

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## N. Korea fires more projectiles into sea

BY KIM GAMEL AND YOO KYONG CHANG

*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired three projectiles that flew about 125 miles before splashing into the sea off its eastern coast on Monday, South Korea's military said, the second such weapons test in a week.

The launches were a fiery reminder that the North still poses a threat as nuclear talks with the U.S. have been deadlocked for more than a year.

They occurred as both Koreas and the U.S. military are battling the deadly coronavirus, which has rapidly spread after first appearing in China in late December.

The projectiles reached a maximum altitude of about 31 miles after they were fired from an area near Sondok, according to the

Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul.

Military officials said the launches appeared to be testing various multiple rocket launchers as part of the North's annual winter exercises.

"The military is monitoring the situation and maintaining a readiness posture in case of additional launches," the JCS said.

It didn't immediately provide more details, such as the type of weapons launched or how far they flew.

"We are aware of a North Korean missile launch this morning into the East Sea, will continue to monitor the situation and are consulting closely with our South Korean and Japanese allies," U.S. Forces Korea said Monday.

The launch occurred a week after military officials said that the North fired two short-range ballistic missiles as part of its

annual winter training. The communist state also conducted an artillery drill Feb. 28.

Experts said that the weapons tests were likely aimed at showing strength after the U.S. and South Korea canceled plans for joint military exercises this month due to fears of the coronavirus.

"I think he's putting a good face on things," Thomas Spoehr, a defense analyst with the Heritage Foundation, said of North Korea leader Kim Jong Un's renewed military activity. "He's obviously trying to keep attention on the status of the unresolved agreement with the United States."

North Korea conducted 13 missile tests last year after a February 2019 summit between Kim and President Donald Trump collapsed without an agreement in Vietnam.

## Blasts target Ghani ceremony; Afghan rival 'sworn in'

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN

*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Rocket blasts briefly interrupted the swearing-in ceremony Monday of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, which took place while his chief rival in last year's election for the country's highest office held his own inauguration nearby.

At least five rockets were shot in the direction of the presidential palace shortly after Ghani took the oath of office before a crowd of hundreds, including U.S. diplomat Zalmay Khalilzad, who led peace talks with the Taliban, and the top American commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Scott Miller.

The blasts, which were heard several miles away, sent some people at the ceremony running for cover, but Ghani appeared unintimidated and, minutes later, picked up his acceptance speech where he'd left off — talking about pine nuts and the economy.

"We have seen big attacks," Ghani said. "A couple of explosions shouldn't scare us."

Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the rocket attacks.

Kabul police reported there were no serious injuries from the attacks.

### Official: US starting troop withdrawal in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON — American troops have begun leaving Afghanistan for the initial troop withdrawal required in the U.S.-Taliban peace agreement, a U.S. official said Monday, amid political chaos in Kabul that threatens the deal.

Hundreds of troops are heading out of the country as previously planned, but they will not be replaced as the U.S. moves ahead with plans to cut the number of forces in the country from about 13,000 to 8,600, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the movement ahead of a public announcement.

Under the agreement, the withdrawal had to begin within 10 days after the deal was signed on Feb. 29.

From The Associated Press

As he was sworn in, Ghani's chief rival in last year's election, former Chief Executive of Afghanistan Abdullah Abdullah, held his own inauguration.

Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission last month declared Ghani the winner of September's presidential poll, but Abdullah said that the election had been marred by irregularities and rejected the result.

The feud between the two men over who won the election could delay the next step in the peace process — the start of talks between the government and the Taliban to chart the way forward for Afghanistan after more than 18 years of war. The Feb. 29 peace deal signed by the Americans and the Taliban stipulates that those talks should begin Tuesday.

Addressing the crowd gathered on the grounds of the presidential palace for his inauguration, Ghani said that negotiations to firm up details of the intra-Afghan talks would be concluded by Tuesday. He did not indicate when the talks would begin or where they would take place. An announcement on a prisoner release, which was also a key part of the U.S.-Taliban deal, will be made later this week, he said.

This is the third presidential result Abdullah has contested. After the election in 2014, then-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry helped broker a deal, which created the position of chief executive for Abdullah and named Ghani president.

## VIRUS OUTBREAK

# Some Beijing workers back; stocks plunge

Associated Press

SOAVE, Italy — Fear over the coronavirus epidemic Monday sent global stock markets and oil prices plunging, touched off prison riots in Italy and caused a cascading shutdown of sites and events ranging from Saudi schools to Poland's annual Holocaust remembrance march.

While many of Beijing's white-collar workers returned to their jobs as new infections subsided in China, about 16 million people under a widespread lockdown in northern Italy struggled to navigate the new rules of their mass isolation.

"Now that the virus has a foothold in so many countries, the threat of a pandemic has become very real," said World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "The great advantage we have is the decisions we all make as governments, businesses, communities, families and individuals can influence the trajectory of this epidemic."

More than 111,000 people have tested positive for the disease and over 3,800 people with the virus have died, most of them

in China. More than 62,000 people have already recovered, but Italy's struggle to halt the virus' spread was emerging as a cautionary tale.

