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'Frogman against frogman'

War crimes case against Navy SEAL sparks debate among elite force

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The war crimes case against a Navy SEAL not only cost the Navy secretary his job. It dragged an elite military force known for quiet professionalism into a political firestorm and drove a wedge through the special operations community.

Regardless of their position on the allegations against Chief Petty Officer Edward Gallagher, most SEALs agree that the force has suffered from the attention surrounding the case that led President Donald Trump to restore Gallagher's rank.

"It's incredibly divisive and polarizing within our own community," one SEAL said. "In some ways, it's pitting frogman against frogman, and it's really hard to know what to do. We're not well-equipped to deal with

so much public exposure and political interference."

The SEAL, who still serves in the military, spoke on condition of anonymity, citing fear that his comments could harm his career.

The case has spurred conversations among the ranks about how to move past the uproar while also addressing the problems that led to it. SEALs still in uniform and those who are retired told The Associated Press that the debate is raging in private online forums.

Some believe the president should not have used his authority as commander in chief to erase the sentence handed down by military jurors who convicted Gallagher of posing with a dead Islamic State captive. Jurors recommended that he be demoted. Gallagher was acquitted of murder charges in

the fatal stabbing of the captive and attempted murder charges for allegedly shooting at civilians during his deployment to Iraq in 2017.

Other SEALs believe Trump had no choice but to intervene because of the Navy's botched handling of the case, which included the prosecution tracking the emails of Gallagher's lawyers during the court-martial, which the judge noted violated his due process rights.

They thought Navy commanders went too far by calling a review board last week to determine whether Gallagher should remain a SEAL just as the Bronze Star recipient was preparing to retire after two decades of service.

Bill Brown, an enlisted SEAL who left the service in 2005, reached out Friday to the Navy's top SEAL, Rear Adm.

Collin Green, to let him know many SEALs shared that point of view.

"I told him, 'With all due respect, admiral, sometimes you've got to let a guy ride out into the sunset,'" he said.

Brown said Trump was looking out for warfighters. Many SEALs have not felt that trust with Navy leadership, which has called for a crackdown on everything from uniform standards to grooming.

Meanwhile, the Navy has been sending its top warriors on multiple deployments. Gallagher deployed eight times.

Some fear being judged when they return home, Brown said.

"When you're in a combat zone, you don't think about anything except worrying about your mission," he said. "We want to make sure our officers have our back."

Sailors urge Navy to return ranks to uniform covers

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy's personnel leadership is looking at putting rank insignias back on the working uniform cover after receiving "an earful of feedback" from sailors to make a change.

The issue was raised during a Facebook live event Tuesday with Vice Adm. John Nowell, the chief of naval personnel, and Fleet Master Chief Wes Koshoffer for Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education.

The Navy currently has only the anchor, Constitution and eagle, or "ACE" emblem, on its

green Navy working uniform eight-point covers, also known as utility caps. The sailor's rank insignia on the uniform is only on the chest.

The issue was raised at the event, submitted by a sailor and read aloud, saying sailors are "uncomfortable staring at a female's chest to see her rank."

The rank insignia "is hard to identify even from just a few feet away" on the chest of the Navy working uniform Type IIIs.

"Why can't we go back to ranks on eight-point covers or somewhere different on the uniform blouse?" they asked.

The ranks were removed from the covers to be more in line with the Marine Corps, which has its eagle, globe and anchor emblem on its caps, as well as to save money for sailors, Koshoffer said.

"Since we've done that, we have gotten an earful of feedback. One of the issues, visibility of the rank insignia on the chest.

"And the fact that female sailors ... have communicated they are uncomfortable with that," he said.

Koshoffer said the Navy would consider the feedback in the Navy's uniform process.

Nowell has also been testing

insignia options with his office staff.

"We've looked at collar devices and other ways to either improve the visibility or try another thing," Koshoffer said of the testing.

The Navy is not ready to go back to having ranks on the covers, Koshoffer said, but he assured sailors they were working on the issue.

"We're just going to go to work on that problem. It's going to take us a little bit. We don't want to knee-jerk back the other direction so quickly," he said. "But we'll solve that, and your input will be important to that."

Pilots honored for heroism in Afghanistan

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Two A-10 pilots who came to the rescue of American ground troops under heavy fire a decade ago in Afghanistan have been recognized for their aerial heroics with the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Maj. John “Sapper” Tice and Lt. Col. Anthony “Crack” Roe were awarded the medals earlier this month during a ceremony at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., home to the 303rd Fighter Squadron.

“Very rarely is the Distinguished Flying Cross awarded,” current squadron commander Lt. Col. Rick Mitchell said during a ceremony attended by 200

people. “Even more rarely is the Distinguished Flying Cross awarded twice in the same day to two members of the exact same fighter squadron.”

