

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## N. Korea fires 2 short-range missiles

BY KIM GAMEL  
AND YOO KYONG CHANG  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired two short-range missiles into the sea off its eastern coast Monday, South Korea's military said, in a new challenge to Seoul and Washington amid the growing coronavirus crisis.

The ballistic missiles were fired from a mobile launcher in a 20-second interval from an area near the city of Wonsan, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. They flew about 150 miles and reached an altitude of 22 miles, the JCS said.

The launch, the first in more than three months, and an artillery drill conducted Friday appeared to be part of the North's annual winter exercises, a JCS official told reporters.

It also occurred as South Korea, the U.S. and other governments are focused on fighting the rapid spread of the deadly new virus.

North Korea also has implemented strict measures against the virus, including sealing its borders and quarantining foreign diplomats. Analysts said Pyongyang is likely seeking to project continued military strength.

The U.S. and South Korea have decided to postpone joint military exercises that had been due to begin this week because of the rapid spread of COVID-19.

"North Korea might have carried out the launches in order to show they're maintaining their military capabilities in spite of the coronavirus crisis," Lee Ho Ryung, a research fellow at the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses.

South Korea raised the total number of COVID-19 cases to 4,335 on Monday, the biggest outbreak outside China, where the virus first appeared in December before spreading to dozens of other countries, including the U.S.

Duyeon Kim, an adviser with the International Crisis Group, said that the North's message was likely two-pronged — to show order on the domestic front, and "foreshad-

owing more provocations" in preparation for an expected "long confrontation" with Washington.

"COVID-19 will likely put nuclear diplomacy and Korean Peninsular security issues on hold for a while until it's contained," she said. "But the concern is if Pyongyang tries to take advantage of a vulnerable time for everyone, and COVID-19 already seems to be fueling geopolitical rifts in this region."

U.S. Forces Korea, which commands some 28,500 American troops on the divided peninsula, has restricted access to bases and banned nonessential travel for service members after a soldier and his wife were infected.

USFK spokesman Col. Lee Peters said that the command was aware of the missile launch and would continue to monitor the situation while consulting with its South Korean and Japanese allies.

"Additionally, USFK remains ready to defend [South Korea] against adversary or threat ... including COVID-19," he said.

## Taliban attacks on Afghans could continue despite US deal

BY J.P. LAWRENCE  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban said they will resume attacks against Afghan government forces, just two days after signing a deal with the U.S. meant to end the war in Afghanistan.

The group also kidnapped dozens of civilians in a province southwest of Kabul during the weekend, Afghan government officials said Monday.

The hostilities resumed after the signing of a U.S.-Taliban deal Saturday that would start a phased 14-month withdrawal of U.S. and allied troops, in exchange for Taliban promises to prevent terrorists from operating in the country, to stop waging war on the U.S. and its partners, and to initiate peace talks with

the Kabul government.

The signing was conditioned on a seven-day partial ceasefire. A Taliban letter shared Monday with Stars and Stripes by a person with links to the militant group called on fighters to attack Afghan forces, but not U.S. or foreign forces.

"After signing the agreement, once again the Mujahedeen (fighters) of the Islamic Emirate are advised to start their attacks against the puppet Kabul administration," said the Taliban letter, which the person provided on condition of anonymity.

The Taliban did not return calls Monday seeking comment, but news service AFP reported a spokesman for the militants said the group would resume "operations."

Top officials at the Pentagon on Monday indicated they

were not surprised the Taliban would return to attacking Afghan forces, but they called on the group to gradually reduce violence across Afghanistan as measures in the new agreement are implemented.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, signaled cautious optimism about the agreement, while stressing an end to the nearly two-decade war remained in the future.

"This is going to be a long, winding, bumpy road," Esper told reporters. "There will be ups and downs. We'll stop and start. That's going to be the nature of this over the next days, weeks and months."

Afghan officials in Maidan Wardak province, which neighbors Kabul province, said 55

civilians were kidnapped by the Taliban in connection to the deal's provision pledging a large-scale prisoner exchange ahead of intra-Afghan talks.

"The reports we got from the district suggest that the Taliban abducted these people to swap them in the coming days for their prisoners," said Muhibullah Sharifzai, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Milley said the United States was evaluating the reports of that incident, telling reporters that he was not certain who was responsible. He also described expectations that violence would suddenly end across Afghanistan after the agreement Saturday as unreasonable.

Stars and Stripes reporters Corey Dickstein, Phillip Walter Wellman and Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.

# Soldier accused in Italy beating jailed

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY  
*Stars and Stripes*

VICENZA, Italy — In a rare move, Italian authorities jailed a U.S. soldier before his trial on aggravated assault charges.

Carabinieri who work on Caserma Ederle arrested Pvt. John Badger at his barracks last week for what local authorities said were violent and unprovoked attacks on Italian civilians and U.S. soldiers. They included one in November that left a 21-year-old man with a shattered jaw and lost teeth.

Five other 173rd Airborne Brigade soldiers remain under investigation but are not in custody.

“The U.S. Army respects the host nation’s primary criminal jurisdiction in the case against Pvt. John Badger,” Maj. Chris Bradley, a 173rd Brigade spokesman, said in a statement Friday, adding that the military “will assist and cooperate with the Italian authorities.”