Inmates at more than two dozen Italian prisons rioted against restrictions on family visits and other containment measures, and six died after they broke into the infirmary and overdosed on anti-psychotic medicine.

Travelers at Milan's main train station had to sign police forms self-certifying that they are traveling for "proven work needs," situations of necessity, health reasons or to return home. They also needed to provide identity documents, contact numbers and an exact reason for travel from the financial hub.

Both Milan and the popular tourist city of Venice were among the places under the quarantine lockdown. Across Italy, museums and archaeological sites were closed, weddings were canceled and restaurants were told to keep patrons more than 3 feet apart. The country has counted 7,375 cases of COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, and 366 deaths, more than

any other country outside of Asia.

Pope Francis celebrated Mass alone at the Vatican hotel where he lives, livestreaming the event, but he did resume some meetings.

Trying to send a message of confidence in the economy, French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife walked on Paris' Champs-Elysees avenue, but kept a one-meter security distance from passersby.

"I'm shaking hands using my heart," he said as he waved to people from a distance.

He called for a proportionate government response.

"We cannot shut down the country, but we need to protect the most fragile people," he said.

China's slow re-emergence from weeks of extreme travel restrictions offered a grim sense of the longer-term effects the virus can have on a country's economy.

"Our business is one-fifth of what it was before," said Cheng Sheng, who helps run a stand in Beijing that sells sausages and noodles. "There's much less foot traffic. There are no people."

## In Naples, US Navy shuts schools, halts gatherings

BY KENT HARRIS  
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — The Navy is shutting schools, child development centers and base gyms at Naval Support Activity Naples, and canceling "base group activities" starting Tuesday, joining Army and Air Force efforts to fight the spread of the coronavirus in Italy.

In an announcement posted Sunday on the NSA Naples Facebook page, Navy officials said the measures are "being implemented as a precaution to allow us time to conduct a thorough risk assessment and make well-informed decisions about the best way ahead to protect our community."

A sailor based at Capodichino, near Naples International Airport, was the first U.S. service member in Europe to test positive for the virus, officials announced Saturday. The sailor, who has no dependents, is staying at home, NSA Naples said.

No personnel at U.S. Army Garrison Italy, based in Vicenza, or at Aviano have tested positive for the virus.

Staff writer Nancy Montgomery in Vicenza contributed to this report.

## S. Korean worker at US base has virus

BY KIM GAMEL  
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — A South Korean construction worker who tested positive for the new coronavirus lied about his health to gain access to the U.S. military base where he worked in Daegu, the garrison commander said Monday.

The man, who was a contracted construction worker on Camp Walker, was the eighth confirmed case linked to U.S. Forces Korea, the command said in a press release. He "is currently in isolation at his off-base residence" as directed by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it said.

An investigation showed that the man became sick a week ago but continued coming on base, evading strict health checks including a questionnaire and temperature checks at access gates, the garrison commander said.

"He was not answering the questions truthfully, and he had even been tested for COVID and still came on post that day," Col. Edward Ballanco said in a Facebook live update. "It's reprehensible and he will never be coming on post again."

## On Iwo Jima, WWII ceremony canceled

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE  
AND AYA ICHIHASHI  
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A ceremony that was to reunite American and Japanese veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima on the 75th anniversary of the bloody World War II campaign has been canceled due to concerns over the new coronavirus.

Survivors have made the sojourn to the infamous tear-shaped volcanic island since 1985 for the Reunion of Honor ceremony. The event — held at an obelisk overlooking the invasion beach of what is now referred to as Iwo To — also draws a host of military and government VIPs as well as members of the III Marine Expeditionary Force on Okinawa.

"Out of an abundance of caution due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the 75th Reunion of Honor event on Iwo Jima which was scheduled to occur 28 March has been cancelled," III Marine Expeditionary Force spokeswoman Lt. Col. Kelly Frushour wrote Saturday to Stars and Stripes.

Seventy-thousand Marines took part in the 36-day battle.



# Leaks case deadlocked on serious charges

*The Washington Post*

NEW YORK — A jury in New York failed to reach a verdict Monday on whether a former CIA employee gave a huge cache of hacking tools to WikiLeaks, in what officials had called the biggest leak of classified information in the history of the intelligence agency.

Jurors, who had begun their deliberations last week, told Judge Paul Crotty that they were “extremely deadlocked” on many of the charges.

Joshua Schulte, 31, was accused of disclosing the hacking tools and information to a reporter at *The Washington Post* while he was in jail awaiting trial.

The jury did find Schulte guilty on two counts of making false statements to investigators and contempt of court. But the failure to reach a unanimous agreement on the most serious charges of disclosing classified information was a significant blow to the government’s case.

In a trial that lasted more than a month, prosecutors portrayed ex-CIA officer Schulte as a disgruntled employee bent on vengeance after his bosses failed to take his side in a dispute with a CIA co-worker.

The verdict came three years after WikiLeaks posted thousands of files revealing secret hacking tools that the CIA used to penetrate cellphones, televisions and other ordinary elec-

tronic devices.

The hacking library, which the organization dubbed Vault 7, alerted United States adversaries to how the CIA spied and could enable them to turn the hacking tools back on the U.S., prosecutors argued at trial.