Roe was awarded the medal for a third time, for a 2008 operation that began at Bagram Airfield and supported a resupply convoy in a mountainous area southeast of the base, the Air Force said.

During the flight, Roe made radio contact with the Army commander of a platoon whose vehicles were disabled after being hit with rocket-propelled grenades, an Air Force account of the battle said.

Without a joint terminal attack controller on the ground to guide airstrikes, Roe was forced

to declare a risky “emergency close air support” situation and ordered ground troops to take cover inside their vehicles.

Roe made his first pass with the A-10’s gun, but the 30 mm rounds missed because of a weapons system error, the Air Force said.

On the next pass, Roe manually adjusted the system to get the elevation right and fired seven rockets, hitting the enemy about 130 feet from the friendly forces, Mackey said.

Tice was awarded for a Dec. 2, 2010, mission that began at Kandahar Airfield in support of two Special Forces teams who were guarding Army engineers building a bridge in an area thick with Taliban fighters.

On the sortie, Tice saw a Taliban fighter who was scouting the U.S. troops, which enabled ground forces to “quickly neutralize the threat with internal assets.”

After that, the Taliban launched an ambush with rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns and small-arms fire.

“Within seconds, the fierce battle intensified,” the medal citation said. “Without any hesitation, Tice descended into the tactical effective range of the small-arms fire.”

Tice performed six low-altitude passes, hitting Taliban fighters at four different fighting positions. He fired 1,140 rounds from the A-10’s gun, the Air Force said.

German leader: Preserving NATO is essential

Associated Press

BERLIN — NATO is at least as essential today as it was during the Cold War, Chancellor Angela Merkel said Wednesday, renewing a pledge to keep raising Germany’s defense spending and arguing that it is important to keep Turkey in the alliance.

Merkel told the German parliament before a NATO summit in London next week that “Europe cannot defend itself alone at the moment; we rely on this trans-Atlantic alliance.”

“The preservation of NATO is in our very own interest today, more strongly than during the Cold War — or at least as strongly as during the Cold War,” she said.

French President Emmanuel Macron’s recent public criticism of NATO — notably a perceived lack of U.S. leadership, concerns about Turkey since it invaded northern Syria without warning its allies, and the need for Europe to take on more security responsibilities — has shaken the alliance.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly criticized alliance members for not spending enough on defense, and in the past has called NATO “obsolete.”

NATO members in 2014 agreed to “aim to move toward” increasing defense spending to 2% of gross domestic product by 2024.

Merkel noted that Germany’s spending has risen from 1.18% at the time of the 2014 decision to a planned 1.4% next year. It aims to reach 1.5% by 2024, and

Merkel said that “people can rely on” Germany hitting 2% in the early 2030s.

The chancellor acknowledged that “Turkey has become alienated as a member state within NATO.”

“I say that Turkey should remain a NATO member and we should support that, because it is of geostrategic significance for NATO that Turkey is in” the alliance, Merkel told lawmakers, while stressing that differences should be addressed.

Military: Marine who died in Iraq killed by enemy fire

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Marine Raider who died in Iraq in August was killed by enemy fire, not by friendly fire, the counter-Islamic State mission confirmed Tuesday.

Gunnery Sgt. Scott A. Koppenhafer was killed Aug. 10 by enemy fire during combat operations against ISIS near Qanoos Island in Iraq, according to a statement Tuesday by Operation Inherent Resolve.

The operation was supporting Iraqi Se-

curity Forces, according to a Pentagon press release sent out around the time of Koppenhafer’s death. A U.S. service member and two members of the Mosul SWAT were wounded by enemy fire, Operation Inherent Resolve said.

“There is no evidence that suggests Iraqi Partner Forces engaged U.S. or Coalition forces on this operation. The deaths and injuries were incurred in the line of duty,” according to the Operation Inherent Resolve statement.

The Defense Department initially an-

nounced that Koppenhafer was killed by “enemy small arms fire.” However, an updated release stated that he died “after suffering fatal wounds” and that the incident was under investigation.

Two defense officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said at the time the investigation was looking into the possibility that Koppenhafer had been accidentally struck by Iraqi or American fire.

At the time of his death, Koppenhafer was assigned to the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

House Judiciary panel set to up Trump impeachment probe

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House Judiciary Committee is set to take over the impeachment probe of President Donald Trump, scheduling a hearing for next week as they push closer to a possible vote on actual charges of “high crimes and misdemeanors.”

The Judiciary panel scheduled the hearing as the separate Intelligence Committee on Tuesday released two last transcripts from its depositions, including from a White House budget official who detailed concerns among colleagues as Trump ordered them, through intermediaries, to put a hold on military aid to Ukraine.

