the territorial defeat of ISIS was hugely significant, Salih said, remnants of the group were still operating and moving around in both Syria and Iraq.

"This threat is far from over. We really need — we in Iraq, Syria and the entire international community — to be vigilant and to make sure that we deal definitely with this threat of extremism," he said.

Salih also said the international community should shoulder its responsibility in dealing with the thousands of ISIS detainees and their families currently being held in Syria and Iraq.

# Navy awards \$1.47B contract for warship to Miss. shipyard

Associated Press

PASCAGOULA, Miss. — The U.S. Navy has awarded a \$1.47 billion contract to a Mississippi shipyard to build an amphibious warship, following through on a plan announced last year.

The money will go to Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula to design and build the 14th in the San Antonio class of amphibious transport dock. The ship will be the first with a modified design following 13 earlier ships. Ingalls has delivered 11 of those and is building two more to launch in coming years.

The vessel will be used to carry Marines and their equipment around the world, putting them ashore with landing craft or amphibious assault vehicles.

The ship will also be able to host helicopters or tiltrotor aircraft such as the MV-22 Osprey.

Ingalls is a unit of Huntington Ingalls Industries of Newport News, Va., and has 11,500 employees. Tuesday's award will provide them work in coming years.

"The LPD Flight II builds upon the significant investment that has been made in this platform to improve the capability and flexibility of our deployed Navy-Marine Corps team," Ingalls President Brian Cuccias said in a statement.

The company said it plans to begin building the ship in 2020.

The shipyard on the Pascagoula River has built nearly 70 percent of Navy warships now afloat and has been spending

hundreds of millions of dollars on modernization and expansion. That includes more than \$150 million in aid in recent years from the state of Mississippi, which owns most of the shipyard and leases it to Ingalls. The company also plans to restore a shipyard on the east bank of the Pascagoula River that was destroyed by 2005's Hurricane Katrina.

The 684-foot-long, 105-foot-wide ships are designed to handle combat, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

The Navy said work is expected to be completed by February 2025. The Pentagon is obligating \$1.37 billion toward the project that won't expire at the end of the current budget year.

## Trump calls for improved conditions for SEAL

Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. — President Donald Trump said Saturday a Navy SEAL charged in the stabbing of an Iraqi war prisoner will be moved to less restrictive confinement while he awaits trial.

Trump said in a tweet that the move was in honor of Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher's past service to the country. The tweet came after 18 Republican members of the U.S. House sent a letter to Navy Secretary Richard Spencer raising concerns about the conditions of Gallagher's confinement at a Navy brig in California.

Gallagher is charged with murder in the death of a teenage Islamic State fighter under his care and then holding his reenlistment ceremony with the corpse. Navy prosecutors also accuse Gallagher of shooting two civilians in Iraq and opening fire on crowds. Gallagher has pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

His lawyers have said he did not murder anyone and that disgruntled SEALs made the accusations because they wanted to get rid of a demanding platoon leader.

In their March 18 letter to Spencer, the House members said Gallagher's family and friends reported that he had not had sufficient access to his defense attorneys. They also said they got reports he was not receiving enough food or adequate medical care.

Housing prisoners such as Gallagher who are awaiting trial with those who have completed their trials may be to blame for some of those problems, they said, and they called on Spencer to review that practice.

Gallagher's trial is scheduled for May 28.

## USAF relieves 2 leaders for hazing culture

Alaska (Anchorage) Dispatch News

Two squadron commanders belonging to the 354th Fighter Wing at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, Alaska, were relieved of command last week following investigations that revealed a culture of hazing within their units, the U.S. Air Force said.

Lt. Col. Robb Fiechtner, 3rd Air Support Operations Squadron, and Lt. Col. Joshua Cates, 5th Air Support Operations Squadron, were relieved of their squadron command positions by the wing commander, Col. Benjamin Bishop, according to a press release Friday from the wing's public affairs office.

Fiechtner's squadron, with about 80 members, is based at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson north of Anchorage but also responsible for a detachment at Fort Wainwright, near Fairbanks.

None of the units in Cates' squadron are in Alaska, according to a public affairs officer for the 354th. But the 354th wing commander has administrative control over that squadron, which is based out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington.

The disciplinary action follows an investigation commanders started in January into a practice called "rolling up" in which an airman is tackled

or restrained, their hands or feet are bound in duct tape, and they are allowed to struggle before being released, the Air Force said.

The practice was a longstanding tradition passed on through squadrons, but the military has made it clear that hazing will no longer be tolerated, said Capt. Kay Nissen, public affairs officer at Eielson. Rolling up comes with the concern the airman could get hurt.

