

## Austin tells West Point grads they're ready

*Associated Press*

WEST POINT, N.Y. — U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told U.S. Military Academy cadets Saturday they were graduating during “exceptionally tough circumstances” but that West Point prepared them to face the extraordinary threats from pandemics to terrorism.

Austin spoke to about 1,000 cadets becoming U.S. Army second lieutenants in a ceremony held with pandemic precautions at West Point’s football stadium. Austin, a 1975 graduate of West Point, recalled his own years at the academy as he told graduates their West Point training will keep them on course.

“You’re watching as America’s longest war winds down. And you’re seeing technology change the character of war itself. And even as big and rising powers jostle and compete, you’re seeing new threats from pandemics to terrorism to cyber weapons. And you’re seeing those threats race across bor-

ders like a gale,” said Austin, the nation’s first Black defense secretary.

“I might, I just might, have a bit of insight into what you’re facing: a democracy under strain, economic fallout, painful issues of racism and discrimination, social tensions and the end of a long and controversial war,” said Austin. “Well, that all sounds pretty familiar to those of us from the Class of 1975.”

West Point’s graduation ceremony returned to Michie Stadium a year after the pandemic prompted a change in venue. Last year, then-President Donald Trump spoke to graduates sitting spaced out on the academy’s nearby parade field.

Trump’s appearance was criticized as a political move that put the graduates at risk, though the Army said the cadets had to return to campus anyway for final medical checks, equipment and training.

All guests at the ceremony this year were required to provide either a negative COVID-19 test result or proof of vaccination.

Graduating cadets were spaced 3 feet apart on the field. Each graduate was provided with six tickets, instead of 10, which allowed spacing between different families in the stands of the stadium.

“Looking out at all of you, I see the vanguard of a generation. I see patriotic, committed young people coming of age at a hinge in history, who grew up never knowing anything other than a nation at war,” Austin said.

The modified ceremony capped an unusual year at West Point in which COVID-19 forced changes in how the military trained and educated more than 4,000 cadets. West Point also endured fallout from a cheating scandal in which dozens of freshmen were accused of cheating on an online calculus exam in May 2020.

“Probably the biggest challenge that I faced that is unique to this year was leading through COVID,” said Cadet Reilly McGinnis, first captain of Corps of Cadets, days before commencement.

## Vets urge Navy ship be named for Filipino hero

BY SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

American veterans in the Philippines are backing a campaign to name a U.S. warship after the only Filipino in the Navy to receive the Medal of Honor.

Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion posts in Angeles City approved resolutions last month calling on the Navy to name a new warship after Telesforo Trinidad.

Trinidad’s bravery aboard the USS San Diego during a disaster at sea earned him the nation’s highest military honor, according to the Naval History and Heritage Command.

On Jan. 21, 1915, while on patrol in the Gulf of California, the armored cruiser conducted a four-hour, full-speed and endurance trial. At the end of the trial, an obstructed tube of one of the ship’s boilers gave way, creating a chain reaction of explosions that killed nine men and injured several others, according to the National Medal of Honor Museum in Arlington, Va. Trinidad’s actions during the disaster

as a fireman second class were reported by the Navy’s magazine, *Our Navy*, in its May 1915 issue, republished by the museum.

“At the time of the explosion, Trinidad was driven out of fireroom No. 2 by the force of the blast, but at once returned and picked up R.E. Daly, Fireman Second Class, whom he saw to be injured and proceeded to bring him out,” the magazine reported. “While passing into Fireroom No. 4, Trinidad was just in time to catch the explosion in No. 3 Fireroom but without consideration for his own safety, although badly burned about the face, he passed Daly on and then assisted in rescuing another injured man from No. 3 Fireroom.”

For his valor that day, Trinidad received the Medal of Honor, a letter of commendation and a gratuity of \$100, the equivalent of about \$2,700 today, the magazine reported.

Ensign Robert Cary, who held doors open to allow sailors to escape a burning fireroom on the ship, was also awarded the Medal of Honor.

Three active Navy ships are named for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The Arleigh Burke-class destroyers USS Chung-Hoon and USS Daniel Inouye are named in honor of Rear Adm. Gordon Pai’ea Chung-Hoon, recipient of the Navy Cross and the Silver Star, and the late Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii, who received the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Bronze Star, and Purple Heart. The Bob Hope-class cargo ship USNS Pililaa is named after Private 1st Class Herbert Pililaa, a Medal of Honor recipient.

Tens of thousands of Filipinos have served in the U.S. military. After the Philippines obtained independence in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1992 under a provision of the Republic of the Philippines-United States Military Bases Agreement.

Thousands of Americans of Filipino descent enlisted during the same 40 years, and continue to do so, according to the campaign’s website.

# Remote work benefits military spouses

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

For nearly a decade, the unemployment rate for military spouses has sat stubbornly at 22% — nearly four times higher than the current national average. While the challenges that often block spouses from finding long-term, meaningful employment remain constant, military family advocates believe the coronavirus pandemic may have shifted employers' perceptions enough on remote work to open the door for real progress.