Trump ordered the hold as he was pressuring Ukraine’s president to investigate Democrats, the issue at the heart of

the impeachment probe. Multiple government witnesses testified in impeachment hearings held by the Intelligence panel this month that Trump directed his personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani to take the lead on Ukraine policy and that Giuliani pushed an “irregular” diplomatic channel.

The Intelligence Committee is wrapping up the investigative phase of the probe and preparing its report for the next. Committee Chairman Adam Schiff has said the report could be released soon after the House returns from its Thanksgiving break.

The initial Judiciary hearing on Dec. 4, the day after lawmakers return, will feature legal experts who will examine questions of constitutional grounds as the panel decides whether to write articles of

impeachment against Trump. Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., said Tuesday his panel’s hearing will “explore the framework put in place to respond to serious allegations of impeachable misconduct.”

Democrats are aiming for a final House vote by Christmas, which would set the stage for a likely Senate trial in January.

Trump, meanwhile, tried to put distance between himself and Giuliani in a radio interview Tuesday. Asked by host Bill O’Reilly what Giuliani was doing on his behalf in Ukraine, Trump said, “I don’t even know.” Asked if he had directed Giuliani to go to Ukraine on his behalf, Trump said, “No.”

In a phone call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on July 25, Trump said several times he would have Giuliani contact Zelenskyy.

Buttigieg is on spot over police shooting

Associated Press

The deadly shooting of a black man by a white police officer last summer in South Bend, Ind., highlighted Mayor Pete Buttigieg’s struggle to win black support for his presidential campaign.

The issue could resurface as the prosecutor leading an investigation into the matter says his work likely won’t be finished before February, just as voters begin deciding whether Buttigieg should be the Democratic nominee.

“It’s accurate to say we won’t be finished before February,” Ric Hertel, the special prosecutor running the investigation, told The Associated Press. “I’d like to be finished by the end of the year. Trying to be realistic though.”

Sgt. Ryan O’Neill was investigating a report of a person breaking into cars in June when he said he fatally shot Eric Logan after Logan refused orders to drop a knife. Logan’s family sued in federal court, accusing O’Neill of using excessive deadly force. O’Neill resigned in July. The shooting wasn’t captured on police video because O’Neill’s dash and body cameras weren’t activated.

The fallout from the shooting presented Buttigieg with some of the toughest moments of his White House campaign.

Buttigieg stepped away from the campaign trail and faced angry residents at an emotional town hall in South Bend, a city of about 100,000 residents, a quarter of whom are black.

He acknowledged that his administration had failed to recruit more minority police officers and utilize police body cameras. Since then, he has frequently decried systemic racism in America and released a plan intended to address disparities in health, education, wealth, criminal justice and voting rights.

But he’s still struggled to rally black voters to his campaign.

A recent Monmouth University poll in South Carolina found that just 1% of blacks in the state support Buttigieg.

Trump rallies Fla. faithful, rips foes

Sun Sentinel

SUNRISE, Fla. — The two diametrically opposed world views of President Donald Trump came together in one place Tuesday: the BB&T Center, where Trump held one of his signature rallies.

Inside, a devoted crowd welcomed home the president, who recently declared himself a Florida resident. Outside, protesters displayed scorn and fury, along with the Baby Trump balloon, the orange-haired inflatable infant clad in a diaper and clutching a cellphone.

Trump didn’t hold back. He whipped the crowd into a chant of “bull----” when discussing the impeachment charges against him. He took shots at “Sleepy Joe Biden.” He railed against the “corrupt” media. He played up crowd favorites, declaring that he was building his wall. He addressed his

health telling the crowd his “gorgeous chest” is just fine.

At one moment, he said he would defend Thanksgiving from anyone who would want to change its name, and he assured his fans he would easily win a second term.

“The crazy Democrats are going down in a landslide, and that landslide is going to start right here in the great state of Florida,” Trump said.

Trump supporters packed the arena, filling it to capacity. They wore shirts with slogans such as “No Quid Pro Quo” and “Read the Transcript.” Florida’s top politicians, including Gov. Ron DeSantis, briefly joined Trump on stage.

Trump took the stage about 7:30 p.m. in front of thousands of cheering supporters at the Sunrise arena, where supporters started arriving as soon as the parking lots opened at 7 a.m. for a “homecoming” cam-

paign rally.

The crowd was enthusiastic, cheering many of Trump’s lines and offering boos when he mentioned an enemy. During a pause, a few people in the crowd started shouting, “We love you!”

The arena, which can hold more than 20,000 people, was filled to capacity.

Trump forcefully decried the impeachment investigation that is dominating the political landscape.

The president said everybody says “that’s really bull----.” The crowd responded by chanting “bull----.”