"Some culture changes die hard and that's kind of what we're looking at right now," Nissen said. "Some units did not get the message that this should not be happening."

A group commander received an indication that the practice was occurring and started the investigation, she said, then forwarded it the wing level when he realized it went beyond that squadron. There was no specific complaint that started the investigation.

Both lieutenant colonels will keep their ranks and be reassigned, Nissen said. They could at some point be commanders again.

"We don't consider them bad people," she said. "They just made a leadership mistake."

Fiechtner's service began in May 2001. Cates' began in July 2000.

# Report: Trump gave Kim list of nuke demands

*Bloomberg News*

SEOUL, South Korea — U.S. President Donald Trump gave North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a list of demands that included a call for handing over nuclear weapons and bomb fuel to the U.S. in their talks in Hanoi last month, Reuters reported, citing the document.

Trump handed Kim the piece of paper stating the U.S. position at their meeting in Hanoi's Metropole Hotel on Feb. 28, according to the news agency. This was the first time that Trump had explicitly defined directly to Kim what he meant by denuclearization, Reuters reported, citing an unidentified person familiar with the discussions.

The document may help explain why the

summit collapsed without a complete account, Reuters said.

Trump abruptly ended his second summit with Kim after the president said the North Korean leader had asked for all U.S. sanctions to be lifted in exchange for the dismantling of the country's main nuclear facility. Each side has blamed the other, with the U.S. saying North Korea demanded too much sanctions relief and Pyongyang faulting Washington for rejecting its promises to reduce its nuclear program.

Trump told reporters Friday he has a good relationship with Kim and didn't think additional sanctions on North Korea were needed.

"It doesn't mean I don't put them on later, I just didn't think additional sanctions at

this time were necessary," he said. "They are suffering greatly."

South Korean President Moon Jae-in will meet Trump on April 11 at the White House in a bid to get North Korean nuclear talks back on track. Moon has come under fire at home from the opposition for accepting the North Korean leader's disarmament pledges. He also faces pressure from across the peninsula, with the Kim regime withdrawing staff from a new joint liaison office last week and criticizing the south as "cowardly" for backing the U.S. stance against easing sanctions.

Moon will seek a fourth summit with the North Korean leader after meeting Trump, South Korea's Chosun Ilbo reported, without saying where it got the information.

# Trump threatens to close US border this week

*Associated Press*

PALM BEACH, Fla. — Threatening drastic action against Mexico, President Donald Trump declared he is likely to shut down America's southern border this week unless Mexican authorities immediately halt all illegal immigration. Such a severe move could hit the economies of both countries, but the president emphasized, "I am not kidding around."

"It could mean all trade" with Mexico, Trump said when questioned Friday by reporters in Florida. "We will close it for a long time."

Trump has been promising for more than two years to build a long, impenetrable wall along the border to stop illegal immigration, though Congress has been

reluctant to provide the money he needs. In the meantime, he has repeatedly threatened to close the border but this time, with a new surge of migrants heading north, he gave a definite timetable.

A substantial closure could have an especially heavy impact on cross-border communities from San Diego to South Texas, as well as supermarkets that sell Mexican produce, factories that rely on imported parts and other businesses across the U.S.

The U.S. and Mexico trade about \$1.7 billion in goods daily, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which said closing the border would be "an unmitigated economic debacle" that would threaten 5 million American jobs.

Trump tweeted Friday morning, "If

Mexico doesn't immediately stop ALL illegal immigration coming into the United States through our Southern Border, I will be CLOSING the Border, or large sections of the Border, next week." He didn't qualify his threat with "or large sections," stating: "There is a very good likelihood I'll be closing the border next week, and that is just fine with me."

He said several times that it would be "so easy" for Mexican authorities to stop immigrants passing through their country and trying to enter the U.S. illegally, "but they just take our money and 'talk.'"

Trump's latest declaration came after Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said his country was doing its part to fight migrant smuggling.

# Barr: Redacted Mueller report to be ready within weeks

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — A redacted version of special counsel Robert Mueller's report on the Russia investigation will be sent to Congress by mid-April and will not be shared with the White House beforehand, Attorney General William Barr said.

Barr's timeline, included in a letter to the chairmen of the House and Senate judiciary committees, sets up a possible showdown with House Democrats, who are insisting they see the full report this week.

In his letter, Barr said Friday he shares a desire for Congress and the public to be able to read Mueller's findings, which are included in the nearly 400-page report the

special counsel recently submitted.

Barr said President Donald Trump would have the right to assert executive privilege over parts of the report. But he noted that Trump "has stated publicly that he intends to defer to me and, accordingly, there are no plans to submit the report to the White House for a privilege review."