Alessandra Bocchi, a lawyer for the injured man, said that Badger’s arrest was ordered by the local prosecutor due to the violence of the attacks, and was intended to prevent the suspect from fleeing Italy.

“We think jail is the right place for him,” Bocchi said. “In light of the events, I consider it the only adequate measure. My client is facing delicate surgery on his face and teeth, and it is very likely that he’ll never be the same.”

Badger and the other troops may have been responding to a racial slur, U.S. military officials have said. But Bocchi said that her client did not say anything to the soldiers.

Another Italian man was also beaten in the Nov. 29 incident outside a bar in the city’s old town. Italian media reported that Badger and several other troops are also alleged to have attacked a group of young men on Nov. 28, and two fellow U.S. soldiers on Nov. 30.

# Navy officer dies while on port visit in Thailand

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A U.S. Navy officer of the 7th Fleet died suddenly last week while on liberty from the command ship USS Blue Ridge during its recent port visit to Laem Chabang, Thailand, officials said.

Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Platt, the security officer on the 7th Fleet staff, was playing golf at the Laem Chabang International Golf Course on Feb. 24 when he suddenly died, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley said Monday in an email to Stars and Stripes.

“CPR was performed, and emergency medical services transported him to the Vibharam Laem Chabang Hospital, but he could not be revived,” he said.

Officials are investigating the cause of death, Keiley added.

Platt, of Pritchette, Colo., arrived in Thailand on Feb. 23 aboard the Blue Ridge, which is homeported in Yokosuka. Since deploying in January, the ship

has also made port visits to Okinawa and Busan, South Korea, Keiley said.

Platt “represented the very best of 7th Fleet,” 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Bill Merz said in a statement to Stars and Stripes on Monday.

“As our security officer, Ryan was a true professional and exceedingly passionate regarding the safety of the Fleet,” Merz said in the statement. “He will be sorely missed.”

Security officers lead “force protection efforts, antiterrorism training and predeployment certification programs” on vessels, according to a Navy job description.

“Our thoughts and prayers go out to Ryan’s family and friends,” Merz added.

The 7th Fleet oversees all Navy vessels from the International Date Line to the India-Pakistan border and from the Kuril Islands to the Antarctic. Its leadership is based aboard its flagship, the Blue Ridge.

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# Slain airman’s family wants life sentence for killer

BY SETH ROBSON  
AND HANA KUSUMOTO  
*Stars and Stripes*

TACHIKAWA, Japan — The family of a slain American airman wants harsh punishment for a Japanese woman who confessed to stabbing him to death at his home near Yokota Air Base.

Aria Saito, 28, of Tokyo, is charged with murder in the Nov. 9, 2018, death of Air Force Master Sgt. Nicholas Vollweiler, 35, who served as the security forces squadron’s chief of standards and evaluation at Yokota. She is also charged with violation of Japan’s Swords and Firearms Control Law.

On Monday, the fifth day

of Saito’s jury trial in western Tokyo, Vollweiler’s mother, Laura Vollweiler, supported by her husband, Bernard, of Saylorsburg, Pa., read a statement about the impact of their son’s death on their family.

“You have stolen my son’s life. You have stolen him from his family, his friends he grew up with and his military family,” she told Saito, who had bowed and apologized to the couple before they addressed the court.

Saito, who said she had been dating Vollweiler and helped him find his off-base home, admitted under questioning that she stabbed him with a kitchen knife she had brought.

She told the court she was upset after finding out that he was married and that she meant to kill Vollweiler the day he died. Others had testified that she was aware of his marital status all along.

Laura Vollweiler said that Saito beat her son, broke his possessions and released his old, retired military working dog in a park after removing its identification collar.

Her son’s tour in Japan would have been his last in the military since he was approaching retirement after 20 years of service, she said.

“He chose to come back to Japan because he loved the Japanese culture and the peaceful-

ness and kindness of the people here,” she said. “Who would have thought that my beautiful son would have been murdered in this peaceful country?”

The couple wants the court to impose a life sentence or at least 60-70 years since Nicholas might have lived that much longer, she said.

Prosecutors, however, asked the court for a 16-year sentence based on past cases with similar facts such as premeditation and breaking into the victim’s home.

Defense lawyers, saying that Saito suffers from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and acted on impulse, argued for a sentence of 10 years.

# Virus spreads in West; eases in China

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The coronavirus appeared for the first time in New York, Moscow and Berlin and clusters of the disease surged around the world, even as new cases in China dropped to their lowest level in six weeks Monday and hundreds of patients were released from hospitals at the epicenter of the outbreak.

Almost nine times more cases were reported outside China than inside the country in the past 24 hours, according to the head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Amid the good-news, bad-news developments, the global death toll from COVID-19 pushed past 3,000, and the number of people infected topped

89,000, with fast-expanding outbreaks in South Korea, Italy and Iran.

Around the world, the virus reshaped people's routines, both at home and at work, from the millions of Japanese schoolchildren facing four weeks without class to special voting booths for Israelis under quarantine. Mobile hospitals were planned in Iran, and the "Mona Lisa" hung in a vacant room of the shuttered Louvre in Paris.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development warned that the world economy could contract this quarter for the first time since the international financial crisis more than a decade ago.