“We had virtually no rights, no due process,” during the inquiry he said, using his favorite epithet for Rep. Adam Schiff, of California, chairman of the Intelligence Committee and leader of the impeachment investigation, calling him “Shifty Schiff.”

US travelers brace for snowy Thanksgiving

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A storm packing heavy, blinding snow and fierce winds that wreaked havoc as it whipped through Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska marched into the upper Midwest on Wednesday as anxious Thanksgiving travelers buckled up and barreled headlong into a busy, if not perilous, holiday week.

The wintry storm that left at least one person dead was expected to push eastward into South Dakota, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, while a “bomb cyclone” weather phenomenon was expected

to simultaneously topple trees, knock out power and dump snow as it rolled into California and Oregon.

The one-two punch made for a double whammy of early wintry weather that threatened to scramble plans for millions of people nationwide during one of the busiest travel weeks of the year. Those who left early were confronted with icy and snow-covered roads that made it difficult — if not impossible — to navigate and prompted law enforcement in many places not to even try.

“Stay put,” Kansas Highway Patrol Trooper Tod Hileman urged drivers in a tweet, even

as a stretch of Interstate 70 on the state’s western border with Colorado reopened after temporarily closing Tuesday at the height of the storm.

Minnesotans prepared Wednesday for a winterlike blast that was expected to deliver heavy snow and powerful winds that had officials warning drivers to stay off the roads at least until the winds died down a bit.

At Denver International Airport, about 10 inches of snow mixed with winds that limited visibility prompted the cancellation of about 30% of the airport’s average daily 1,600 flights.

The storm dumped nearly 3 feet of snow in parts of northern Colorado and closed long stretches of highways there and in Wyoming. One person was killed and two others were injured when a tractor-trailer jackknifed and was hit by two other trucks on Interstate 70 near the Colorado ski town of Vail.

About 1,100 people spent the night at the airport, including many cadets from the Air Force Academy near Colorado Springs who either missed flights or wanted to get to the airport before road conditions deteriorated, airport spokeswoman Alex Renteria said.

Calif. officials hope rain aids wildfire battle

Associated Press

GOLETA, Calif. — Firefighters are hoping rainy weather will douse a wildfire that threatens thousands of homes in the coastal foothills north of Los Angeles.

The wind-whipped fire that erupted Monday raged through tinder-dry brushy canyons in the same area where a 1990 blaze destroyed more than 400 homes.

No homes had burned as of Tuesday night but about 2,400 homes and other buildings in the Goleta area near Santa Barbara remained threatened, fire officials said.

The National Weather Service expected rain to hit the region before dawn Wednesday, with up to an inch possible as the storm moved through.

The rain should help drench the flames. Forecasters said it probably won’t fall strongly enough to trigger any major mudslides on the fire-stripped ground.

Most of the fire’s growth occurred Monday, and while the burned area increased on Tuesday, about 4,000 of the 5,500 people who had been ordered to evacuate were being allowed home.

Fire commanders described a fierce battle that saved homes as the blaze consumed brush in an area that hadn’t burned in 29 years.

“We’ve had winds move up slope, down slope, across the slope,” Santa Barbara County fire Battalion Chief Anthony Stornetta said.

The fire was 10% contained Tuesday night after burning nearly 7 square miles, much of it in Los Padres National Forest.

The steep terrain, coupled with dry vegetation and erratic winds, made for a tough firefight.

“It’s just a hard, difficult piece of country to fight fire in and the weather is the most

extreme anywhere around,” said Jim Harris, Los Padres National Forest fire chief.

Rudy Gruber, 79, watched the smoke and flames from the top of a hill near his house in Santa Barbara.

Despite orders to evacuate, he said he decided not to leave because he didn’t think the fire would cross a canyon to his home. Plus, it would be tough to move his 50-pound tortoise, Amstel.

Even so, he’s been prepared for about a year, packing photo albums, computers and a carrier for his cat, Scooter.

Gruber, who’s lived in the area since 1976, was facing his fifth fire but said he’s evacuated only once, when he saw smoke in his neighborhood in 1978. He didn’t see any this time, so he decided to stay put.

“We’re better prepared than we used to be,” Gruber said. “We’ve gone through it so many times now.”

More clues point to chemical in vaping illness outbreak

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Health officials said Tuesday they have more evidence that a certain chemical compound is a culprit in a national outbreak of vaping illnesses.

Researchers analyzed black market vaping cartridges seized in Minnesota during the outbreak this year and vaping

liquid seized in that state last year. The newer cartridges contained the compound vitamin E acetate, but none of the older samples did.

They also looked at vaping cartridges collected from a dozen patients. Vitamin E acetate was commonly found in those too.