Mueller officially concluded his investigation when he submitted the report March 22. Two days later, Barr sent a four-page letter to Congress that detailed Mueller's "principal conclusions."

Barr said he is preparing to redact multiple categories of information from the report, and Mueller is helping the Justice Department identify sections that will be

blacked out in the public version.

Those include grand jury material; information that would compromise sensitive sources and methods; information that could affect ongoing investigations, including those referred by Mueller's office to other Justice Department offices; and information that could infringe on the personal privacy and reputation of "peripheral third parties."

"Our progress is such that I anticipate we will be in a position to release the report by mid-April, if not sooner," Barr wrote.

Barr said his letter detailing Mueller's "principal conclusions" was not intended to be an "exhaustive recounting" of the special counsel's investigation.

# Russia's relations with Venezuela deepen

*The Washington Post*

CARACAS, Venezuela — After two Russian military planes landed near Caracas this month, the Trump administration issued stark warnings over President Nicolas Maduro's ties to the Kremlin. But a vessel that arrived in the waters off Venezuela's Caribbean coast a day earlier offered a more telling sign of a deepening relationship that is alarming to Washington.

Venezuela has the world's largest known oil reserves, with transport and sales of its thick, sludgy crude long dependent on chemical thinners purchased from the United States. After Washington barred U.S. companies from selling them to Venezuela in January — and warned foreign companies to

follow suit — Maduro faced a dire predicament: How would he stave off the industry's total collapse?

An answer arrived in the form of a red-and-black tanker, the *Serengeti*, that loaded a cargo of thinners off the coast of Malta before arriving in Venezuela on March 22. The company that chartered the vessel: Russia's state-run oil giant, Rosneft.

"Relations between Russia and Venezuela are excellent," Alexey Seredin, minister counselor at the Russian Embassy in Caracas, said in an interview. "At the moment, we are working to strengthen cooperation."

The arrival of vital diluents is only one part of an expanding Russian footprint in Venezuela. Moscow is dispatching military personnel and equipment and

is acting to offset U.S. sanctions by shipping Venezuelan crude to India for processing. The Kremlin is poised to increase wheat sales and dispatch more medical aid. This month, Venezuela also announced the opening in Moscow of a regional headquarters for its state-run oil giant.

This week, Seredin said, a senior delegation from Maduro's government will arrive in Moscow to discuss Russian investments in Venezuela's mining, agricultural and transport sectors. Seredin added that the arrival of 99 Russian military personnel on March 23 was part of an effort to maintain Maduro's defense apparatus, which includes Sukhoi fighter jets and anti-aircraft systems purchased from Russia.

In an era of generally warm-

ing ties between the Trump administration and Moscow, Russia's deepening involvement in Venezuela is creating a flashpoint by challenging the U.S. effort to force Maduro from office.

President Donald Trump said Friday that he is likely to speak with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping about the crisis in Venezuela. Earlier in the day, national security adviser John Bolton was more pointed, issuing a statement that condemned the "introduction of Russian military personnel and equipment into Venezuela" as a "provocative" act and a "direct threat to international peace and security in the region."

## Politician accuses Biden of an inappropriate kiss

*New York Daily News*

Former vice president Joe Biden's potential 2020 presidential bid took a hit Friday after a former Nevada political candidate accused him of behaving inappropriately five years ago.

Lucy Flores, a former Nevada state representative and 2014 Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor, wrote in a *New York Magazine* article that Biden kissed her without consent at a political rally five years ago.

"I felt two hands on my shoulders. I froze," wrote Flores. "Why is the vice president of the United States touching me?" He proceeded to plant a big, slow kiss on the back of my head."

In the first-person article published Friday, Flores said the incident occurred as she waited with Biden before taking the stage at a 2014 rally in Las Vegas.

She said Biden's behavior "made me feel uneasy, gross

and confused," adding, "even if his behavior wasn't violent or sexual, it was demeaning and disrespectful."

"I'm not suggesting that Biden broke any laws," wrote Flores, "but the transgressions that society deems minor (or doesn't even see as transgressions) often feel considerable to the person on the receiving end. That imbalance of power and attention is the whole point — and the whole problem."

Biden spokesman Bill Russo responded with a statement: "Neither then, nor in the years since, did (Biden) or the staff with him at the time have an inkling that Ms. Flores had been at any time uncomfortable, nor do they recall what she describes."

Flores' assertion comes as Biden, the early leader in national Democratic presidential polls, mulls a White House run. He has been working to put together a political team in the early-voting states of Iowa and South Carolina.