"Global economic prospects remain subdued and very uncertain," the agency said.

Wall Street nevertheless opened higher after the worst week for stocks since the 2008 crisis.

In the United States, infections ticked upward to over 90 and the country recorded its second death, both of them in Washington state. Health officials said the latest victim was a man in his 70s from a nursing facility near Seattle, in a region where researchers believe the virus may have been circulating for weeks undetected.

Malaysia and Portugal were among the newest places to detect the virus. More than 60 countries — including nine of the 10 most populous — have reported infections.

Even as alarms grew louder in much of the world, Monday brought positive signs from

China, where the outbreak started two months ago. China reported 202 new cases of the virus, its lowest daily count since Jan. 21, and the city at the heart of the crisis, Wuhan, said 2,570 patients were released.

But in other places, problems continued to multiply.

"Just about everywhere, the cases are rising quite quickly in a number of countries," said Ian Mackey, who studies viruses at the University of Queensland in Australia.

South Korea, with the worst outbreak outside of China, said it recorded 599 new cases Monday, bringing the total to 4,335. The death toll rose to 26.

South Korea extended the shutdown of its schools two more weeks to March 23.

## Closures at bases in Italy continue as cases double

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY  
AND KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — U.S. bases in northern Italy entered a second week of school, day care and gym closures as the country's cases of the new coronavirus doubled over the weekend.

The number of confirmed cases jumped in Italy to 1,694, the country's Civil Protection Agency reported Sunday. The death toll also rose to 34, up from 29 the previous day.

Around 90% of all infections are in the northern regions of Lombardy, Emilia Romagna and Veneto. U.S. Army Garrison Italy and more than 7,000 U.S. troops are based in the Veneto region.

So far, neither soldiers nor civilians associated with the garrison — or with any Europe-based U.S. military unit — have been diagnosed with the virus, officials said. Vicenza officials said that they plan

to isolate any sick troops on base, if necessary.

The State Department has designated Veneto among its do-not-travel areas due to the highly contagious virus, for which there is no treatment other than supportive care.

President Donald Trump tweeted Sunday that those arriving to the U.S. from Veneto, among other places, would be screened at U.S. airports.

Base and U.S. European Command officials said Monday they were closely monitoring conditions but that so far there had been no changes for troops leaving Italy to change assignments. They also said that operations in Europe have not been affected.

Aviano Air Base, about 90 miles northeast of Vicenza in the Friuli Venezia-Giulia region, also closed its schools and day care centers through at least the end of the week, said 1st Lt. Danielle Lucero, a spokeswoman for the 31st Fighter Wing.

## Japan bases see run on sanitizer and toilet paper

BY JAMES BOLINGER

Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — Shelves at commissaries on military bases across Japan ran short of toilet paper over the weekend as service members prepared for possible quarantines due to COVID-19.

Shoppers in Japan faced long lines over online rumors that Chinese-made toilet paper wouldn't be exported. The Japan Times reported Saturday, in spite of industry and official assurances that enough toilet paper for everyone is made in Japan.

Lauren Ignaffo, spouse of Petty Officer 2nd Class Austin Ignaffo from Fighter Attack Squadron 102, said that by Saturday the shelves at the MCAS Iwakuni commissary had been stripped of toilet paper and, oddly enough, pasta and spaghetti sauce.

Yokosuka Naval Base, home of the Navy's 7th Fleet, reported on a base-affiliated Face-

book page that its commissary shelves were being restocked Monday after the weekend run on toilet paper.

The post asked consumers to limit themselves to one item per family per day of several items including toilet paper, cleaning products, disinfecting wipes and rice in order to prevent hoarding.

A shipment of toilet paper arrived Monday at MCAS Iwakuni, said 2nd Lt. Phillip Parker, a base spokesman.

Hand sanitizer has also been in short supply both in Japanese stores and at base exchanges and commissaries.

Sanitizer was scarce on exchange shelves at bases in South Korea, where the Army garrison at Daegu is under a self-imposed quarantine. Sanitizer was restocked at Osan Air Base and Camp Humphreys, home of U.S. Forces Korea headquarters, over the weekend.

Stars and Stripes reporters Matthew Keeler, Christian Lopez and Caitlin Doornbos contributed to this report.

## Judge cites hire, annuls CIS asylum directive on 5

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — A federal judge has ruled that Ken Cuccinelli was unlawfully appointed to lead the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services agency and, as a result, lacked authority to give asylum seekers less time to prepare for initial screening interviews.

Cuccinelli, a former Virginia attorney general, was named to a new position of “principal deputy director” in June, which immediately made him acting director because Lee Francis Cissna had just resigned. The agency grants green cards and

other visas and also oversees asylum officers.

U.S. District Judge Randolph Moss in Washington found Cuccinelli’s appointment violated the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, a 1998 law governing who is eligible to lead federal agencies in an acting capacity.

Cuccinelli, in an interview with Fox News Channel on Monday, said that President Donald Trump’s administration would appeal the ruling and that his agency would take steps to try to prevent the invalidation of other decisions made under his tenure.