The study was small, but it echoes other work that found

the compound in the damaged lungs of 29 patients across the country.

“The findings further support a potential role for vitamin E acetate in causing lung injury associated with vaping products,” said Dr. Ruth Lynfield, a Minnesota health official.

Nearly 2,300 Americans who vape have gotten sick since March, many of them teens

and young adults, according to a recent tally by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At least 47 people have died.

Most who got sick said they had vaped liquids that contain THC, the high-inducing part of marijuana. Vitamin E acetate has recently been used as a thickener in illicit vaping products that contain THC.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police free dog from clutches of vacuum

MO BALLWIN — Police in a suburban St. Louis community were called to free a small dog from the clutches of an automated vacuum cleaner.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that Ballwin officers received a call that the vacuum had sucked up the tail of a Shih Tzu mix dog as it napped.

Police spokesman Mike Burgoyne said that when officers arrived they could hear a dog yelping, a woman screaming and a newborn baby crying.

The officers cut fur off the dog's tail to free it from the Roomba's grip. Burgoyne said the dog was shaken but not injured.

Goats recruited for landscaping work

FL TITUSVILLE — A Florida school district is bringing in a crack squad of four-legged experts to deal with an overgrown patch of rough terrain where hidden gopher tortoises, snakes, steep banks and vertical drop-offs make it too hazardous for grounds crews to handle.

Florida Today reported about two dozen goats will descend into a fenced area around a pond next to Imperial Estates Elementary in Titusville.

Grounds services supervisor Matt Nolle said the area is too dangerous for heavy equipment or people on foot. Goats are better for the environment and can get into places humans can't.

Horse gets stuck in barn's hayloft

SC LORIS — Horry County Fire Rescue workers said they were called

to a barn in Loris, where a horse managed to leave its stall and climb into a hayloft.

They had to bring in heavy equipment, and large-animal veterinarians helped sedate the horse before it was lowered to the ground on a makeshift platform.

Rescue workers still haven't figured out how the horse managed to climb a narrow set of stairs into the loft.

Police: Man filmed girls in bathroom

WV MORGANTOWN — A West Virginia man was accused of filming two girls through a hole in a bathroom wall.

The Exponent Telegram reported Oliver Wayne Matheny, 45, was charged with felony use of minors in filming of sexually explicit conduct.

Monongalia County Sheriff Perry Palmer said Matheny is accused of filming the girls without their knowledge or consent in September 2018.

The West Virginia State Police website said Matheny is a registered sex offender who was convicted in 1993 of a sex offense against a child in Florida.

Man uses ornament to stop dog attack

OH CANTON — An Ohio man repeatedly hit a dog with a nutcracker Christmas decoration to stop its attack on a 10-year-old neighbor, police said.

Leonard Miller, 88, of Perry Township, struck the animal multiple times until it let go of the child, The Canton Repository reported. The girl was transported to a hospital with severe injuries to her left arm, police said.

Miller said his 13-year-old

neighbor knocked on his door and told him that a dog at their home was attacking her younger sister.

Miller said he rushed out the door and grabbed a nutcracker outside his neighbor's home, which he used to hit the dog in the back.

When the dog released the child, Miller locked it in the house, took the girls to his home and called an ambulance.

Washed-up sea turtles headed for safety

MA QUINCY — The New England Aquarium said 45 endangered sea turtles that were stranded on Cape Cod are headed for Georgia and Florida.

The aquarium said the turtles were medically stabilized before being flown south by a volunteer. The facility said the transfer of the turtles is important to make room at its sea turtle hospital in Quincy.

The turtles are Kemp's ridleys and loggerheads. They are slated to finish rehabilitating at the Georgia Sea Turtle Center and Gulf World Marine Park in Panama City, Fla.

Deformed pig flown to animal hospital

VA DANVILLE — A deformed baby pig that was born on a farm in Virginia was flown to a veterinary hospital in Pennsylvania for medical treatment.

The Danville Register & Bee reported the black female pig named Hope was born with deformed rear legs on a farm near the town of Floyd.

The 3-week-old pig was set to be euthanized. But Ziggy's Refuge Farm Sanctuary in nearby Providence, N.C., adopted her.

Volunteers flew Hope on a private plane to the New Bolton

Center at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine in Kennett Square outside Philadelphia on Nov. 16.

Towel-clad man found hiding in room

MD COLLEGE PARK — Police in Maryland charged a suspect they said was found hiding in a woman's bedroom closet wearing a towel.

Prince George's County police said in a statement that a woman arrived back at her apartment and heard a noise coming from her bedroom. The woman told police she opened a closet door to find the man, Eric Tata, 24, hiding in the space with a towel wrapped around his body. Police said she screamed and Tata ran away to his nearby apartment where officers later arrested him.