“These leaks were devastating to national security,” assistant U.S. attorney Matthew Laroche told jurors during his closing argument on Monday. “The CIA’s cyber tools were gone in an instant. Intelligence gathering operations around the world stopped immediately.”

But Schulte’s defense attorneys argued that the government never knew with certainty that Schulte was the individual who gave the hacking tools to

WikiLeaks. They pointed out that other CIA employees had access to the network from which the hacking tools were allegedly stolen. Schulte’s team also claimed that the CIA’s computer security was weak.

“The bottom line is this ... because the system was insecure, because the system was poorly monitored, the government cannot know, and it certainly cannot prove to you which of the many people with access to this information committed this crime, when they committed it or how they did it,” Sabrina Shroff, Schulte’s lead defense attorney, said in her closing argument to jurors on Monday.

# Va. Dems put historic stamp on laws

*Associated Press*

RICHMOND, Va. — Democratic legislators in Virginia have dramatically reshaped the state in two months, sweeping aside many of the state’s old business-friendly and socially conservative laws and replacing them with a broad, progressive policy agenda.

Lawmakers wrapped up this year’s session Sunday — apart from passing the state budget — after advancing the South’s strictest gun laws, broadest LGBTQ protections and some of its loosest abortion restrictions. Democrats had not had full control of the legislature for more than two decades, and

their years of pent-up frustrations yielded one of the most consequential sessions in Virginia’s history.

“In November, voters called for swift, impactful action to make their communities safer and more prosperous. We have delivered,” House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn said.

But many Republicans said that Democrats had advanced a liberal agenda beyond what the average voter supports while trampling on Virginia’s pro-business reputation.

“I think it’s been a fairly devastating year for people that are in rural Virginia,” said Sen. Steve Newman, a Republican who has served in the legisla-

ture since the early 1990s. “It’s not just the high-profile items, but it’s just how deep the far left has reached into the code of Virginia.”

An astonishingly large list of topics were covered, with high-profile legislation advancing to Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam’s desk nearly every day. Marijuana was decriminalized, insulin prices capped and voter ID requirements repealed.

One immediate priority of Democrats, making Virginia the critical 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, was quickly dispatched in January to the delight of women’s rights

advocates, some of whom had worked on the issue for decades.

The Senate won out in several fights, insisting on more moderate versions of high-profile legislation. A plan to hike the minimum wage to \$15 an hour is more gradual and has broader exemptions than what the House wanted, and a public sector collective bargaining measure is far more limited than what the House initially passed.

The Senate also watered down almost all of Northam’s package of gun-control laws and outright rejected his proposed ban on the sale of assault weapons.

# Cleveland police: 1 killed, 17 injured in shooting at party

*Associated Press*

CLEVELAND — At least one person was killed and 17 people were injured when gunfire erupted late Saturday following a fight at a party in Cleveland attended by multiple motorcycle clubs, police said.

A 48-year-old man was found dead with multiple gunshot wounds when Cleveland police officers responded to an address in a neighborhood on the city’s east side. Police said that many other victims left the scene in private vehicles and began to arrive at various

hospitals.

Police said they learned there had been a party there attended by “multiple motorcycle clubs.” A fight broke out and some people were ejected from the party, but they returned firing shots at other people, some of whom fired back.

A total of 18 people, including male and female victims, were shot and treated at various hospitals, authorities said. Injuries range from minor to serious, though police didn’t immediately provide details about the victims or the extent of their injuries.

# Report: Software pushed jet down before crash

Associated Press

Software designed to stop an aerodynamic stall activated four times as Ethiopian Airlines pilots struggled to control their Boeing 737 Max 8 shortly before the jet slammed into the ground on March 10, 2019.

That's one of many findings in an interim report on the crash released Monday by Ethiopia's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau. The report came out just a day before the one-year anniversary of the crash, which killed all 157 people on board.

The report makes safety rec-

ommendations and gives clues to the cause, but an analysis won't be done until the final report, which is expected later this year.

The software called MCAS pushes the nose of the plane down. That touched off the pilots' desperate struggle to regain control of the plane.

The report also blames a faulty sensor reading that led to the cascading events that brought the plane down. And it said that pilots should have received simulator training on what to do if the flight-control system malfunctions.

One of Boeing's biggest selling points for the Max was that it was essentially the same as older 737s, and therefore no simulator training was needed to switch to the new aircraft.

Boeing said in a statement Monday that it is providing technical assistance to support the probe.

"We look forward to reviewing the full details and formal recommendations that will be included in the final report from the Ethiopian Accident Investigation Bureau," it said.

According to the report, the pilots de-activated MCAS and

tried to control a stabilizer on the tail manually to point the nose back up. But their air speed was 575 mph, which some experts believe put too much force on the stabilizer, making manual movement nearly impossible.

About five minutes and 43 seconds after takeoff, the pilots apparently reactivated MCAS, and the plane descended despite the pilots exerting force to bring the nose up.

"The descent rate increased from minus 100 feet per minute to more than 5,000 feet per minute," the report said.