## Hostage situation at mall in Philippines ends peacefully

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — A recently dismissed security guard freed dozens of hostages and was subdued by police after walking out of a shopping mall in the Philippine capital on Monday, ending a daylong hostage crisis in an upscale commercial district near the police and military headquarters, officials said.

The former guard at the Greenhills shopping center, identified by police as Archie Paray, left the mall in San Juan City in metropolitan Manila

with the remaining hostages, who were then secured by police. Several others had managed to escape earlier, police said.

Instead of being immediately arrested, the suspect was allowed to speak for several minutes to journalists and authorities to describe his grievances against his former bosses before police approached and subdued him.

The gunman shot and wounded a security officer before he took the hostages, Zamora said. The mall officer was in stable condition at a nearby hospital.

## Iraq’s PM-designate withdraws

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq’s prime minister-designate announced his withdrawal from the post Sunday night after failing to secure parliamentary support for his Cabinet selection, prolonging the political deadlock in the country amid multiple economic, health and security challenges.

Prime Minister-designate Mohammed Allawi blamed political parties he did not name, saying they “were not serious

about implementing reforms that they promised to the people” and accusing them of placing obstacles in the way of a new and independent government.

“If I agreed to offer concessions, I would be prime minister now, but I tried everything possible to save the country from sliding toward the unknown and resolve the current crisis. But the negotiations hit repeated snags,” he said in a short address to the nation, explaining his decision to withdraw.

# Klobuchar ends bid, to back Biden

Associated Press

Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar ended her Democratic presidential campaign on Monday and plans to endorse rival Joe Biden in an effort to unify moderate voters behind the former vice president’s White House bid.

She is flying to Dallas and plans to join Biden at his rally Monday night, according to her campaign.

Klobuchar was the second presidential candidate to exit the race in less than 24 hours, following Pete Buttigieg’s departure late Sunday. Their decisions reflect an urgent push among moderates to consolidate behind Biden as a counter to progressive rival Bernie Sanders.

Klobuchar outlasted several better-known and better-funded Democrats, thanks to a better-than-expected third-place

finish in New Hampshire. But she couldn’t turn that into success elsewhere, as she struggled to build out a campaign that could compete across the country and had poor showings in the next contests.

She was hoping to own the moderate lane of a Democratic field that grew to some two dozen candidates. But that got much tougher when Biden joined the race in April, starting as a front-runner and remaining there. Klobuchar also was quickly overshadowed by Buttigieg, a fellow Midwesterner who shot from being the largely unknown mayor of South Bend, Ind., to a top contender on a mix of intelligence, strong oratory and youthful optimism. Buttigieg dropped out on Sunday, saying he no longer had a viable path to the nomination. He has not endorsed anyone.

## Historic Buttigieg campaign ended amid chants of ‘2024’

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—He opened February by sharing victory with one of the Democratic Party’s best-known figures and ended it with a humbling defeat at the hands of another. Yet Pete Buttigieg’s unlikely path over the last 30 days exceeded virtually everyone’s expectations of his presidential ambitions, except, perhaps, his own.

The former mayor of Indiana’s fourth largest city, an openly gay 38-year-old whose name most voters still can’t pronounce, formally suspended his White House bid Sunday night. He did so acknowledging that he no longer had a viable path to the Democratic Party’s presidential nomination, even after finishing in the top four in each of the first four contests of the 2020 primary season.

“By every historical mea-

sure, we were never supposed to get anywhere at all,” Buttigieg reminded his hometown crowd, which was disappointed and hopeful at the same time. The crowd interrupted his speech with chants of “2024.”

Buttigieg began the month effectively in a first-place tie with progressive powerhouse Bernie Sanders in Iowa’s presidential caucuses.

Buttigieg and his competitors pivoted quickly to New Hampshire, where he nearly tripled Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s vote total and finished just one percentage point behind Sanders, the winner.

“You know, he very nearly pulled it off,” said David Axelrod, who served as the senior adviser to former President Barack Obama and was at times an unofficial Buttigieg booster.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Spring break town says no booze on beach

**FL PANAMA CITY** — Spring breakers be forewarned: you still can't drink booze in March on the beach in a Florida town seeking to curb rowdy parties.

The Panama City News Herald reported that the month-long ban is paired with a 2 a.m. deadline to buy alcohol anywhere within city limits.

Panama City Police Chief Drew Whitman said the zero tolerance policy originally enacted in 2015 has helped the city transition from a national spring break hot-spot to a more family-friendly destination all year long.

Whitman said enforcing the ban includes extra officers on the beach, some on all-terrain vehicles. Violators can be fined or even jailed.

## Man accused of leaving son in car at casino

**RI LINCOLN** — A Rhode Island father who wanted to gamble was charged with leaving his 3-year-old autistic son alone outside in a car while he placed bets in a casino.

The Rhode Island State Police said Mitchell Cuevas, 38, of Providence, was arrested and charged with cruelty to or neglect of a child, and obstructing an officer in the execution of duty.

Patrons of the Twin River Casino alerted the State Police Gaming Enforcement Unit they saw the child abandoned in a vehicle parked in the casino hotel lot.

Police said the child had been left unattended in the locked vehicle with no heat, in 35-degree weather, for approximately a half hour.