"Honestly, I think that's one of the beauties of the pandemic is that it shows just how creative we can get with remote employment," said Jennifer Davis, government relations deputy director for the National Military Family Association. "I think this is kind of the perfect time and opportunity to just drive that home."

While acknowledging that the pandemic has devastated overall employment levels, especially among women, who account for 88% of military spouses, the association and other military advocates want to capitalize on the shift that stay-at-home orders have had in accepting remote work as productive and beneficial for a company.

"The pandemic kind of removed the stigma of remote work, because now everybody's having to figure out a way to make it work," said Sue Hoppin, founder and president of National Military Spouse Network. "It does work. We can have a geographically dispersed workforce, and still provide a product or service and still work together cohesively."

A Defense Department survey released in December showed that, despite years of ongoing effort to get more spouses into jobs, the unemployment rate has held at 22%

since 2012. The survey, which the department conducts every other year, included responses obtained from more than 65,000 spouses in 2019 — before the pandemic hit.

Meanwhile, advocates are pitching Congress and the Defense Department to implement other measures to provide incentives for companies to hire spouses and improve state partnerships to allow spouses to move more easily with occupational licenses.

"I think we just need to flip the dynamic a little bit and maybe ask different questions," Hoppin said. "Not what will it take to hire military spouses, but what will it take to retain military spouses who move?"

Inside the Defense Department, Lee Kelley, director of military community support programs, said seeing the statistic remain unchanged in yet another spouse survey was "disheartening."

"It's an area that we are focused on every single day," she said. In fiscal year 2021, the Pentagon directed \$65.9 million toward spouse employment programs, which range from career counselors and workshops to developing partnerships with private companies to help develop state partnerships that ease state licensing requirements for certain careers. The Defense Department also offers qualified spouses \$4,000 in tuition assistance to pay for an associate degree, license, certificate program or approved testing that expands employment opportunities.

Given the lessons learned in the pandemic, Kelley said she's reviewing the department's existing programs to adapt to "the changing landscape of employment." She's actively working to expand an employer-partnership program with more than

500 companies to include more small businesses, which have typically been more hesitant to hire military spouses because of the risk of them moving.

"I think we are at a point where companies are recognizing that a military spouse moving actually doesn't matter at all. They can maintain the training that they've invested in that military spouse, the experience that they've had and continue to leverage their skills that as they seamlessly transition from one location to another," Kelley said.

To cater to expanding remote work opportunities for spouses, the USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore opened a shared workspace at Fort Belvoir, Va., in March specifically for military spouses who need somewhere to conduct business. It features semi-private space, a conference room, a second-floor patio and office equipment on an appointment basis, said Maura Keenan-Gondek, a program supervisor for the regional USO. They had 50 reservation requests within the first two months with spouses seeking a quiet place to work, study, write resumes or prepare for interviews.

"We know women in the workforce have been really affected by [the coronavirus pandemic] and that they've had to make that hard decision to leave employment because they're managing virtual education of their kids, and the emotional and social health of their children during this time. For some, it's just too much. You can't do everything," Keenan-Gondek said. "But having this space gave that spouse an opportunity to be able to tag team with their service member and say, 'OK, I need to go and get some stuff done and I'm going to go to this quiet workspace.'"

Remote work isn't possible for everyone, and so there is also a push to continue improvements for the 30% of military spouses who work in fields regulated by state occupational licenses, said Davis, of the National Military Family Association.

Licensure compacts, which are meant to remove barriers for spouses in jobs that require a state license, have come a long way, she said. Those fields include health care, teaching, law and real estate. The nursing compact agreement is the largest, with 33 states recognizing a nurse's credentials from other states in the compact.

"I think more and more [states] are coming around to understanding why this is beneficial for them," Davis said. "If you've got a military family that comes to your local installation and they have a job, that helps with your local economy. It's just a win-win."

For instances where no compact is available, the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act allowed each service branch to offer reimbursement up to \$1,000 each for spouses who have to renew their licenses in a new state after moving.

Congress and the White House are also renewing efforts, with two bills being refiled this month to include military spouses in the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the return of the Joining Forces program, under first lady Jill Biden's direction, that targets several areas of stress in military life.

Hoppin, of National Military Spouse Network, said she is encouraged by the program's return.

For more information about the Defense Department's spouse employment programs, go to [www.militaryonesource-mil](http://www.militaryonesource-mil).

# New US virus cases lowest in nearly a year

*Associated Press*

New coronavirus cases across the United States have tumbled to rates not seen in more than 11 months, sparking optimism that vaccination campaigns are stemming both severe COVID-19 cases and the spread of the virus.

As cases, hospitalizations and deaths steadily dropped last week, pre-pandemic life in America has largely resumed. Hugs and unmasked crowds returned to the White House, a Mardi Gras-style parade marched through Alabama's port city of Mobile and even states that have stuck to pandemic-related restrictions readied to drop them. Health experts also cautioned, however, that not enough Americans have been vaccinated to completely extinguish the virus,

leaving the potential for new variants that could extend the pandemic.

As the seven-day average for new cases dropped below 30,000 per day last week, Rochelle Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, pointed out cases have not been this low since June 18, 2020. The average number of deaths over the last seven days also dropped to 552 — a rate not seen since July last year. It's a dramatic drop since the pandemic hit a devastating crescendo in January.