## Trial opens for 4 suspects in downing of Flight MH17

Associated Press

SCHIPHOL, Netherlands — Three Russians and a Ukrainian went on trial Monday in the Netherlands, charged with multiple counts of murder for their alleged involvement in the 2014 downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, which killed all 298 people aboard.

As expected, the suspects did not appear in the courtroom.

It is a day that has been a long time coming for family and friends of those killed on July 17, 2014, when a Buk missile blew MH17 out of the sky above conflict-torn eastern Ukraine.

Five black-robed judges — three who will hear the case and two alternates — filed silently into a packed courtroom on the edge of Schiphol, the airport from which the doomed flight took off, heading for Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. A small number of family members of victims were in court while others watched the proceedings via a video link from a conference center in the central Netherlands.

Among those in court was Piet Ploeg, who lost his brother, Alex, his sister-in-law and his nephew. Ploeg sat in court, his

hands folded in front of him, listening attentively as the case started.

"Next of kin want justice, simple as that," he said. "We want justice for the fact that 298 people are murdered, and this court and the hearings (that) will start today will give us more clarity about what happened, why it happened and who was responsible for it."

Presiding Judge Hendrik Steenhuis said that the criminal file in the case contains some 36,000 pages and "an enormous amount of multimedia files."

Examining the evidence "will be a very painful and emotional period. There are many victims and, of course, because of that, there are many next of kin," Steenhuis said.

Jon and Meryn O'Brien flew all the way from Sydney to witness the start of the unprecedented Dutch trial, hoping for justice for their son, Jack.

"The trial is important because the truth still matters," Jon said on the eve of the trial. "You shouldn't be able to murder 298 people and for there to be no consequences, regardless of who you are. So it's important the truth about that is told."

## Sudan PM says he survived 'terror attack' on motorcade

Associated Press

CAIRO — Sudan's prime minister said Monday he survived a "terror attack" after an explosion and gunfire targeted his motorcade in the capital of Khartoum.

Abdalla Hamdok, a longtime economist, tweeted that he was "safe and in good shape" following the explosion. Sudanese state TV said that Hamdok had been heading to his office when the attack took place.

Hamdok also tweeted a photo of himself smiling and seated at a large desk, while a TV behind him showed news coverage reporting that he'd survived.

The attack highlighted the fragility of Sudan's transition to civilian rule, almost a year after pro-democracy protesters forced the military to remove autocratic President Omar al-Bashir from power and replace him with a joint military-civilian government, which has promised to hold elections in three years.

Sudan's generals, however, remain the de facto rulers of the country, and have shown little willingness to hand over power to civilians.

Hamdok, in his brief statement on Twitter, said, "Rest assured that what happened today will not stand in the way

of our transition, instead it is an additional push to the wheel of change in Sudan."

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

A statement from the prime minister's office said that the attackers used explosives and firearms, and that a security officer was lightly wounded. The statement was read by Faisal Saleh, Sudan's information minister and interim government spokesman.

The protest movement that led the uprising against al-Bashir called the blast a "terrorist attack." The statement by the Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change called on people to take to the streets to "show our unity and cohesion ... and protect the transitional authority."

After months of negotiations, the military and the pro-democracy movement reached a power-sharing deal in August, at which point Hamdok took office. The deal established a joint military-civilian, 11-member sovereign council to govern Sudan for the next three years.

The U.S. Embassy in Sudan tweeted, "We continue to support Sudan's civilian led transitional government and stand in solidarity with the Sudanese people."



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Students suspended after mock lynching

**GA** ATLANTA — Some students at an Atlanta private school have been suspended indefinitely after a video surfaced showing them conducting an apparent mock lynching of another student with toilet paper in a school bathroom, officials said.

Several boys at Cristo Rey Atlanta Jesuit High School were seen on video wrapping toilet paper around their heads and cutting holes for their eyes, news outlets reported. Some were also seen wrapping what appears to be a toilet paper noose around another boy's neck as he appears to pull up on a bathroom stall support beam as if being hanged.

Officials at the college preparatory school said the act was reprehensible and wouldn't be tolerated. They also said the students were suspended indefinitely while the school investigates.

## Stabbing of customer deemed self-defense

**MO** ST. LOUIS — Prosecutors said a St. Louis Pizza Hut worker acted in self-defense when he stabbed a customer who had threatened him with a knife during a confrontation about an order.

St. Louis Circuit Attorney's Office spokeswoman Allison Hawk told The Associated Press the customer showed up at the restaurant angry and ready to fight. Hawk said the man got the workers to go outside, where he drew a knife and told them he also had a gun.

Hawk said one of the workers then stabbed the customer several times with a kitchen knife. Police said that the man is expected to survive.

Police referred first-degree assault charges to the prose-

cutor's office for review. But Hawk said prosecutors determined that the stabbing was a case of self-defense and decided not to file charges.

## Wallets stolen from Make-A-Wish patrons

**FL** ORLANDO — A SeaWorld guest stole wallets from the stroller of two Make-A-Wish Foundation visitors and used their cards to buy Apple watches, the Orange County Sheriff's Office said.

Krystle Henry, 37, was arrested on several charges, including grand theft over \$750 and obtaining goods with stolen credit card.