## Woman saved, man dies in attempt to save truck

**KS HOLTON** — An attempt to pull a truck found dangling over a culvert from the brink ended with the vehicle flipping over and landing upside down in a full ditch, killing a man inside, officials in northeastern Kansas said.

The incident happened on state Highway 116 about four miles east of Holton, station KSNT reported. Jackson County Sheriff Tim Morse said a passerby who came upon the stranded truck tried to get it back on the road when it flipped over into the ditch.

A woman in the truck was pulled to safety, but Morse said the man in the truck could not be saved.

## Man accused of hiring children to sell candy

**KY BOWLING GREEN** — Kentucky is seeking \$45,000 in fines from an Indiana man who is accused of using children to sell candy in Bowling Green.

Shawn Floyd, 55, also faces 12 felony charges of human trafficking, The Lexington Herald-Leader reported.

According to the state attorney general's office, Floyd brought 12 children to Kentucky with him in July 2019 to sell candy by knocking on doors.

Investigators said Floyd made the juveniles share a motel room with three adults and pay for their own meals and water.

Floyd, who lives in Indianapolis, was initially charged with misdemeanor counts of endangering minors in the summer of 2019, but a grand jury returned more serious charges.

## Police: Teen led police on 90 mph pursuit

**ME AUBURN** — A 15-year-old boy led police on a high-speed chase in a stolen vehicle before crashing into a convenience store, police said.

The pursuit reached speeds up to 90 mph and police abandoned the pursuit in downtown Auburn before the car crashed, police said.

The driver was evaluated at Maine Medical Center and transported to Long Creek Youth Development Center for an unrelated warrant. The passenger was not charged and was returned to his parents.

The chase began when a Cumberland County deputy headed to an unrelated emergency in Gray noticed a car that was being operated erratically and learned that it was stolen.

## Mom with 4-year-old in car charged with DUI

**NH MANCHESTER** — New Hampshire police charged a mother with driving under the influence and child endangerment after she was found passed out at the wheel.

Manchester Police responded to a report of an unconscious woman at the steering wheel while her 4-year-old son cried in the backseat, New England Cable News reported.

Police said when they arrived Kristie Moulton was awake but spoke slowly, slurred her words, and had bloodshot eyes.

## Trove of Spanish coins dating to 1715 found

**FL INDIAN RIVER SHORES** — A trove of Spanish coins dating back to a 1715 shipwreck during a storm were found along a beach in

Florida.

TC Palm newspapers reported that treasure hunter Jonah Martinez, 43, located the coins using a metal detector. He was able to dig out 22 silver coins he estimates are worth about \$7,000.

Twelve Spanish galleons laden with treasures from the New World were bound for Spain on July 31, 1715, but 11 were lost during a hurricane off the coast of Florida.

## Roadside attraction Oliver the camel dies

**VT FERRISBURGH** — Oliver the camel, a quirky roadside attraction and social media darling, died at age 17 in Vermont.

"Ollie" delighted travelers along Route 7 in Ferrisburgh for nearly two decades. Many stopped for photos and selfies with the friendly creature, which sported two humps.

Oliver Camel's Facebook page announced that he died on Feb. 21. It did not cite the cause of his death. The Facebook post noted that "Ollie" was loved and spoiled, and looking forward to an afterlife.

## Drunken driver hits 2 state trooper cars

**MA CHICOPEE** — Two Massachusetts State Troopers escaped serious injury after a suspected drunken driver lost control of his vehicle and slammed into both of the troopers' police vehicles as they were standing outside.

A state police dog inside one of the cruisers was taken to a veterinary hospital for an examination but did not suffer any serious injuries.

The driver was identified as Ryan Churilo, 29, of East Windsor, Conn.

From wire reports

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## Top 25 roundup

# St. John's gets hot from deep, knocks off No. 10 Creighton

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Greg Williams Jr. made seven three-pointers and scored a career-high 21 points as St. John's routed No. 10 Creighton 91-71 on Sunday.

Rasheem Dunn had 19 points, a career-high 10 assists and six rebounds for the Red Storm (15-14, 4-12 Big East), who stopped a three-game skid. LJ Figueroa added 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Julian Champagnie scored 13.

One of the worst three-point shooting teams in the country, St. John's went a season-best 14-for-22 from long range in its biggest victory under first-year coach Mike Anderson. It was the school's first win over a top-10 team at Carne-secca Arena on campus since beating Bernard King and No. 7 Tennessee in December 1975.

"St. John's was terrific," Creighton coach Greg McDermott said. "When you get outscored by 30 on the three-point line in somebody else's building, it's hard to win."

Over the years, St. John's has played many of its big-time games at Madison Square Garden.

Damien Jefferson equaled a career best with 20 points and Ty-Shon Alexander scored 19 for the Bluejays (22-7, 11-5), who had won five straight and nine of 10. Creighton could have captured its first Big East title by winning its final three regular-season games, but now needs help after falling two games behind first-place Seton Hall with two to play.

**No. 11 Louisville 68, Virginia Tech 52:** Jordan Nwora had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and the host Cardinals beat the Hokies to move into first place in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

Louisville (24-6, 15-4 ACC) rebounded from last week's loss at No. 6 Florida State and took a half-game lead over the Seminoles, who swept the season series and hold the tiebreaker with two games to play. Louisville has one game remaining, at third-place Virginia on Saturday.