## Report: 23% of adults in US had no sex in 2018

*The Washington Post*

The share of U.S. adults reporting no sex in the past year reached an all-time high in 2018, underscoring a three-decade trend line marked by an aging population and higher numbers of unattached people.

But among the 23 percent of adults — or nearly 1 in 4 — who spent the year in a celibate state, a much larger than expected number of them were 20-something men, according to the latest data from the General Social Survey.

Experts who study Americans' bedroom habits say there are a number of factors driving the Great American Sex Drought. Age is one of them: The 60 and older demographic climbed from 18 percent of the population in 1996 to 26 percent in 2018, according to the survey. The share reporting no sex has consistently hovered at about 50 percent, and because that age group is growing relative to everyone else, it has the net effect of reducing the over-

all population's likelihood of having sex.

But changes at the other end of the age spectrum may be playing an even bigger role. The portion of Americans 18 to 29 reporting no sex in the past year more than doubled between 2008 and 2018, to 23 percent.

Jean Twenge, professor of psychology at San Diego State University, said in an interview that growing sexlessness among America's 20-somethings is primarily attributable to partnering up later in life.

The data also show a significant gender divide among 20-somethings.

For most of the past three decades, 20-something men and women reported similar rates of sexlessness. But that's changed in recent years. Since 2008, the share of men younger than 30 reporting no sex has nearly tripled, to 28 percent.

That's a much steeper increase than the 8 percentage-point increase reported among their female peers.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Woman gives birth at work, leaves baby

**PA** LANCASTER — A Pennsylvania woman who gave birth in a restroom at her work and left the baby boy partially submerged in the toilet pleaded guilty to felony child endangerment.

Emmanuella Osei entered her plea during a court hearing Tuesday. The 23-year-old Reading woman faces up to 10 years in prison when she's sentenced later this year.

The Lancaster District Attorney's office said Osei was working at a group home in Warwick in January when she told colleagues she felt ill. She went to a restroom and phoned her supervisor, asking them to call 911.

The baby was hospitalized in critical condition but has since recovered. He was placed in a foster home.

### Dogs attack 76-year-old attending funeral

**SC** DUNCAN — Authorities said a 76-year-old Virginia woman was attacked and wounded by a pack of dogs while attending a funeral in South Carolina, and the dogs' owner has since been charged.

News outlets reported the woman was attacked by five dogs that Spartanburg Environmental Enforcement officials said escaped from owner Daisy Ann Anderson, of Duncan. Arrest warrants accuse Anderson of allowing her dogs to escape despite knowing they had violent tendencies.

### Fisheries to close in April to protect whales

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — All fisheries in California will close for the season

in April when whales are feeding off the state's coast as part of an effort to keep Dungeness crab fishery gear from killing protected whales.

The April 15 closure, three months before the fishing season normally ends, is part of a settlement reached by the Center for Biological Diversity and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

### Gunshot from ceiling wounds woman below

**NC** DURHAM — Police in North Carolina said a gunshot from an upstairs apartment went through the floor and wounded a woman in an apartment below.

News outlets reported the woman suffered serious injuries when she was shot Saturday night in Durham. A statement from Durham police said she was taken to a hospital.

A search warrant said a man came into the living room when he heard a boom, and saw smoke. The woman in the room told him she thought she had been electrocuted. But she was shot in the chest, stomach and right leg.

### City seeks to close business for gambling

**KS** WICHITA — Wichita officials are seeking to padlock a coin-operated laundry because of ongoing gambling on the property.

The Wichita Eagle reported that police have seized at least 34 illegal gambling machines from the Fabric Care Center since 2016. But the city said last week in a court filing that every time authorities haul some out, more show up. Wichita police officers also have logged one homicide, one rape, five aggravated assaults, two simple assaults, five weapons

cases, three larcenies and 12 drug cases at the site over the past 14 months.

### Man charged with stealing ambulance

**GA** ATHENS — A man in Georgia was arrested and charged with stealing an ambulance from a hospital before he was arrested in a drug store break-in.

Athens-Clark County police told news outlets that Edward Lee Wessinger, 41, is accused of taking an ambulance at St. Mary's Hospital while the driver was inside waiting for a patient discharge.

Less than an hour later, officers were called to a drug store where they found Wessinger inside. They said he used a rock to break the front door glass.

### Dozens of spiny dogfish sharks wash ashore

**NJ** BRIGANTINE — Authorities said dozens of spiny dogfish sharks washed up on beaches across southern New Jersey recently.

And while it's still not clear what caused the deaths, officials believe it most likely was a natural occurrence.

The state Division of Fish and Wildlife said conservation officers saw roughly 60 decayed dogfish during their patrols. The sharks were found from Brigantine to Longport.