Authorities said the two guests from Make-A-Wish Foundation were watching a show at SeaWorld and left their purses in a stroller outside the stadium.

The Orlando Sentinel reported both victims spotted charges of over \$400 on their debit cards at Walmart and 7-Eleven.

## Man charged for tracking ex-girlfriend with GPS

**WI** LA CROSSE — Prosecutors have accused a West Salem man of using a GPS device to track his ex-girlfriend.

The La Crosse Tribune reported that Matthew Robinson, 41, was charged with stalking, misuse of a GPS device, criminal damage to property and disorderly conduct.

According to court documents, the ex-girlfriend called police after Robinson started messaging her about her vehicle's location and showed up at her friend's house in Blair when he shouldn't have known where she was. The woman searched her vehicle and found a GPS unit in the spare tire compartment.

## Squeegee worker breaks window and hits woman

**MD** BALTIMORE — A woman in Baltimore was knocked to the ground by a squeegee worker on a scooter when she got out of her vehicle after he broke the rear window, according to a police report.

The woman told police the kid broke the window when she attempted to drive away after being approached by a group cleaning windshields. The police report shows she got out of her minivan to take photographs of the group, but the suspect got on a scooter, ran into her and knocked her to the ground.

Police used the city's surveillance cameras to confirm the suspect shattered the rear window using his squeegee and then hit the woman with the scooter. She was taken to a hospital with a scrape and large contusion on her left leg.

## Ferry company seeks to sink old vessel in lake

**VT** BURLINGTON — A ferry company that transports passengers and vehicles across Lake Champlain between Vermont and New York wants to see a century-old vessel turned into an underwater scuba diving destination just off the Burlington waterfront.

The Lake Champlain Transportation Co. is hoping to donate the now-retired ferry "Adirondack," constructed in 1913, to the state of Vermont so it could become the latest addition to an underwater historic preserve.

Ferry company Operations Manager Heather Stewart called sinking the vessel that has carried passengers across Lake Champlain since 1954 "bittersweet," but it's better than the most practical alternative, selling it for scrap.

"We are saying goodbye. All of us here, the thought of her getting scrapped is an unpleasant thought," she said. "But to preserve her and for her to be part of the marine preserve would be great."

## Woman sentenced for driving with man on hood

**ND** BISMARCK — A judge sentenced a Bismarck woman to probation after she drove her car for several blocks with a man clinging to the hood.

The Bismarck Tribune reported that Brittany Miller, 25, was arrested after the incident was reported to police. She told officers that the man jumped on her hood and wouldn't get off so she drove eight blocks in hopes of shaking him loose.

The man's father told police Miller drove the car into him and his son jumped onto the hood to avoid being hit. It's unclear if Miller knew the men or what led up to the incident.

## Paraglider lands in freezing rural pond

**WI** MADISON — Authorities in southern Wisconsin are trying to figure out why a paraglider landed in a freezing rural pond.

The Dane County Sheriff's Office said the pilot inadvertently landed in the Town of Oregon pond and sank into the icy water. He managed to free himself from the aircraft but couldn't reach shore.

A local resident called 911. Sheriff's deputies and Oregon police officers responded along with firefighters from Brooklyn, Oregon and Madison. The firefighters saved the pilot by wading out into the water in rescue suits. The pilot was treated on the shore for non-life threatening injuries.

From wire reports

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# Pac-12 could net seven berths

Associated Press

The Pac-12 Conference has the potential to get seven teams through to the NCAA Tournament. That would match the past two years combined and equal the conference record set in 2016.

To get there, a few teams may have some work to do at next week's Pac-12 Tournament in Las Vegas.

No. 13 Oregon (24-7, 13-5) earned its third regular-season title in five years and the No. 1 seed in the conference tournament with Saturday's 80-67 victory over Stanford.

NCAA vice president of men's basketball Dan Gavitt told CBS on Sunday that the NCAA Tournament will go on as planned despite the coronavirus and that the Ducks will be in the bracket no matter what happens in Las Vegas.

Colorado (21-10, 10-8) would appear to be a lock and so would Arizona (20-11, 10-8), thanks to steady seasons and marquee wins.

Southern California (22-9, 11-7) may have popped its NCAA Tournament bubble by beating rival UCLA 54-52 on Saturday.

The loss by the Bruins is likely keep them on the bubble, due to an ugly start to the season. UCLA (19-12, 12-6) did come alive at the right

time, winning seven of its last eight games to finish within a half-game of sharing the conference title with Oregon.

Arizona State (20-11, 11-7) was in position to win the regular-season title just two weeks ago, only to lose three straight games, including to last-place Washington. The Sun Devils gave themselves a little bubble cushion on Saturday, withstanding Washington State's late rally to win 83-74 after a nice bounce-back game by guard Remy Martin.

"I can't say 100%, but I imagine we are," Arizona State coach Bobby Hurley said. "We've had a great year, we have a great story, we have one of the most dynamic players in college basketball the rest of the country should get to see — and Remy wants that stage."

Stanford (20-11, 9-9) missed a massive opportunity to pad its resume with Saturday's loss to the Ducks. The Cardinal were the surprise of the conference early in the season but lost six of seven during one stretch of the Pac-12 season and dropped its final two regular-season games.