"As each week passes and as we continue to see progress, these data give me hope," Walensky said Friday at a news conference.

Health experts credit an efficient rollout of vaccines for the turnaround. More than 60% of

people over 18 have received at least one shot, and almost half are fully vaccinated, according to the CDC. But demand for vaccines has dropped across much of the country. President Joe Biden's administration is trying to convince other Americans to sign up for shots, using an upbeat message that vaccines offer a return to normal life.

White House health officials on Friday even waded into offering dating advice. They are teaming up with dating apps to offer a new reason to "swipe right" by featuring vaccination badges on profiles and in-app bonuses for people who have gotten their shots.

In Mobile, thousands of joyful revelers, many without masks, competed for plastic beads and trinkets tossed from

floats Friday night as Alabama's port city threw a Mardi Gras-style parade. But only about a quarter of the county's population is fully vaccinated. Many went without masks, though health officials had urged personal responsibility.

Alabama's vaccination rate — 34% of people have received at least one dose — is one of the lowest in the U.S. It's part of a swath of Southern states where vaccine uptake has been slow. Health experts worry that areas with low vaccine rates could give rise to new virus variants that are more resistant to vaccines.

"My biggest concern is new strains of the virus and the need to remain vigilant in the months ahead," said Boston College public health expert Dr. Philip J. Landrigan.

## Las Vegas officials hold pop-up vaccination clinic at strip club

*Associated Press*

LAS VEGAS — Wearing a French maid-inspired lingerie costume and high heels, dancer JoJo Hamner waited patiently to get her COVID-19 vaccine in a line that snaked past a glittery hostess stand under a red-light chandelier.

When it was her turn, Hamner sat in a chair and held onto a small feather duster that completed her costume while a nurse administered the shot into her already-exposed arm.

Hamner then waited nearby for the required 15 minutes of observation, sitting with other vaccine recipients in leather chairs between plush purple booths, vacant stages and empty poles at this strip club in Las Vegas.

"This is just the most Vegas thing I've ever seen," she said of the experience.

Larry Flynt's Hustler Club, with a spinning disco ball casting rainbow colors on the walls but with more lights turned on than usual, was an unconventional site for a walk-in vaccination clinic. But as government officials and health workers try to address the slowing demand for COVID-19 vaccines, they're increasingly

turning to creative ways to incentivize people to show up and get a shot.

"This is just another way to access our population," said JoAnn Rupiper, the chief nurse of the Southern Nevada Health District, who monitored the walk-in clinic. "It might attract some people who like the novelty of it, I suppose."

The clinic opened for several hours Friday night, administering shots to about 100 people before the strip club opened for its usual business. Several workers at the club, including Hamner, a dancer at a topless revenue, got their shots at the clinic along with members of the public.

More than 46% of the state's population age 12 and over has received at least one shot of the vaccine, but Nevada health officials said that a steep drop-off in demand for shots may make it impossible for the state to reach a goal of vaccinating 75% of the eligible population.

Nevada officials have been increasingly turning to pop-up clinics in places like churches, schools and senior centers — and now strip clubs — to try to get more shots in arms.

## Virus testing value shrinks as vaccines beat back COVID-19

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Federal health officials' new, more relaxed recommendations on masks have all but eclipsed another major change in guidance from the government: Fully vaccinated Americans can largely skip getting tested for the coronavirus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that most people who have received the full course of shots and have no COVID-19 symptoms don't need to be screened for the virus, even if exposed to someone infected.

The change represents a new phase in the epidemic after nearly a year in which testing was the primary weapon against the virus. Vaccines are now central to the response and have driven down hospitalizations and deaths dramatically.

"At this point we really should be asking ourselves whether the benefits of testing outweigh the costs — which are lots of disruptions, lots of confusion and very little clinical or public health benefit," said Dr. David Paltiel of Yale's School of Public Health, who championed widespread testing at colleges last year.



# FBI agent indicted for theft of documents

*The Washington Post*

A former FBI agent with top-secret security clearance was indicted last week on charges that she illegally took numerous national security documents, including materials related to al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden, and kept them in her home over the course of more than a decade.

The grand jury indictment, filed in federal court in Missouri and unsealed Friday, charges Kendra Kingsbury with two counts of gathering, transmitting or losing defense information, a felony that carries a maximum sentence of 10 years.

Kingsbury, 48, from Dodge City, Kan., is accused of taking a range of materials between 2004 and 2017, many of which were marked secret because they discussed intelligence sources and methods, cyber-threats and other highly sensitive matters.

One batch of documents involved “internal correspondence” about a suspected bin Laden associate in Africa, according to the indictment.

The files were from 2005 and 2006, when bin Laden, who masterminded the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, was alive and on the run from U.S. forces.

Prosecutors didn’t indicate a motive for Kingsbury’s alleged offenses, but said they zeroed in on her as part of their work to root out “insider threats” within the bureau.

“The breadth and depth of classified national security information retained by the defendant for more than a decade is simply astonishing,” Alan E. Kohler Jr. assistant director of the FBI’s Counterintelligence Division, said in a statement.