### 2 arrested after guns pulled at birthday party

**MI** KALAMAZOO — Police said two men were arrested after guns were pulled during a fight at a birthday party in southwestern Michigan with children in attendance.

No shots were fired during the fight in Kalamazoo. A woman at the party had what

police described as minor injuries.

Police found a large group of people at the party and witnesses told them at least two people with guns had fled. Police arrested two 31-year-old Kalamazoo men and recovered at least three guns.

### Man agrees to stop chasing stolen vehicles

**AK** ANCHORAGE — An Alaska man agreed to a plea deal that includes a promise to stop chasing after stolen vehicles.

The Anchorage Daily News reported that Floyd Hall, 54, pleaded guilty to one count of reckless endangerment resulting in a 30-day suspended sentence and a \$500 fine.

Officials said Hall's three year probation terms include a pledge to refrain from chasing anyone driving a suspected stolen vehicle.

The newspaper reported that Hall can remain involved with a group calling itself the "A Team" that relies on social media tipoffs to recover stolen automobiles.

### Man faked robbery to get out of work

**FL** DUNDEE — Authorities said a Florida man didn't want to show up for his shift at a Hardee's restaurant, so he called 911 and reported he'd just been robbed.

WFTS-TV reported that Brian Anderson, 32, of Dundee told dispatchers Tuesday that two gun-carrying men took his necklace, money and his phone before jumping into a car and driving away.

Polk County sheriff's deputies went to the scene and quickly realized that a robbery never happened.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

## NCAA Tournament: East Region roundup

# Top seed Duke survives another nail-biter

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—There was nothing Zion Williamson could do but watch. Once again, Williamson and Duke were at the mercy of an opponent's last-second shot at the rim. Once again, the Blue Devils and their phenomenal freshmen marched on in March Madness when the ball didn't drop through.

Williamson and No. 1 overall seed Duke moved into the Elite Eight by erasing a deficit and then holding on to edge No. 4-seeded Virginia Tech 75-73 on Friday night.

Narrow as could be.

The Hokies had their chances in the closing seconds, the final one coming on an inbounds play with 1.1 seconds left. The ball went to Ahmed Hill as he jumped to the basket, but his attempt to tie it somehow fell short from close-as-can-be.

"I'm not gonna lie to you," Williamson said. "When he caught it, I said: 'That's it. We're going to overtime.'"

Hill dropped to the court on his back.

"I just came up short," he'd say later.

Williamson — fittingly — grabbed the basketball and smiled broadly.

It was similar to the way two last-gasp shots went off the rim for Duke's second-round opponent, UCF.

"The old thing: The operation was a success, but the patient died," Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "Their play was a success, but it didn't work."

And so now Duke will take on No. 2 seed Michigan State on Sunday with a Final Four berth on the line.

That Coach K and his crew are moving on is thanks in part, of course, to Hill's late flub, of which Virginia Tech's Kerry Blackshear Jr. said: "Ahmed is the guy that we definitely want taking that shot. You wouldn't want it any other way."

Duke also got by because a

pair of three-pointers by Virginia Tech went awry just before that final miss, one by Hill and the other by Ty Outlaw.

**Michigan State 80, LSU 63:** At Washington, Aaron Henry scored a career-best 20 and Gabe Brown had a career-high 15 as the second-seeded Spartans beat the third-seeded Tigers to move on to the East Region final.

Coach Tom Izzo's upperclassman-heavy team is one victory against Duke away from its first Final Four appearance since 2015 — and the freshmen led the way.

Michigan State took it to LSU on the glass, outrebounding the Tigers 34-20. At halftime, Michigan State had as many offensive rebounds as LSU had total rebounds, at times making it look like 5-on-4 when the ball came off the rim.

It didn't bounce off the rim much for the Spartans early as they took advantage of an LSU defense that left them uncon-

tested three-point shots. Michigan State had five threes in the first 10 minutes alone, and LSU never adjusted defensively.

Tremont Waters scored 10 points during a 13-0 LSU run spanning the end of the first half into the second to cut the deficit to four. Then Michigan State blew the game open again with three-pointers. The Spartans hit four of their first five three-point attempts out of halftime to pull away.

Brown came in averaging 2 points a game and scored more than he had in his past 11 games combined. Brown had just five points in the Spartans' past 12 games but became a central figure against LSU.

The loss plunges LSU into uncertainty given the corruption scandal that left coach Will Wade suspended indefinitely for comments he reportedly made about his recruiting efforts on a phone call that was wiretapped as part of an FBI investigation.