Jalen Cone scored 15 points off the bench and Nahiem Alleyne had 12 for Virginia Tech (15-14, 6-12), which lost its fourth in a row and ninth in 10 games.

**No. 23 Ohio State 77, No. 19 Michigan 63:** Duane Washington Jr. tied a career high with 20 points and the Buckeyes surged late to beat the visiting Wolverines.

CJ Walker had 15 points, and brothers Andre and Kaleb Wesson each added 14 for Ohio State (20-9, 10-8 Big Ten). The Buckeyes have won three straight and eight of their last 10.

Ohio State swept the season series against rival Michigan.

Franz Wagner had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Wolverines (19-10, 10-8). They lost their second straight after winning five in a row.

**Stanford 72, No. 21 Colorado 64:** Bryce Wills scored 19 points, including a key layup in the final minute, and the host Cardinal beat the Buffaloes.

Oscar da Silva added 16 points, and Deajon Davis and Tyrell Terry each had 12 for the Cardinal (20-9, 10-7 Pac-12), who won their fourth straight.

Tyler Bey scored 17 points to lead the Buffaloes (21-9, 10-7), who lost a third consecutive game for the first time this season. McKinley Wright had 13 points and 11 rebounds.

**No. 25 Houston 68, Cincinnati 55:** Marcus Sasser scored 21 points, Nate Hinton had 16 and Houston beat Cincinnati.

Sasser, who scored 12 points in the second half, shot 8-for-16, including 5-for-12 on threes. Caleb Mills added 15 points for Houston (22-7, 12-4 American Athletic Conference), which shot 36%.

The Cougars moved back into a tie atop the American with Tulsa, one game ahead of Cincinnati (18-10, 11-5).

Tre Scott had 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Bearcats.

## With virus on mind, Im wins Honda Classic

Associated Press

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — Moments after getting his first career PGA Tour win, Sungjae Im took a moment to reflect on what it means.

Not for himself — for his homeland, and for those dealing with a virus that has the world on edge.

The 21-year-old South Korean started fast and finished stronger Sunday, winning the Honda Classic by one shot over Mackenzie Hughes and two over Tommy Fleetwood for his first victory in 50 tries on tour. But before he could be whisked back to the course to collect the trophy, Im made sure to speak out about the coronavirus and tell those in South Korea — where nearly 4,000 cases have been confirmed — that he was thinking of them.

"Over in Korea right now, I know a lot of people are dealing with the coronavirus," Im said. "And it's kind of a huge deal with everybody. But I'm just glad as a Korean player that I can deliver some good news to the countrymen back home."

Im shot a 4-under 66 on Sunday, finishing at 6 under to match the second-highest winning score since the Honda moved to PGA National in 2007. He was the tour's rookie of the year last season, plus has played more tournaments and more rounds than anyone since the 2018-19 season began nearly a year and a half ago.

And now, he's a winner, picking up \$1.26 million this week and becoming the Honda's 10th international champion in the last 16 seasons.

Im birdied four of his first five holes, then birdied two of the last four to finish off the win.

Hughes, a Canadian who made the cut on the number Friday, shot his second consecutive 66. Playing alongside Im, he was part of some serious fireworks on the last two holes and missed a birdie putt at the par-5 finishing hole that would have gotten him into a tie for the top spot.

"I love being in the mix," Hughes said.

## Bowman earns second Cup win

Associated Press

FONTANA, Calif. — Before Alex Bowman started looking for tattoo shops somewhere between Los Angeles and Phoenix, he celebrated a win that suggested even more permanent success ahead for the hard-working driver and his

resurgent team.

Bowman raced to his second career NASCAR Cup Series victory Sunday, holding off Kyle and Kurt Busch at Fontana.

The win was the culmination of a tremendously encouraging weekend for Bowman, who has run 156 Cup races without extraordinary success. He is

in the final year of his contract with Hendrick Motorsports.

Defending Fontana champion Kyle Busch was 8.9 seconds behind in second place in his Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota. His older brother Kurt was third, and Bowman teammate Chase Elliott came in fourth.

## NBA roundup

## LeBron too much for Pelicans, Zion

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — LeBron James keeps finding ways to assert his supremacy over the upstart New Orleans Pelicans and rookie sensation Zion Williamson — with or without the help of fellow Lakers All-Star Anthony Davis.

James had 34 points, 13 assists and 12 rebounds, and Los Angeles overcame both Davis' absence and Williamson's highest-scoring game to beat New Orleans 122-114 on Sunday night.

"Obviously, spectacular performance by LeBron James," Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. "His shot-making was ridiculous from both in the post, with turnaround jump shots, and at the three-point line.

"When they brought double-teams, he is one of the best passers in the league," Vogel added. "He showed it tonight and picked their defense apart."

Williamson finished with 35 points, but his largely productive and highlight-filled night was marred somewhat by six turnovers.

Kyle Kuzma scored 20, including a corner three-pointer set up by James that put Los Angeles up 113-109 with 3:40 to go. The Lakers gradually pulled away after that, aided by James' three with 2:27 left.