Kingsbury is scheduled to be arraigned on June 1.

Criminal cases against intelligence officials accused of mishandling classified information

are fairly common, but unlike Kingsbury’s case, they often include allegations that the materials were leaked.

Kingsbury is not accused of leaking any of the documents she allegedly stored at home. But prosecutors say she was aware she wasn’t allowed to possess them.

Kingsbury worked as an FBI intelligence analyst for more than 13 years, from June 2004 until Dec. 15, 2017, during which time she received training on the different types of classified information and how to handle them, according to the indictment.

## Voter ID rules raise concerns of fraud and ballot rejection

*Associated Press*

ATLANTA — When voters in Florida and Georgia want to vote by mail in next year’s races for governor, they will have to make sure they take one more step to ensure they receive a ballot: providing their identification.

Just two states had ID requirements in 2020 for voters requesting a mailed ballot. This year, Republicans across the country have zeroed in on mail voting and enacted new limits on a process that exploded in popularity during the coronavirus pandemic.

Republicans, seizing on false claims by former President Donald Trump of widespread fraud in last year’s White House election, say identification is needed for mailed ballots to deter fraud and improve confidence in elections. There is no evidence of widespread fraud in the 2020 election. Courts rejected multiple claims by Trump and his allies, a coalition of federal, state and local election officials called it the most secure election in

U.S. history, and Trump’s own attorney general said he had seen nothing that would change the outcome.

Critics say adding ID requirements to request a mailed ballot is not only unnecessary, but creates one more opportunity for voters to make a mistake that could leave them unable to vote absentee.

When ID is also required to cast a mailed ballot, as is now the case in Georgia, critics say it will only result in more ballots being rejected. It is also expected to disproportionately affect poor, minority and college-age voters — groups more likely not to have an ID or to have one with a different address.

“Every additional requirement you add will lead to more ballot rejections, people who inadvertently fail to comply or don’t comply correctly with those requirements,” said Wendy Weiser, director of the democracy program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU’s School of Law, which supports expanded voter access.

## Shock of Capitol insurrection devolves into a political fight

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — In one of the most chilling scenes from the Jan. 6 insurrection, a violent mob surged through the halls of the U.S. Capitol chanting “hang Mike Pence.” But when the House moved last week to create an independent commission to investigate the tragedy, the former vice president’s brother voted no.

Pressed to explain his decision, Rep. Greg Pence of Indiana praised his brother as a “hero” and turned his ire on Democrats, calling the commission a “cover-up about the failed Biden administration.” He was even more aggressive in a baseless statement labeling House Speaker Nancy Pelosi a “hanging judge” who “is hellbent on pushing her version of partisan justice complete with a hand-picked jury that will carry out her predetermined political execution of Donald Trump.”

Pence’s swift pivot to attacking Democrats and defending the former president about a riot that threatened his brother’s life is a stark measure of how the horror of Jan. 6 has

been reduced from a violent assault on American democracy to a purely political fight.

Rather than uniting behind a bipartisan investigation like the ones that followed the 9/11 terror attacks, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy or Pearl Harbor, Republicans are calculating they can regain at least partial control of Congress if they put the issue behind them as quickly as possible without antagonizing Trump or his supporters.

The Republican resistance to an independent commission comes as many in the GOP attempt to rewrite the history of Jan. 6, minimizing the haunting events of the day when a mob of Trump supporters used flagpoles as weapons and brutally beat police officers.

The issue could come to a head this week if the legislation creating the commission, which passed the House, gets a vote in the Senate. Democrats will need at least 10 Republicans to join them in backing the measure, a dim prospect after Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell expressed opposition last week.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Cocaine with photo of Escobar washes up**

**AL** GULF SHORES — Packages of cocaine, including one decorated with a photograph of Colombian drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, are still washing up on Alabama beaches days after an initial haul of almost 70 poundsworth more than \$1 million was found on the sand, police said.

Beach combers began discovering cocaine wrapped in plastic in the surf in Gulf Shores, a popular tourist spot, and police told news outlets that additional bundles of the drug were still coming in sporadically.

One of the brick-like packages bore the image of what appeared to be a 1976 booking photo of Escobar, a notorious kingpin who was shot to death in Colombia in 1993.

**DMV receives reports of scamming text messages**

**NH** CONCORD — The New Hampshire Division of Motor Vehicles has received multiple reports of scammers contacting residents by text, claiming that the agency is awarding consumers with cash prizes for being safe drivers, officials said.

In another reported scam, a consumer received a text message from someone that falsely represented they worked for the DMV and needed the consumer to text them back in order to update the consumer's driving status.

The DMV does not send unsolicited texts to consumers, and it does not award cash prizes, the attorney general's office said in a statement.

**FBI look for person who flew drone near CBP helo**

**AZ** TUCSON — The FBI is seeking to identify whoever is responsible for illegally flying a drone near a U.S. Customs and Border Protection helicopter about three months ago.

On the night of Feb. 9, Border Protection employees told Tucson police that a drone was flying dangerously close to their helicopter.

The FBI said the drone appeared to launch from an area about 5 miles south of Tucson and flew across Tucson and north over Marana.