Tata was charged with fourth-degree burglary, trespassing and trespassing related to a peeping Tom offense.

Man drives 125 mph, crashes into trooper

GA ATLANTA — Authorities in Georgia said a man suspected of driving under the influence led officers on a 125 mph chase before crashing into a trooper's cruiser.

Georgia State Patrol told news outlets the chase began when police spotted a Mercedes-Benz going about 50 mph over the speed limit on an Atlanta highway. Authorities said the driver refused to stop for two state troopers.

Spokeswoman Stacey Collins told news outlets the suspect hit one patrol car on its side but another trooper was able to box him in and stop the pursuit.

From wire reports

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Stephen F. Austin stuns top-ranked Duke

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — With a breakaway layup at the overtime buzzer, Stephen F. Austin pulled off a shocker for the ages and did what no team outside the ACC had done in almost 20 years — topple mighty Duke at home.

The underdog Lumberjacks and their high-pressure defense took over at Cameron Indoor Stadium as No. 1 Duke lost its grip on everything: the ball, the game, its prized home-court winning streak and, ultimately, the nation's top ranking.

Stephen F. Austin stunned the Blue Devils 85-83 in overtime Tuesday night, with Nathan Bain's coast-to-coast layup just before time expired bringing a jarring end to Duke's 150-game home winning streak against nonconference opponents.

Representing the little-known Southland Conference, the Lumberjacks became the first non-Atlantic Coast Conference school to beat Duke at Cameron since St. John's in February 2000, and the second unranked squad to upset a No.

1 team on its home floor in two weeks after Evansville went into Rupp Arena and knocked off Kentucky 67-64.

"I told our players, 'Banners can't beat us tonight,'" Stephen F. Austin coach Kyle Keller said. "The players have to beat us."

Duke had the ball late in overtime, but Tre Jones missed a jumper with about 15 seconds left and Wendell Moore rebounded it for the Blue Devils. Hounded by the Lumberjacks' active defense, Jones threw a bounce pass toward the baseline that got broken up, and the ball kicked away from Matthew Hurt in a scramble with around three seconds to go.

Gavin Kensmil snatched it and passed from the seat of his pants to Bain, who split two Blue Devils players and went nearly the length of the floor for a buzzer-beating layup with Duke forward Jack White in futile pursuit.

"I looked up at the clock and saw I had 2.6 seconds, just going as fast as I can to lay it up. Like a layup drill. Prayed it would go in," Bain said. "I wasn't sure

if the guy was going to foul me or not. Get it on the rim to give us a chance."

Kevon Harris scored 26 points and Kensmil added 15 for the Lumberjacks (5-1).

"It means the world," Harris said.

Vernon Carey had 20 points and 11 rebounds for the Blue Devils (6-1), who committed 22 turnovers and shot just 11-for-24 from the free-throw line in the second half.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski "told us at halftime about getting back" on defense, guard Cassius Stanley said. "It's kind of what we deserved. We didn't listen to him, and it hurt us eventually at the end."

Big picture

Stephen F. Austin: No question the Lumberjacks earned the biggest victory in program history. Bain, a fifth-year senior, was a freshman on the Thomas Walkup-led team that upset eighth-ranked West Virginia as a No. 14 seed in the first round of the 2016 NCAA Tournament.

"It doesn't get much bigger than this," Bain said. "But getting a win inside the NCAA Tournament, that's a different type of sweet. That's a different type of taste you want to have. We didn't get that last year."

Duke: This Duke team didn't have the feeling of invincibility that some of its predecessors had, in part because it committed at least 16 turnovers in three of its first six games. The Blue Devils' offense was completely flummoxed at times by the Lumberjacks' unrelenting pressure, and as a result, their run at No. 1 will end after two weeks. For the second straight season, they lost at home to an unranked opponent as the No. 1 team, with the Zion Williamson-led squad falling to Syracuse.

Poll implications

Duke became the third No. 1 team to lose this season — and Thanksgiving hasn't even arrived yet. The defeat will surely cost the Blue Devils at least a few spots in the poll Monday.

College basketball roundup

Winston, No. 3 Michigan State bounce back from loss

Associated Press

LAHAINA, Hawaii — Cassius Winston sat in the Lahaina Civic Center locker room, the tears forming a puddle by his feet as his teammates warmed up on the court below.

It's been less than three weeks since his brother's death and Winston's pain is still searing, his heart still heavy.

Once the ball was in his hands, Winston felt a sense of normalcy, found a rhythm that had been missing since tragedy struck.

Even then, Georgia's Anthony Edwards nearly spoiled it.

Winston had 28 points and eight assists, and No. 3 Michigan State withstood Edwards'

second-half outburst to beat Georgia 93-85 at the Maui Invitational on Tuesday.