## NCAA Tournament: Midwest Region roundup

# Auburn unleashes barrage of threes to bury Carolina

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The euphoria of reaching the Elite Eight for the first time in 33 years had already worn off and Auburn coach Bruce Pearl was left to arrange his bravest smile on his face.

His trigger-happy Tigers were moving on in the NCAA Tournament.

They were doing it without their most versatile player.

Behind yet another three-point barrage, No. 5 seed Auburn overcame a slow start to roar past top-seeded North Carolina 97-80 in the Midwest Region semifinals Friday night.

But the victory came only after sophomore forward

Chuma Okeke, who already had scored a game-high 20 points and pulled down 11 rebounds, sustained a gruesome injury to his left knee in the closing minutes of the game.

"It's a bittersweet accomplishment because of Chuma getting hurt," Pearl conceded. "In a game full of guys that have a chance to play at the next level, I thought he was the best player."

Yet he didn't do it alone. And that should give the Tigers (29-9), who matched the 1998-99 team for most wins in school history, some confidence as they aim for their first Final Four.

Malik Dunbar finished with 13 points, Bryce Brown

and Danjel Purifoy scored 12 apiece, and Jared Harper scored nine while dishing out 11 assists.

**Kentucky 62, Houston 58:** At Kansas City, Mo., Tyler Herro hit a three-pointer with 25.8 seconds left to give his team the lead after the Cougars had erased a double-digit deficit, and the second-seeded Wildcats escaped their Midwest Regional semifinal.

There was a notion this Kentucky team might max out after two rounds of the NCAA Tournament if its star forward PJ Washington didn't come back from a foot injury. Playing through pain, Washington scored 16 points and had a crucial blocked shot late in the game.

Herro's huge basket gave the Wildcats (30-6) a 60-58 lead and came after Houston's Corey Davis Jr. had his driving shot swatted away by Washington.

Herro, who made two free throws with 13 seconds left to wrap up his 19-point night, also played a superb game defensively. His assignment was to guard Davis, who averaged 23.5 points in the Cougars' first two tournament games. Davis missed five of his first six shots and was not much of a factor until he helped fuel Houston's comeback. He ended up with 14 points on 5-for-16 shooting.

Houston (33-4), in the Sweet 16 for the first time since 1984, used a 17-6 surge to finish a comeback from 13 points down early in the second half.

## Womens Tournament roundup

# Dangerfield, UConn knock off UCLA

Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — With UConn struggling on offense, Crystal Dangerfield took over.

The Huskies' junior guard scored 11 of her 15 points in the fourth quarter, including nine during a game-changing spurt to start the period and No. 2 UConn went on to beat sixth-seeded UCLA 69-61 on Friday night in the Albany Region semifinals. Napheesa Collier had 25 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Huskies.

"I don't think there's anything that came easy from the very opening tip. It was a struggle," UConn coach Geno Auriemma said.

Trailing 50-49 entering the fourth quarter, the Huskies scored the first six points of the run. Dangerfield had a nifty lefty-handed layup high off the glass during the spurt.

"They were really packing it in on D, they were leaving the lane really wide open," she said. "So it's just a matter of spacing the floor and taking what they leave open."

The Huskies will face No. 1 Louisville in the regional final Sunday. The Cardinals handed the Huskies one of their two losses this season. UConn will be trying to extend its record Final Four run to 12 consecutive years. During that stretch the team has won six national championships and had a record 111-game winning streak.

**No. 1 Louisville 61, No. 4 Oregon State 44:** Sam Fuehring and Asia Durr each had 17 points and the top-seeded Cardinals clamped down on defense again, beating the Beavers to reach the Elite Eight.

Louisville (32-3) will meet UConn (34-2) on Sunday for a berth in the Final Four. The Huskies defeated UCLA 69-61 in the first game. The Cardinals beat UConn 78-69 in late January.

Oregon State (26-8), 0-3 against Louisville, sputtered in the third quarter to fall behind by 16 and couldn't recover in the rematch of a regional final last year that Louisville won by 33.

Mikayla Pivec, who entered the game averaging 19.5 points in the tournament for Oregon State, finished with 17 points, the only player in double figures for the Beavers, who matched their season low in points.

## Portland Region

**No. 1 Mississippi State 76, No. 5 Arizona State 53:** Teaira McCowan had 22 points and 13 rebounds, and the top-seeded Bulldogs earned a spot in the Elite Eight for the third straight season with a victory over the Sun Devils.

Mississippi State (33-2) will face second-seeded Oregon.

Jazzmun Holmes had 13 points and seven assists, and Andra Espinoza-Hunter added 12 points for Mississippi State, which led by as many as 24 points.

Kianna Ibis had 16 points for the Sun Devils (22-11), who were vying for their first trip to the round of eight since 2009.