**Cash-counting motorist hits a mailbox, rolls truck**

**ME** SABATTUS — A pickup driver in Maine who was counting his cash hit a mailbox and rolled the truck, state police said.

Nicholas Landry told police he'd just cashed his paycheck and was counting the money when his pickup veered onto a shoulder, clipped a mailbox and rolled over in Sabattus, police said.

Landry, 32, of Greene, was wearing his seat belt and walked away from the crash with a "slight bump on his head," Sabattus Police Lt. Daniel Davies said in a statement.

**Officer dragged during traffic stop, 2 others hurt**

**MO** ST. LOUIS — Authorities are searching for a driver after a suburban St. Louis police officer was dragged during a traffic stop, and two other officers

were later injured in a crash as they tried to stop the suspect.

The incident began when a St. John officer stopped a vehicle and was dragged for an unspecified distance when the driver sped off, police said. Doorbell camera video of the incident shows the car driving by, then the officer falling from the vehicle and rolling on the pavement.

Hours later, two St. Louis County officers in separate squad cars were chasing the car suspected in the officer's dragging when the suspect stopped and ran from the car. When the officer in the first squad car stopped to chase the driver, the second squad car rear-ended the first, officials said. Both officers were treated for minor injuries.

The suspect got away, police said.

**Judge halts dredging plan over threat to sea turtles**

**GA** SAVANNAH — A federal judge ordered an immediate halt to plans to dredge a shipping channel on the Georgia coast, citing a threat to sea turtles nesting on nearby beaches.

The injunction by U.S. District Judge R. Stan Baker delivered an initial setback to the Army Corps of Engineers. The agency is trying to end a policy that for 30 years limited to the winter months the dredging of accumulated sand and mud in harbors from the Carolinas to Florida.

The seasonal limits were enacted to protect sea turtles from being killed and maimed by the vacuum-like suction pumps of hopper dredges.

The judge ordered the Brun-

swick dredging project be put on hold until December, unless the Corps can use a different type of dredge that poses far less risk to sea turtles.

**Insect becomes nuisance in riverside communities**

**AZ** BULLHEAD CITY — Officials in two cities along the Arizona-Nevada border said small, moth-like insects that thrive along the river are becoming a nuisance.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is planning a series of water reductions from a dam on the Colorado River to dry out caddisfly eggs and larvae to reduce the population.

Birds and bats also are likely to feed on the flies, the agency said.

Officials in Bullhead City and Laughlin, Nev., requested the action, saying the insects are hurting businesses and visitors who flock to the communities on opposite sides of the river.

**Mountain lion that roamed city captured**

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — A mountain lion that roamed the streets of San Francisco for two days has been captured and will be returned to the wild, authorities said.

The cougar, an approximately 2-year-old male, was found in a tree near Mission Street and tranquilized by San Francisco Animal Care and Control officers. The animal was taken to the Oakland Zoo for an examination.

The lion had a radio collar, indicating it was being tracked by wildlife experts.

— From wire reports



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## Nets rally past Celtics

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Maybe it was Boston's defense. It could have even been Brooklyn's own fans.

Whatever the reason, something had the Nets' Big Three out of rhythm to start the playoff opener.

Once the second half arrived, Kevin Durant, Kyrie Irving and James Harden went from way off to off and running.

Durant had 32 points and 12 rebounds, Irving scored 29 points and the Nets recovered from their superstars' frigid start to beat the Celtics 104-93 on Saturday night.

"I think once your energy's focused on the defensive side of the ball, it will start to turn for you," Durant said. "So you saw that for us in the second half."

Harden finished with 21 points, nine rebounds and eight assists in just the ninth appearance of the season for the trio. The three combined to go 0-for-11 from three-point range in the first half, then stormed out of the locker room with an 18-4 run to open the third and swing the lead the Nets' way for good.

The Nets announced a sellout crowd of 14,391 after playing in fully or mostly empty arenas for most of the season. Harden said the loud crowd was an adjustment.

"It just threw me off a little bit, but second half we got more comfortable and the shots started falling," he said.

Durant, Irving and Harden scored 28 of the Nets' 31 points in the period, with Joe Harris — who made Brooklyn's only three-pointer of the first half — hitting another for the other points.

Harris had 10 points for the Nets, who host Game 2 on Tuesday night.

Jayson Tatum scored 22 points, but shot just 6-for-20 and couldn't come to his 50-point effort in the play-in tournament, when Boston beat Washington to earn the No. 7 seed.

# Bucks top Heat in OT of Game 1

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Milwaukee Bucks found themselves in danger of suffering one more devastating playoff loss to the Miami Heat.

Khris Middleton made sure it didn't happen.

Middleton broke a tie with a jumper with 0.5 seconds left in overtime and had 27 points to help the Bucks beat the Heat 109-107 on Saturday in Game 1 of the first-round series.

"I have confidence in myself," Middleton said. "You miss a lot of shots. You make a lot of shots. You just have to trust all the work you put in during the season and practice."

The nip-and-tuck nature of this game — nobody led by more than four points in the fourth quarter and overtime — exemplified the competitive nature of this playoff rematch. Game 2 is Monday night in Milwaukee.