Winning a game or two at the Pac-12 Tournament may be needed for Stanford to get back to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2014.

## Top 25 roundup Winston, Spartans knock off Buckeyes

Associated Press

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Cassius Winston kissed Michigan State's logo in the middle of its basketball court, following the school's quarter-century long tradition toward the end of his last game at the Breslin Center.

The senior scored 27 points to help the 16th-ranked Spartans beat No. 19 Ohio State 80-69 on Sunday to win a share of a third straight Big Ten championship.

"It means the world to have my whole family come and see me in my last home game and to go out like that," he said. "It's an amazing feeling."

Michigan State (22-9, 14-6 Big Ten) shared the conference title with No. 9 Maryland and No. 24 Wisconsin. The Spartans will be the second-seeded team at the Big Ten Tournament behind the Badgers, with the Terrapins seeded third.

**No. 9 Maryland 83, No. 25 Michigan 70:** Anthony Cowan Jr. had 20 points and eight assists in his final home game, and the Terrapins beat the Wolverines to earn a share of the Big Ten regular-season title.

**No. 23 Illinois 78, No. 18 Iowa 76:** Ayo Dosunmu scored 17 points and the Illini held off the Hawkeyes to secure the No. 4 seed in the Big Ten Conference tournament.

Andres Feliz scored 14 points for Illinois (21-10, 12-8 Big Ten).

**No. 21 Houston 64, Memphis 57:** Fabian White Jr. had 18 points and 14 rebounds, Quentin Grimes added 17 points and Houston beat Memphis.

Grimes had 15 second-half points, which led a big run for the Cougars (23-8, 13-5 American Athletic Conference). Houston will finish in at least a tie for second in the AAC.

## Conference championships

# Winthrop back in NCAA Tournament

Associated Press

ROCK HILL, S.C. — It took a freshman to bring Winthrop back to where it almost always used to go — the NCAA Tournament.

DJ Burns scored 16 points, 12 of them in the second half, to lead the second-seeded Eagles to a 76-68 win over fifth-seeded Hampton on Sunday in the Big South Conference championship.

Winthrop is off to its 11th NCAA Tournament, but just the fourth for the Eagles (24-10) since 2007, when coach Gregg Marshall set the bar for small conference excellence, winning the Big South seven times in nine seasons before heading to Wichita State.

"You walk in that gym every day and you look up and those banners just stare at you," said Winthrop coach Pat Kelsey.

Kelsey blew a kiss to his family as the buzzer sounded and students, let in free at the uni-

versity president's declaration on Twitter, stormed the court. The No. 2 seed Eagles got to play at home after Hampton (15-19) beat top seed Radford in the semifinals.

Hunter Hale threw the ball almost into the rafters as the students swarmed. The senior transferred to Winthrop after two seasons at Division II Grand Valley State in Michigan. His 10 points included a soft jumper with the shot clock winding down that put the Eagles up seven with 1:08 to go.

### Missouri Valley

**Bradley 80, Valparaiso 66:** Braves guard Darrell Brown was not happy with his selection to the all-conference second team earlier in week.

He displayed his displeasure in a big way in St. Louis.

Brown scored 21 points and Elijah Childs added 17 to lead fourth-seeded Bradley to its 10th NCAA Tournament with a win over the seventh-seeded

Crusaders in the MVC championship game.

Bradley (23-11) claimed its fourth MVC title and became the ninth team in history to defend its tournament crown.

### Atlantic Sun

**Liberty 73, Lipscomb 57:** The Flames are headed to the NCAA Tournament for the second year in a row, but there is a big difference between them making it last year and doing it again — expectations.

"Any time you have a target on your back or you're the team that's expected to win, it's hard," coach Ritchie McKay said after host Liberty took command with a long first-half run in the ASUN championship Sunday. "Our group showed its emotional maturity."

Caleb Homesley and Elijah Cuffee each scored 16 points, helping the Flames earn their fifth NCAA Tournament bid.



## NHL roundup

## Rookie paces Canes in rout of Pens

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Morgan Geekie didn't have time to think.

On Saturday, he was in the minors. By Sunday afternoon, the newest Carolina Hurricanes forward found himself thrust in the middle of the play-off race. The 21-year-old rookie hardly looked overwhelmed by the moment. Neither did his team.

Geekie scored twice and dished out an assist in his NHL debut, a 6-2 victory over listless Pittsburgh that capped a frantic 24 hours for the 2017 third-round pick. He arrived in town late Saturday night after being called up from the American Hockey League.

By the middle of the first period, he'd already had his first NHL goal, then added an exclamation point in the third period to cap a dominant performance by the Hurricanes. Things happened so quickly that Geekie didn't have time to get nervous.

"It's kind of good that way, that you don't get to think about stuff," Geekie said. "You kind of go out there and play the game you're used to playing. I just tried to go out there and keep things simple, adjust to the speed of the game and play hard out here."

**Blue Jackets 2, Canucks 1:** Elvis Merzlikins made 26 saves in his return after missing four games with a concussion, and

Columbus won at Vancouver.