It was the 11th straight victory for the Bulldogs, who defeated Arkansas for the SEC Tournament title and won the regular-season conference title with a 15-1 record.

**No. 2 Oregon 63, No. 6 South Dakota State 53:** Ruthy Hebard had 24 points and 14 rebounds, and Sabrina Ionescu added 17 points and 11 assists to send the Ducks to their third straight Elite Eight with a victory over the Jackrabbits.

Ionescu added seven rebounds to fall just short of a triple-double for Oregon (32-4). On Sunday, the Ducks will face top seed Mississippi State (33-2), which beat Arizona State 76-53 in the earlier evening.

## MLB roundup

# Cards' Goldschmidt hits 3 HRs, walked intentionally in 9th

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Paul Goldschmidt hit three home runs and then was intentionally walked in the ninth inning with a chance to tie the major league record, and the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Milwaukee Brewers 9-5 on Friday.

Brewers manager Craig Counsell signaled for the free pass with one out and a runner on second. Cardinals fans behind the visiting dugout cheered as Goldschmidt approached the plate and booed loudly when Counsell made the move.

Just 18 players have hit four homers in a game, including J.D. Martinez and Scooter Gennett in 2017.

Goldschmidt had four hits and drove in five in his second game with St. Louis. The six-time All-Star was 0-for-3 with three strikeouts in his first game Thursday after an offseason trade from Arizona. Set to test free agency after this season, Goldschmidt instead signed a \$130 million deal to stay with St. Louis through 2024 last weekend.

**Diamondbacks 5, Dodgers 4 (13):** Pinch-hitter Carson Kelly delivered an RBI double in the 13th, and Arizona won the longest regular-season game in Dodger Stadium history.

Pinch-hitter Christian Walker hit a tying three-run homer in the seventh for the Diamondbacks, who persevered to win a 6-hour, 5-minute marathon that ended early Saturday morning in just the second game of the regular season.

**Rays 4, Astros 2:** Charlie Morton was solid in his debut for host Tampa Bay, pitching five innings and striking out eight against his former team.

The 35-year-old right-hander, two seasons removed from helping Houston win a World Series, allowed two runs and three hits

in his first start since signing a \$30 million, two-year contract as a free agent.

**Red Sox 7, Mariners 6:** At Seattle, pinch hitter Mitch Moreland connected for a three-run homer in the ninth inning and World Series champion Boston rallied for its first win of the season.

A day after losing its opener 12-4, Boston bounced back. The Mariners had started off 3-0.

**Padres 4, Giants 1:** Manny Machado got his first two hits with his new team and Ian Kinsler homered to lift host San Diego to 2-0 for the first time since 2011.

Machado went 0-for-3 with two strikeouts in his Padres debut on Thursday. He struck out in his first two at-bats Friday night before lining a single to left off Derek Holland (0-1) in the fifth.

**Angels 6, Athletics 2:** Matt Harvey pitched solidly in his first game with his new team, Andrelton Simmons hit a tie-breaking single in the eighth inning and visiting Los Angeles got its first victory under new manager Brad Ausmus.

Oakland's Khris Davis homered for the second straight day, but the A's normally reliable bullpen didn't hold the lead. Davis, who led the majors with 48 home runs in 2018, has three in four games.

**Blue Jays 6, Tigers 0:** Matt Shoemaker (1-0) pitched seven sharp innings to win his Toronto debut, giving Charlie Montoyo his first victory as a major league manager.

The Blue Jays gave Montoyo, an 18-year minor league manager, a beer shower to celebrate.

**Rockies 6, Marlins 1:** Charlie Blackmon had three hits and drove in two, German Marquez struck out seven in six innings and visiting Colorado pulled away late to beat Miami.

## NHL roundup

## Rinne's 42 saves help Preds top Pens

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Pekka Rinne stopped 42 shots to lead the Nashville Predators to a 3-1 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Friday night.

Rinne was 63 seconds from his fifth shutout of the season when Nick Bjugstad scored for Pittsburgh.

Viktor Arvidsson's 32nd goal of the season — a power-play goal — set a career high and also was the 100th of his NHL career. Craig Smith and P.K. Subban also scored for the Predators, who moved into a first-place tie in the Central Division. Nashville, which clinched its fifth straight playoff berth Monday, has won five of seven after losing four of its previous six.

Matt Murray made 23 saves for the Penguins, whose three-game winning streak ended.

**Red Wings 4, Devils 0:** Jonathan Bernier and Jimmy Howard combined for a shutout, Tyler Bertuzzi had a goal and two assists and host Detroit topped New Jersey for its

fourth straight win.