Milwaukee was the No. 1 overall seed in last year's playoffs but lost 4-1 to Miami in the second round. Milwaukee is seeded third and Miami sixth in the Eastern Conference this time.

"The pressure was all on them," said Miami's Goran Dragic, who scored 25 points and tied it with a corner three with 20.6 seconds left. "They need to win at home. It was a close game. I feel like we had our chances, but unfortunately we didn't take them."

**Mavericks 113, Clippers 103:** Luka Doncic scored 31 points and visiting Dallas beat Los An-

geles in Game 1.

Tim Hardaway Jr. added 21 points and Dorian Finney-Smith had 18 for the Mavs. Doncic and Hardaway Jr. made five three-pointers each, and Finney-Smith had four to help Dallas shoot 47% from long-range.

Kawhi Leonard had 26 points and 10 rebounds for the Clippers, and Paul George added 23 points. But they were a combined 3 of 14 on three-pointers and the Clippers shot 31% after leading the NBA at 41% during the regular season.

Game 2 is Tuesday night at Staples Center.

**Trail Blazers 123, Nuggets 109:** Damian Lillard scored 34 points and led Portland's three-point barrage that sparked the win over host Denver in the opener of the first-round playoff series.

The Blazers hit 19 of 40 shots from beyond the arc, and Lillard, sporting silver sneakers that were a fitting choice for his sterling performance, had five of them.

Subs Carmelo Anthony and Anfernee Simons added four each as the Blazers outscored Denver by 24 points from beyond the arc.

CJ McCollum added 21 points and Anthony scored 18 in his first playoff game against the team that drafted him 18 years ago.

MVP favorite Nikola Jokic led Denver with 34 points, and Michael Porter Jr. chipped in 25. Aaron Gordon added 16.

Game 2 in the series is Monday night.

## Mickelson on cusp of history at PGA Championship

Associated Press

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. — Phil Mickelson could have done without the thrills Saturday in the PGA Championship.

Losing a five-shot lead in a span of five holes on the back nine. One tee shot into the water, another that ended up under a cart tire. It was all part of a wildly entertaining day at Kiawah Island that ended with Mickelson nearly holing a flop shot that can test the nerves of just about any 50-year-old but him.

That brought Mickelson to the cusp of history not many could have seen coming.

That par save for a 2-under 70 gave him a one-shot lead over Brooks Koepka and left him 18 holes away from becoming the oldest champion in the 161 years of the majors.

When he curled in the 4-foot putt for par on the 18th hole, Mickelson became the oldest player with a 54-hole lead in a major since 59-year-old Tom Watson at Turnberry in 2009.

That didn't end well for Watson, who lost that British Open in a playoff to Stewart Cink. For Mickelson, it's an opportunity to become the oldest major champion. Julius Boros was 48 when he won the 1968 PGA Championship.

Asked to describe such an occasion, Mickelson was too busy glancing at his watch. Sunlight was fading and he wanted to practice. These opportunities don't come along as often as they once did.

"I'm not really dwelling back on what took place today," he said.

Sunday should get his atten-

tion, starting with the guy who joins him in the final group. Koepka survived what he called the worst putting of his career. Statistically, he was middle of the pack, but he missed a 6-foot par on the final hole for a 70 that cost him a share of the lead.

No matter. At stake for Koepka is a shot at his third Wanamaker Trophy in four years. No one has won the PGA Championship so often so quickly since it switched to stroke play in 1958.

"I'm in the final group," Koepka said. "That's what you want."

Mickelson was at 7-under 209. For all his success in the majors — five victories, runner-up finishes in all four of them — this is only the third time he has held the 54-hole lead.

One more for history.



# Indians top Twins in 10th inning

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — César Hernández hit a two-run homer in the 10th inning off Alex Colomé, giving the Cleveland Indians a 5-3 victory over Minnesota on Saturday that dropped the Twins to 0-8 in extra-inning games this season.

AL Cy Young Award winner Shane Bieber allowed three runs and eight hits in 5 1/3 innings. He struck out six, ending his 23-game streak of at least seven strikeouts.

**Yankees 7, White Sox 0:** Gerrit Cole shook off rare control problems to pitch four-hit ball over seven innings, and host New York won its fifth straight.

**Dodgers 6, Giants 3:** Max Muncy hit a home run into McCovey Cove, connecting off Scott Kazmir in the lefty's first big league game since 2016, and visiting Los Angeles beat San Francisco for its seventh straight win.

**Red Sox 4, Phillies 3:** Matt Barnes retired Bryce Harper and Rhys Hoskins to strand the potential tying run in the ninth, and visiting Boston beat Philly

for its fourth straight win.

**Padres 6, Mariners 4:** Eric Hosmer hit a two-run, bases-loaded single and Fernando Tatis Jr. came around and scored on an error on the play to highlight the five-run fifth inning for host San Diego.

**Athletics 6, Angels 2:** At Anaheim, Calif., Chris Bassitt pitched five-hit ball into the eighth inning and Seth Brown hit a two-run homer in the Athletics' victory over the Angels.