"He is who he is — incredible player," Williamson said of James. "I give respect when it's due. He hit a big shot and it helped them seal the game."

**Mavericks 111, Timberwolves 91:** Kristaps Porzingis tied a season high with 38 points, Seth Curry scored 27 and Dallas rolled to a victory at Minnesota.

Porzingis added 13 rebounds and five

assists, while also connecting on a career high-tying six three-pointers. He's the only player in NBA history with at least 35 points, 10 rebounds, five blocks and five made threes in a game, according to Basketball Reference. It's the second time he's accomplished the feat.

"The 38 points tells about a quarter of the story of what he did in this game," Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle said. "Defensively, he was phenomenal. Changing shots, blocking shots, rebounding the ball, deflecting, saving balls. It was a defensive clinic."

D'Angelo Russell had 16 points, nine rebounds and seven assists, but Minnesota lost for the 20th time in 22 games.

**Bucks 93, Hornets 85:** Giannis Antetokounmpo had 41 points, 20 rebounds and six assists and Milwaukee won at Charlotte for its sixth straight victory.

Brook Lopez added 16 points and seven rebounds for the NBA-leading Bucks. They've won 20 of their last 22 games and to improve to 52-8.

Antetokounmpo scored in almost every way imaginable — on pick-and-rolls, fast-break dunks, fadeaway jumpers and from the foul line.

Devonte Graham had 17 points for Charlotte.

**Clippers 136, 76ers 130:** Kawhi Leonard scored 30 points, Paul George added 24 and host Los Angeles beat Philadelphia to extended its winning streak to four.

Reserves Montrezl Harrell and Lou Williams also had 24 points. The Clippers — who shot 59.2% from the field — trailed by two at halftime but took control in the third quarter, outscoring the Sixers 38-24.

Shake Milton led Philadelphia with 39 points, hitting seven three-pointers. The first-year guard had 26 points in the first half, which tied a team season high. Former Clippers forward Tobias Harris had 25 points and Alec Burks 15.

**Nuggets 133, Raptors 118:** Nikola Jokic had 23 points, 18 rebounds and 11 assists for his 12th triple-double of the season to lead host Denver past short-handed Toronto.

Jokic has 43 triple-doubles in his short career, completing his latest by feeding Jerami Grant on a dunk that helped the Nuggets hand the defending champion Raptors their third straight loss.

Grant finished with 16 points, Toronto played without Serge Ibaka and Fred VanVleet for a second straight game, but got a career night from OG Anunoby. He had 32 points on 12-for-16 shooting.

**Wizards 124, Warriors 110:** Bradley Beal had 34 points, eight assists and a season-best five steals and Washington won at Golden State for the first time in six years.

Beal has scored at least 25 points in a franchise-record 18 straight games.

Andrew Wiggins scored 27 points for the Warriors, who have lost nine straight at home.

**Kings 106, Pistons 100:** De'Aaron Fox scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and host Sacramento overcame a 17-point deficit to beat Detroit.

Buddy Hield added 19 points, Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 15 and Harrison Barnes had 10 points and eight rebounds for the Kings. Sacramento has won four of five since the All-Star break.

## Season in doubt, Japan baseball taps virus experts

Associated Press

TOKYO — The opening of the Japanese baseball season is in doubt because of the outbreak of the new virus, officials said Monday, as the nation's baseball and soccer leagues tapped three medical experts as advisers.

Baseball commissioner Atsushi Saito said protecting fans, players and coaches was critical. Preseason games are being played in empty stadiums, with a hope the regular season can

begin as scheduled on March 20.

But Saito acknowledged assessing whether the regular season can open — with or without fans — is a delicate decision, noting the virus outbreak wasn't expected to subside soon.

"That is the difficult part," Saito said. "At this point, we still can't say what action we will take under what conditions."

The J-League soccer competition joined Nippon Profession-

al Baseball in forming the panel to assess the virus outbreak. The panel, to be up and running by Tuesday, will include representatives from each of the 12 professional baseball clubs, as well as J-League representatives. It will come up with recommendations by the middle of this month, officials said.

The J-League had begun, but has suspended play. It hopes to resume on March 18. J-League chairman Mitsuru Murai said matches attract crowds and un-

expected problems.

"We must realize we have a responsibility for people's health," Murai said.

Reporters at the news briefing were required to wear masks, although Saito and Murai did not wear masks. They also shook hands afterward.

The Japanese government has indicated it sees the next couple of weeks as crucial to containing the spread of COVID-19, which began in China late last year.

# Ovechkin, Capitals stop road slump

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Alex Ovechkin scored twice as part of a three-point night and the Washington Capitals ended a season-high four-game road slide by holding off the Minnesota Wild 4-3 on Sunday night.

Richard Panik and Tom Wilson also scored, Evgeny Kuznetsov had two assists, and Braden Holtby stopped 37 shots for his fourth straight victory. Washington moved into a tie with Colorado for the league lead with 22 road wins.

"Lots of good things happened tonight, and we'll take the two points on the road," Capitals coach Todd Reirden said. "We're definitely a work in progress."

Washington has won six straight games at Xcel Energy Center since March 19, 2013.