Bernier made 21 saves in the first two periods before leaving with an upper-body injury. Howard stopped seven shots in the third period to complete the Red Wings' sixth victory in their last seven games.

Dylan Larkin and Danny DeKeyser each had a goal and an assist, and Andreas Athanasiou also scored for Detroit.

**Avalanche 3, Coyotes 2 (SO):** Nathan MacKinnon's shootout goal lifted his team over visiting Arizona and Colorado tightened its grip on the second Western Conference wild-card berth.

MacKinnon and Derick Brassard also had power-play goals in regulation for the Avalanche, who extended their lead over the Coyotes to three points in the race for the wild-card berth. Both teams have four games remaining.

Oliver Ekman-Larsson had both goals for Arizona, including the tying goal with 51 seconds remaining in regulation.

Colorado also got 42 saves from Philipp Grubauer, who

also stopped all three shots by Arizona in the shootout.

**Rangers 4, Blues 2:** Jimmy Vesey scored the go-ahead goal early in the third period, helping host New York beat St. Louis.

Ryan Strome, Pavel Buchnevich and Chris Kreider also scored, and Alexandar Georgiev made 44 saves for the Rangers, who had lost two in a row.

Vladimir Tarasenko and David Perron scored for St. Louis, which clinched a playoff spot when Arizona lost at Colorado. Jordan Binnington stopped 20 shots in only his third regulation loss on the road this season.

**Flames 6, Ducks 1:** Sean Monahan scored twice to set a single-season career high with 33 goals and also added two assists, leading host Calgary past Anaheim.

Mark Giordano, James Neal, Derek Ryan and Garnet Hathaway also scored for Calgary, which extended its lead atop the Pacific Division and Western Conference to eight points

over San Jose. The Flames are looking for their first division title since the 2005-06 season and first conference title since 1989-90. The Sharks have five games remaining, including a home date with Calgary on Sunday.

Andy Welinski scored his first NHL goal for Anaheim.

**Wild 3, Golden Knights 2:** Devan Dubnyk stopped 35 shots and visiting Minnesota defeated Vegas.

The Wild, who are four points back of the second wild-card spot in the Western Conference, improved to 5-0-1 all-time against Vegas, including a perfect 3-0-0 at T-Mobile Arena.

Minnesota opened the game with a 3-0 lead on goals by Greg Pateryn, Eric Staal and Kevin Fiala.

Despite the loss, the Golden Knights clinched their second consecutive playoff berth when Arizona lost in a shootout in Denver. Paul Stastny scored both of Vegas' goals, and Malcolm Subban made 30 saves.

## NBA roundup

## Towns' free throw in OT lifts T-wolves past Warriors

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Karl-Anthony Towns made a free throw with 0.5 seconds remaining in overtime after Stephen Curry led a frantic rally to tie the game, lifting the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 131-130 victory over the Golden State Warriors on Friday night.

Minnesota led by nine with 1:41 remaining in the extra period before Curry made three three-pointers during an 11-2 run, including the tying one from the corner with 0.5 seconds left.

But Towns was fouled by Kevin Durant on the ensuing

inbounds pass. He made the first free throw to give him 15 points, missed the second and time expired as Towns secured the offensive rebound.

Curry made 11 three-pointers and scored 37 points for the Warriors, who dropped into a tie with Denver for the top seed in the Western Conference playoffs. Durant added 23 points.

**Celtics 114, Pacers 112:** Kyrie Irving hit a driving layup with 0.5 seconds left and host Boston beat Indiana to move into fourth place in the Eastern Conference standings.

Both teams have identical 45-31 records, but the Celtics lead

the regular-season series 2-1, giving them the current inside track on home-court advantage in a first-round series.

**Nuggets 115, Thunder 105:** Jamal Murray scored 27 points and visiting Denver beat Oklahoma City.

Nikola Jokic added 23 points and 16 rebounds for the Nuggets, who won all four meetings with Oklahoma City this season.

**Trail Blazers 118, Hawks 98:** Damian Lillard scored 36 points, Al-Farouq Aminu added 17 and 11 rebounds, and Portland extended its winning streak to a season-high six games with a victory over host

Atlanta.

**Lakers 129, Hornets 115:** LeBron James had 27 points and nine assists, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 25 points and host Los Angeles ended Charlotte's four-game winning streak.

Kemba Walker scored 24 points and had six assists for the Hornets, who trail Miami for the final playoff spot from the Eastern Conference by two games with seven games remaining.

**Jazz 128, Wizards 124:** Donovan Mitchell scored 35 points, Joe Ingles added 18 points and 10 assists, and Utah beat visiting Washington.