**Nationals 12, Orioles 9:** Ryan Zimmerman hit a tiebreaking three-run homer and Washington overcame a pair of five-run deficits in a win over visiting Baltimore.

**Rockies 7, Diamondbacks 6:** Charlie Blackmon hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer off Madison Bumgarner in a four-run sixth inning, left fielder Raimel Tapia made a dazzling catch to thwart a rally attempt and host Colorado dealt Arizona its 12th straight road loss.

**Brewers 4, Reds 3:** Daniel Robertson hit his first home run in more than two years, a tiebreaking, seventh-inning drive,

and Milwaukee topped host Cincinnati.

**Marlins 3, Mets 1:** At Miami, Garrett Cooper hit a two-out, two-run homer in the ninth inning, and the Marlins beat New York.

**Braves 6, Pirates 1:** Ozzie Albies hit home runs from both sides of the plate and Ronald Acuña Jr. led off with his major league-best 15th homer as host Atlanta beat Pittsburgh.

**Royals 7, Tigers 5:** Andrew Benintendi drove in three runs, Josh Staumont escaped a bases-loaded jam in the ninth inning and Kansas City stopped visiting Detroit's four-game winning streak.

**Cardinals 2, Cubs 1:** Four pitchers combined for five innings of scoreless, two-hit relief after Miles Mikolas appeared to get injured in his delayed season debut, and Yadier Molina hit a tiebreaking home run that lifted host St. Louis over Chicago.

**Rays 3, Blue Jays 1:** At Dunedin, Fla., Taylor Walls hit a pair of doubles in his major league debut and Tampa Bay won its ninth straight game.

# Biles makes more history in return

Associated Press

Time on her hands and a world-class gym at her disposal after the 2020 Olympics were postponed, Simone Biles started experimenting almost as a way to stave off the monotony of training.

Pretty soon a vault that she occasionally tinkered with for fun — the Yurchenko double pike — started to look like a vault she could pull off in competition.

So what if it had historically been done only by men? So what if the International Gymnastics Federation seemed intent on not giving the vault a difficulty value commensurate with its complexity?

The vault exists. She can do it. So she did.

Hands seemingly magnetized to her hamstrings as she soared off the vaulting table, Biles drilled the Yurchenko double pike during her victory at the US Classic on Saturday night. The 24-year-old defending world and Olympic champion generated so much momentum she took a couple of big hops upon landing before letting out a semi-relieved smile.

Get ready to add another element in her name in the sport's Code of Points, even she thinks the 6.6 start value for the Yurchenko double-pike — just a tick above significantly less difficult vaults — isn't as high as it should be.

And no one in the sport has ever excelled as much as Biles. Her all-around score of 58.400 in her first event in more than 18 months was easily the best of the night even though she shorted her dismount on floor exercise and sailed off the uneven bars.

Biles' spot on the U.S. Olympic Team is assured. Jordan Chiles finished second in the all-around (57.100) to Biles and ranked in the top four in each of the four events.

# Busch dominates Xfinity race in Austin

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Kyle Busch turned in a dominating performance to win the NASCAR Xfinity race at the Circuit of the Americas on Saturday, with lessons learned for maybe an even bigger victory later in the weekend.

Busch, looking to get some extra laps and much-needed track experience before the NASCAR Cup Series race, stepped into the Xfinity lineup and crushed the field from the pole position with a pace and road course mastery that left little doubt about the outcome from the opening laps.

"It's cool to come here in the first race at a new track. Really proud of the effort," Busch said. "There are other fast guys out

here who will be a force to reckon with (Sunday)."

Busch led 36 of 46 laps and finished 11 seconds ahead of A.J. Allmendinger for his record 98th Xfinity victory and 217th in NASCAR's top three series.

"Kyle Busch is one of the best we've ever seen. To run second to him is not the worst thing," Allmendinger said. "Second was the best we were going to do unless something happened to Kyle."

NASCAR's inaugural race weekend at the 3.4-mile track built for Formula One is pushing drivers to quickly learn its 20 turns, s-curves and elevation changes. None are trickier than the first corner, a left-handed switchback that quickly sends

the cars into a 133-foot descent.

The win and the course knowledge could be a boost for Busch heading into Sunday's Cup race if conditions stay the same. Saturday morning Xfinity qualifying was in the rain. The afternoon race was dry. Rain looms in the forecast for Sunday.

Busch cut through the wet conditions in the morning to earn pole position and was just as dominant when the sun came out.

Ross Chastain started second and challenged Busch from the start through the first corner. But his race was done early as he broke an axle when he left the track in the first lap and his car limped back into the garage.

# Sorokin, Isles beat Pens to tie series

Associated Press

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — After two tough losses, the New York Islanders turned back to Ilya Sorokin in a game they needed to win, and the rookie goalie came through.

Sorokin stopped 29 shots, Oliver Wahlstrom and Ryan Pulock each had a goal and an assist and the Islanders beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 4-1 in Game 4 on Saturday to even the first-round series.

Sorokin, who had 39 saves in the Islanders' 4-3 win in Game 1, was back in goal after Semyon Varlamov started Games 2 and 3 — both losses.