"Once I got out there, I was able to find my rhythm, find my peace out there on the court and that was really good for me, getting up and down, just having that rhythm that I usually play with," Winston said. "I feel like this is the first time I kind of had it in a while."

Michigan State (4-2) was sharp early after losing to Virginia Tech in its opener, building a 28-point lead early in the second half behind Winston's steady play.

Once Edwards got rolling, the Spartans had no answer.

Projected as a lottery pick, the 6-foot-5 freshman brought

the Bulldogs (3-2) back almost entirely by himself, scoring 33 of his 37 points in the second half.

But Michigan State had Winston.

Spartans coach Tom Izzo called Winston a "shell of himself" after a quiet game against Virginia Tech.

Winston's brother Zachary was hit by a train and killed Nov. 9, a death that has taken an emotional and physical toll on the senior guard.

No. 4 Kansas 71, BYU 56: At Lahaina, Hawaii, David McCormack scored 16 points, Ochai Agbaji added 14 and the Jayhawks turned a huge second half into a trip to the Maui Invitational title game with a vic-

tory over the Cougars.

No. 18 Auburn 79, Richmond 65: At New York, Samir Doughty scored 22 points to lead the Tigeers to a win over the Spiders in the championship game of the Legends Classic.

No. 21 Colorado 71, Clemson 67: At Las Vegas, Tyler Bey had 18 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Buffaloes over the Tigers in the championship game of the MGM Resorts Main Event.

Navy 72, Cornell 61: John Carter Jr. and Cam Davis scored 24 points apiece as the host Midshipmen defeated the Big Red.

Greg Summers had 12 points and 12 rebounds for Navy (3-3), which led 42-29 at halftime.

Buckeyes No. 1 in latest CFP rankings

Associated Press

Ohio State jumped LSU to No. 1 in the College Football Playoff rankings with two weeks left to go before selection Sunday.

LSU slipped to second Tuesday night and Clemson remained third while Georgia held on at four. If playoff history holds form, three of those top four teams will reach the semifinals.

Alabama remained No. 5 in the selection committee's third rankings, with Utah moving up a spot to No. 6. The Utes are the only Pac-12 team in the top 10 after Oregon dropped eight spots to 14th.

Oklahoma is seventh, followed by Minnesota, Baylor and Penn State.

In each of the first five years of the playoff, three of the top four teams in the rankings heading into rivalry weekend reached the semifinals, including the No. 1 team every time.

Now that spot belongs to Ohio State, which committee chairman Ron Mullens has continually referred to as a complete team.

"Competing consistently and

really highly ranked on offense and defense. Performing at a high level on both," Mullens said of Ohio State, which currently leads the nation in scoring and points allowed.

The Buckeyes beat Penn State last week 28-17, their third victory of the season against a team currently ranked along with No. 12 Wisconsin and No. 18 Cincinnati. LSU has beaten No. 5 Alabama, No. 11 Florida and No. 15 Auburn.

Down the stretch

There are some signs that the stretch run this season could be more volatile than in past playoff years. First off, three times in the previous five years one of the teams that was ranked in the top four heading into rivalry weekend and made the playoff only played one more game.

In 2015, Oklahoma reached the CFP as the Big 12 champion, but the conference had no title game so the Sooners were able to kick back with their 11-1 record after beating rival Oklahoma State.

In 2016, Ohio State was shut out of the Big Ten champion-

ship game because of a loss to Penn State, but the committee liked the Buckeyes' 11-1 record with three victories against top-10 teams.

Last year Notre Dame, a football independent, was No. 3 when it wrapped up its perfect regular season on rivalry weekend and stayed that way on selection Sunday.

In 2017, Alabama lost on rivalry weekend to Auburn as No. 1 in the CFP rankings. That eliminated the 11-1 Tide from the SEC championship game and dropped them to No. 5 in the second-to-last CFP rankings. Alabama moved back to four after sitting out championship weekend when No. 4 and unbeaten Wisconsin lost the Big Ten championship game to an Ohio State team with two losses.

The other contenders and what they need to happen over the next two weeks:

Alabama

■ Beat the stuffing out of Auburn on the road with backup quarterback Mac Jones.

■ LSU wins out.

■ Hope having the best loss out-

weighs a light résumé and no conference title.

■ Some cannibalization in the Big 12 and Pac-12 over the next two weeks would also help — a lot.

Utah

■ Win out in impressive fashion.

■ LSU and Ohio State win out and eliminate other contenders.

■ Hope the Pac-12 title gives it an edge over a Tua-less Alabama.

■ Hope a pile of blowout victories is more impressive to the committee than the close calls the Big 12 champion will have.