"I don't know, I think guys get emotional here because

lots of guys from here," Ovechkin said. "You can feel it in the locker room. Everybody gets excited and you take the energy from your teammates."

Ryan Donato, Kevin Fiala and Zach Parise scored for the Wild. Alex Stalock made 26 saves, but Minnesota lost for the first time in four games and remains one point behind Nashville, Winnipeg and Arizona for the second wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

"It was really quiet after the game, really disappointed, obviously, that we didn't get the outcome," Minnesota interim coach Dean Evason said. "I think we believe, and we know we're a good hockey club, and if we bring it every night, then, yeah, we can play with anybody."

It certainly would help to have one of the best players ever.

Ovechkin, who has seven

games of at least three points this season, scored twice in a first-period surge that saw the Capitals turn a 1-0 deficit into a 3-1 lead in 3 minutes, 38 seconds.

With a two-man advantage, Ovechkin ripped home a slap shot from the top of the left circle, the first power-play goal allowed by the Wild in 10 games, a span of 21 straight kills.

"They capitalized on their chances," said Stalock, whose high-sticking penalty gave Washington a 5-on-3 for 78 seconds. "They got a guy that has over 700 goals and when he gets the puck, he gets chances. He's going to make good shots."

Panik beat Stalock with a wrist shot 3 minutes later, and Ovechkin hammered home a feed from Kuznetsov 31 seconds after that, leading to a chant of "Ovi, Ovi" from the contingent of lower-deck fans at that end of the arena wearing red.

Ovechkin now has 356 career regular-season road goals, surpassing Jaromir Jagr for third-most in league history. Only Wayne Gretzky (402) and Steve Yzerman (362) had more. Ovechkin also passed Phil Esposito for fifth all-time with his 144th career multi-goal game.

Fiala got the Wild within 3-2 before the period ended. He is on an Ovechkin-like run with goals in four straight games and 11 in 14.

Wilson made it 4-2 for Washington 40 seconds into the third period on a feed from Ovechkin after Kuznetsov thwarted an attempted clear by Ryan Suter. Wilson has four goals in six games.

"It's a great play from O," Wilson said. "I think it shows what type of teammate he is. He's got the puck right in the slot, chance for a hat trick and he dishes it off."

## NHL roundup

# Flyers' win streak hits 6 with defeat of Rangers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Carter Hart made 23 saves and the surging Philadelphia Flyers extended their winning streak to a season-high six games with a 5-3 victory over the New York Rangers on Sunday.

Matt Niskanen, Sean Couturier and Travis Konecny each scored power-play goals. Michael Raffl scored short-handed and Derek Grant also tallied for the Flyers, who swept a home-and-home series against the Rangers after winning 5-2 on Friday night.

"We knew they were going to come out hard and try and respond here to the game on Friday," Hart said. "We just had to stick to our plan, stick to the way we play and just compete."

Philadelphia's run combined with the Penguins' six-game slide has moved the Flyers into second place in the Metropolitan Division.

Henrik Lundqvist made his first start since Feb. 3 and made 21 saves for New York.

Mika Zibanejad scored two power-play goals and Pavel Buchnevich also tallied

on the man advantage for the Rangers. Zibanejad has a career-high 32 goals on the season.

**Kings 4, Golden Knights 1:** Anze Kopitar scored twice, rookie Calvin Petersen made 42 saves and Los Angeles improved to 6-2-1 in its last nine games with a win at Vegas.

The Kings, in last place in the Pacific Division, snapped the Golden Knights' franchise record-tying win streak at eight-games. Vegas hadn't lost since a 4-0 defeat in Minnesota on Feb. 11.

Petersen, who improved to 2-0-0 against the Golden Knights, was brilliant in stifling a normally potent offense that clearly was missing Mark Stone, who is week-to-week with a lower-body injury. Of his 42 stops, 19 came in the third period.

Trevor Lewis and Alex Iafallo also scored for Los Angeles.

**Devils 3, Ducks 0:** Pavel Zacha scored two power-play goals and Cory Schneider made 34 saves for his first shutout in more than a year to lift New Jersey to the win at Anaheim.

Nico Hischier had a goal, Nikita Gusev had an assist to extend his point streak to

six games, and the Devils extended their streak of games earning a point to six. New Jersey is 4-0-2 in that span.

**Blue Jackets 5, Canucks 3:** Zach Werenski and Emil Bemstrom scored on power plays during host Columbus' four-goal, third-period rally and the slumping Blue Jackets stunned Vancouver.

Riley Nash and Gustav Nyquist also scored in the third period for Columbus, which ended a two-game skid and moved three points ahead of Carolina for the second Eastern Conference wild card. It was the Blue Jackets' first regulation win since Feb. 7 and their second victory in 11 games.

Bo Horvat, Elias Pettersson and J.T. Miller scored for the Canucks, and Louis Domingue stopped 30 shots in his first appearance since being acquired from New Jersey at the trade deadline.

**Flames 3, Panthers 0:** Cam Talbot made 38 saves, and Johnny Gaudreau had a goal and an assist to lead Calgary to a win at Florida.

TJ Brodie and Milan Lucic also scored for the Flames, and Mark Giordano had three assists.