"Ilya's been through a lot of stuff, everything from league championships in a very good league in the KHL," New York coach Barry Trotz said. "He's won it, he's been MVP. He's been under the spotlight a lot and been in those big moments. ... He's not a guy that's a pure rookie coming in the NHL or a lot of these high-pressure situations. He's had a lot of them, just in different leagues."

Josh Bailey and Jordan Eberle also

scored and Mathew Barzal had two assists for New York.

Tristan Jarry had 23 saves for Pittsburgh, and drew mocking chants of "Jarry! Jar-ry!" from Islanders fans.

"We just got to stay with it," Penguins coach Mike Sullivan said. "I don't think we were quite as sharp tonight. We didn't have as many looks tonight as we had in the first few games. We're going to have to work for those moving forward."

Game 5 is Monday night in Pittsburgh, and Game 6 back at Nassau Coliseum on Wednesday.

With the teams skating 4 on 4 in the third period, Pittsburgh's Kris Letang was whistled for interference to put the Islanders on their third power play. Just as a penalty on Scott Mayfield was expiring, Wahlstrom fired a one-timer that was stopped by Jarry. However, Pittsburgh's Teddy Blueger knocked the puck in while trying to clear the rebound, putting New York up 3-0 at 6:04.

With the Islanders still on a power play,

Eberle made it 4-0 just 24 seconds later as he beat Jarry high on the glove side from the inside edge of the right circle.

"It's a critical moment in the game," Barzal said. "(If) they kill that off they got a lot of life. Just two huge goals to put the game away. That's a crucial moment, big by our power play."

Zach Aston-Reese spoiled Sorokin's shutout bid with a short-handed goal with 2:35 to go. It was his first career playoff goal.

The Islanders expect the Penguins to come out refocused back on their home ice Monday night.

"It's a pretty veteran group over on the other side," Barzal said. "I think whatever we did tonight, they've probably already forgotten about it. They're going to be fresh for Game 5. We've been in a few playoff series past few years so we kind of got a feel on where our heads need to be at and where our focus is at. We'll enjoy this one and once we leave the rink tonight it's a tied series, three-game series."

# Killorn, Kucherov pace Lightning's rout of Panthers

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — The sight of Nikita Kucherov crumpled to the ice in pain left a sour taste in the mouths of the Tampa Bay Lightning.

The reigning Stanley Cup champions beat the Florida Panthers 6-2 to take a commanding 3-1 lead in their first-round post-season matchup on Saturday, with Kucherov continuing to sparkle after missing the entire regular season while recovering from hip surgery.

Coach Jon Cooper and Kucherov's teammates understandably were alarmed when the Tampa Bay star went down after being slashed by Florida's Anthony Duclair with the Panthers trailing by four goals midway through the third period.

"The hockey game ended halfway through the second period, then it turned into something else," Cooper said after a penalty-filled afternoon that saw Florida finish with 13 penalties for 50 minutes and Tampa Bay 13 for 42 minutes.

"Not much there for me," Panthers coach Joel Quenneville said of the slashing call on Duclair. "I hope he's all right."

Kucherov had a goal and three assists. Alex Killorn scored a pair of second-period

goals and notched two assists, while Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 39 of 41 shots for the Lightning, who can wrap up the best-of-seven series by winning Game 5 in Sun rise, Florida, on Monday night.

Kucherov remained on the bench for a short time, but did not return to the game. Defenseman Mikhail Sergachev was also shaken up by a late hit.

Cooper would not discuss the injuries.

"Nothing. Next question," the coach said.

"It's tough. You never want to see a guy go down on the ice and stay there," forward Yann Gourde said.

"And if one of our guys stays down," Killorn offered, "he's hurt."

The Lightning pushed their intrastate rivals to the brink of elimination by scoring three first-period goals, then building their advantage to 5-1 when Killorn beat goalie Sergei Bobrovsky twice in a span of 94 seconds to break the game open.

**Maple Leafs 5, Canadiens 1:** Auston Matthews broke a tie early in the second period and host Toronto beat Montreal in Game 2 to even the first-round playoff series.

Matthews also had assists, William Nylander added goal and an assist, and Jason

Spezza, Rasmus Sandin and Alexander Kerfoot, into an empty net, also scored. Jack Campbell stopped 22 shots, and Mitch Marner had two assists.

Jesper Kotkaniemi scored for Montreal, and Carey Price stopped 29 shots.

The best-of-seven matchup between the Original Six rivals shifts to the Bell Centre for games Monday and Tuesday nights. The Canadiens won the opener 2-1.

The Maple Leafs were without captain John Tavares after he sustained a concussion and knee injury on a scary collision 10 minutes into Game 1.

**Knights 4, Wild 0:** Marc-Andre Fleury made 35 saves for his 16th career post-season shutout, Nicolas Roy scored twice and visiting Vegas beat Minnesota 4-0 in Game 4 to take a 3-1 series lead,

Alex Tuch and Mark Stone each got their third goal of the series and Keegan Kolesar had two assists for the Golden Knights, who have nine unanswered goals and lead 3-1 in the first-round, best-of-seven matchup.

"When you get those leads, sometimes you sit back. I think we did a good job of just pushing forward," Stone said.

They get Game 5 at home on Monday night.