"It was hard to get back in the game," said the 25-year-old rookie, who boasts a .923 save percentage through 33 games this season. "I don't know if Vancouver is a really quick team or it was just the feeling that in five minutes I was like, 'Wow, it's really fast, the game is.'"

Emil Bemstrom and Eric Robinson scored to help the Blue Jackets move two points ahead of Carolina and the New York Islanders for the top Eastern Conference wild card.

Elias Pettersson got the goal for the Canucks, who are tied with the Predators and Jets for the second wild card in the West.

**Red Wings 5, Lightning 4:** Robby Fabbri scored the winning goal in a shootout as host Detroit snapped a 16-game losing streak against Tampa Bay in the regular season.

Fabbri opened the scoring in similar fashion, beating goalie Curtis McElhinney on a breakaway in the first period as well. Anthony Mantha had a goal and three assists for the Red Wings, who won despite blowing a 4-2 lead in the third period. Dylan Larkin and Tyler Bertuzzi also scored for Detroit.

Brayden Point scored two goals, and Carter Verhaeghe and Pat Maroon had one apiece for the Lightning, who completed an unusual weekend in which they beat the team with the NHL's best record (Boston)

on Saturday night and then lost a day later to a Red Wings team with by far the league's worst mark.

Mikhail Sergachev scored for Tampa Bay in the shootout, but Larkin tied it. In the third round, Detroit goalie Jonathan Bernier denied Nikita Kucherov. Then Fabbri tucked the puck past McElhinney with a backhand.

**Blues 2, Blackhawks 0:** Jake Allen stopped 29 shots for his second shutout, and visiting St. Louis won for the ninth time in 10 games.

Robert Bortuzzo and Alex Pietrangelo scored for the Central Division-leading Blues, who killed four Chicago power plays as they rebounded from a 4-2 home loss to lowly New Jersey on Friday. Jaden Schwartz had two assists.

Allen was tested only in spurts in his 21st career shutout. St. Louis swept its season series from the Blackhawks, winning all four games and outscoring Chicago 16-8.

**Golden Knights 5, Flames 3:** Shea Theodore scored the tiebreaking goal with 1:10 remaining, and Vegas recovered after giving up a three-goal lead on the road.

Nick Holden had a goal and an assist for the Golden Knights, who regained top spot in the Pacific Division over idle Edmonton. Tomas Nosek, Max Pacioretty and Jonathan Marchessault also scored for Vegas.

Making his third start for the Golden Knights since being acquired from Chicago at the trade deadline, Robin Lehner made 19 saves to improve to 3-0-0 with his new team.

Milan Lucic had a goal and an assist for Calgary, which had won three straight. Dillon Dube and Matthew Tkachuk also scored for the Flames.

**Wild 5, Ducks 4:** Kevin Fiala scored his second goal of the game with 59 seconds left in overtime, and Minnesota won at Anaheim.

Alex Galchenyuk, Victor Rask and Mats Zuccarello also scored, and the Wild reclaimed the first wild card in the Western Conference. Minnesota has won eight of its past 11 games and seven of eight on the road.

Devan Dubnyk made 22 saves in his first start Feb. 23 after Alex Stalock started the previous seven games.

Jakob Silfverberg had two goals and an assist, but the Ducks fell short of matching a season-high three-game win streak.

**Avalanche 4, Sharks 3:** Nathan MacKinnon and Gabriel Landeskog each had a goal and two assists, and Colorado's top line rolled to a win at San Jose.

MacKinnon and Landeskog scored the first two goals for the Avalanche, and then set up Vladislav Namestnikov for the go-ahead score midway through the second period to give Colorado its 10th win in its past 11 road games.

## Virus postpones opening of Japanese baseball

Associated Press

TOKYO — Japanese officials postponed the start of the 12-team professional baseball league season Monday because of the spread of the coronavirus.

The season was to open on March 20. Japan's professional league had been playing its preseason games without fans because of the virus.

"I personally believe that we have no choice but to postpone at this stage," Japanese league commissioner Atsushi Saito said.

Baseball officials said that they were unsure of when the season might start, but mentioned some time in April.

Japan's baseball league last suspended play in 2011 after an earthquake, tsunami

and the subsequent meltdown of three nuclear reactors in Fukushima prefecture, located 150 miles northeast of Tokyo.

The head of the soccer J-League said that it was also extending its suspension of play until March 18.

"At this moment, I think it's very difficult to resume the matches," J-League chairman Mitsuru Murai said.

## NBA roundup

## LeBron, Lakers top streaking Clippers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — LeBron James closed out a weekend to remember. First, he outdueled Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Milwaukee Bucks in a matchup of NBA conference leaders. Then he kept the Los Angeles Lakers rolling with a victory over the streaking Clippers.

James had 28 points, seven rebounds and nine assists Sunday in 112-103 victory that ended the Clippers' six-game winning streak. He put up 37 points, eight rebounds and seven assists Friday against the Bucks.

"His best weekend in a Lakers uniform I'm assuming," first-year coach Frank Vogel said. "I wasn't here last year but, in my mind, this was the best two-game stretch. Really just dominated both games."

The Lakers won their fourth in a row and 11th in 12 games. Anthony Davis scored 30 points and Avery Bradley added 24.

"It's a really good weekend for us, playing against two of the best teams, the top two teams in the league with us as far as record-wise," James said. "I just think we kept our composure throughout the whole game."

The Lakers recently clinched a playoff berth for the first time since 2013, and it's possible they could meet the Clippers in the postseason. The crowd made it feel like a playoff atmosphere, with a strong contingent of raucous Lakers fans on hand for what was a Clippers home game. They chanted "MVP! MVP!" when James completed a three-point play that tied the

Lakers' largest lead of 12 points with 40 seconds to play.

**Thunder 105, Celtics 104:** Dennis Schroder stripped the ball from Kemba Walker and scored on a layup with 8.5 seconds to help Oklahoma city rally to win at Boston.

With leading Thunder scorer Gilgeous-Alexander sitting for the first time this season with a hip bruise that he suffered in a win at New York on Friday, Chris Paul had 28 points and seven assists to help OKC overcome an 18-point first-half deficit. Schroder added 27 points and six assists as the Thunder won their third straight.

The Celtics have lost four straight at home for the first time since 2015.

**Suns 140, Bucks 131:** Devin Booker scored 20 of his 36 points in Phoenix's 47-point first quarter and the host Sun beat NBA-leading Milwaukee.

The Bucks played without MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo because of a minor knee sprain. Injured Friday night in a loss at the Los Angeles Lakers, he'll also sit out Monday night at Denver.

Ricky Rubio had a triple-double for Phoenix with 25 points, 13 assists and 13 rebounds.

**Magic 126, Rockets 106:** D.J. Augustin scored 24 points, Aaron Gordon added 19 and Orlando handed host Houston its fourth straight loss.

Russell Westbrook led the Rockets with 24 points to give him at least 20 in a career-long 33 straight games, but he also topped the Rockets with eight turnovers.

**Raptors 118, Kings 113:** Pascal Siakam scored 11 of his 23 points in the final 2½ minutes, Toronto got a big fourth

quarter from Kyle Lowry and the Raptors held on to beat host Sacramento.

Lowry scored 13 of his 30 points in the final quarter after picking up his fifth foul early in the period. Siakam took over the scoring late to help Toronto win its third straight since a three-game skid.

**Pelicans 120, Timberwolves 107:** Jrue Holiday just missed his second triple-double against Minnesota in less than a week, putting up a season-high 37 points and adding nine rebounds and eight assists for visiting New Orleans.

**Pacers 112, Mavericks 109:** Domantas Sabonis had 20 points and 17 rebounds, and Victor Oladipo scored the final six points to help Indiana beat host Dallas.

Luka Doncic scored 36 points for the Mavericks. Tim Hardaway Jr. had 20 of his 30 points in the second half.

**Nets 110, Bulls 107:** Spencer Dinwiddie scored 24 points, Caris LeVert and Joe Harris each added 23 and Brooklyn beat visiting Chicago, a day after the Nets parted ways with coach Kenny Atkinson.

**Heat 100, Wizards 89:** Playing most of the second half without Jimmy Butler after he headed to the locker room, Miami beat Washington to snap a four-game road skid.

**Cavaliers 132, Spurs 129 (OT):** Andre Drummond returned from a leg injury to score 28 points and add 17 rebounds, and Kevin Love made a big three in overtime to lift host Cleveland past San Antonio.

**Knicks 96, Pistons 84:** Julius Randle had 22 points and 12 rebounds and New York pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat visiting Detroit.

## Logano holds off Harvick's charge to win at Phoenix

Associated Press

AVONDALE, Ariz. — Joey Logano raced to his second NASCAR Cup Series win in three weeks, holding off Kevin Harvick over the final two laps after an overtime restart Sunday at Phoenix Raceway.

Also the winner two weeks ago in Las Vegas for Team Penske, Logano has 25 career Cup victories. He overcame several tough moments during an entertaining race, including a pit-road penalty for an uncontrolled tire and a broken jack during another stop.

A late caution triggered the two-lap overtime shootout with Logano, Harvick and Kyle Busch all in a decent position to win.

Logano had a good restart at the mile oval and was able to hold off Harvick. Busch was third, Kyle Larson finished fourth and Clint Bowyer was fifth.

"That was a pretty intense last 30 minutes or hour of the race. A lot going on," Logano said. "Couldn't be more proud of this team. Two wins already in the books. We've got to keep this thing rocking."

Pole-sitter Chase Elliott and Harvick dominated the first half of the race but Elliott had to make a green-flag stop because of a loose front tire and fell a lap behind the leaders. He eventually earned a free pass to get back on the lead lap and finished seventh. The Phoenix race was the

first under NASCAR's new rules package for short tracks, which included a significantly smaller rear spoiler. The hope was the changes would make for more passing and excitement during the race.

For the most part, the tweaks seemed to have their desired effect. There were 20 lead changes and plenty of passing and contact back in the pack.

Elliott started on the pole while Harvick — who has won nine times in Phoenix — also was on the front row. Elliott led the first 61 laps of the race before Harvick beat him off pit road following the first caution. Harvick had his fourth top 10 finish in four races.