Oklahoma and Baylor

■ Similar to Utah in that either potential Big 12 champ could use the SEC and Big Ten favorites to take care of business.

■ A slip-up by Utah (or Alabama).

Minnesota

■ The Gophers probably just need to win out and slap down a résumé in front of the committee that includes a Big Ten championship with victories against Penn State, Wisconsin and Ohio State.

■ It probably wouldn't hurt if LSU cleared out Georgia, too.

Saints' Thomas proves a valuable return on investment

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — When Michael Thomas appears in the locker room at New Orleans Saints training headquarters, he doesn't linger long.

The 6-foot-3, 212-pound Thomas is often seen striding somewhere with purpose, be it for muscle maintenance in the training room or to study opposing defenses in meeting rooms.

The way he celebrates clutch catches with bulging biceps flexed on each side of his head indicates how much time he spends in the weight room, building the strength that makes it difficult for defenders to establish inside position on New Orleans' No. 1 receiver, or get between him and an arriv-

ing pass.

His 321 catches for 3,787 yards and 23 touchdowns in his first three seasons out of Ohio State earned him a five-year extension worth nearly \$100 million. Thomas pledged to "earn every penny," and has since produced what could be one of the greatest seasons by a receiver in NFL history.

"I'm blessed to be in a position to have an opportunity to earn a contract like that, so I just want to take full advantage of it and give my best effort and add the most value I can," Thomas said. "How can I build and how can I get better? And how can I do better than I did the week before? I'm always trying to play a perfect game. I haven't played one yet."

He doesn't seem far off.

His 104 receptions are the most ever through the first 11 games of a season, putting him on pace to eclipse Marvin Harrison's single-season record of 143 receptions in 2002. That's also 23 catches ahead of Houston's DeAndre Hopkins, who ranks second.

Thomas has produced while playing with two different quarterbacks this season: Drew Brees and backup Teddy Bridgewater, who started five games when Brees was sidelined by a thumb injury.

Thomas even thrived when defenses knew he'd be a focal point of the Saints' offense because of sporadic injuries to other key offensive players — from dynamic running back Alvin Kamara to tight end Jared Cook.

Thomas said when he knew he was going to be the focal point of opposing defenses, his approach was to "accept the challenge and don't think it's the end of the world."

Of the 408 passes the Saints have attempted this season, 124, or 30 percent, have been intended for Thomas, and he's caught 84 percent of those.

As far as drawing coverage from opponents' top defensive backs, Thomas states flatly, "I'm not really worried about the names on the jerseys or who's following me. If I look up and you're in front of me, I'm about to beat you. That's it."

The numbers back him up. He's made 10 receptions and 100 yards in a game look routine.

NBA roundup

George, Clippers down Doncic, Mavericks

Associated Press

DALLAS — Paul George and Kawhi Leonard gave the young European duo from Dallas the best look yet at life among the elite in the Western Conference.

George scored 17 of his 26 points in the first quarter, Leonard finished with 28 and the Los Angeles Clippers took control early in a meeting of teams with matching five-game winning streaks, beating the Mavericks 114-99 on Tuesday night.

The Clippers used several defenders to end Luka Doncic's franchise-record streak of four games with at least 30 points and 10 assists, knocking the 20-year-old phenom to the floor early on a 4-for-14 shooting night. Doncic had 22 points,

eight rebounds and six assists.

Kristaps Porzingis was 4-for-13, the 7-foot-3 Latvian combining with the Rookie of the Year from Slovenia to go 8-for-27 compared to 19-for-42 for the LA stars. George added a career-high six steals to help hold the Mavericks under 100 points for the first time this season.

"They're looking to win a championship; they played like it was a playoff game," said Porzingis, who hit a 28-footer 22 seconds into the game and another three-pointer from the logo at center court just before halftime but finished 3-for-8 from long range. He had 15 points and 10 rebounds. "They played aggressively and they showed us that we have to learn how to play these games. We have to bring that same intensity."

Patrick Beverley got in foul trouble as one of the defenders assigned to Doncic, who had to settle for doing most of his damage on free throws, making 14 of 16.

Beverley getting his fourth foul early in the second half just brought back Lou Williams sooner. The high-scoring reserve finished with 21 points, going 4-for-7 on threes while Doncic missed all seven of his deep tries against the LA defense.

Nuggets 117, Wizards 104:

Nikola Jokic had 20 rebounds and Jerami Grant scored a season-best 20 points to lead host Denver over Washington.

Jokic finished one rebound shy of his career high and added eight points in Denver's sixth straight win.

Will Barton had 17 points,

eight rebounds and eight assists for the Nuggets, who are 10-1 in November and ended a three-game home losing streak against the Wizards. Jamal Murray scored 16 and Mason Plumlee 15.

Denver held one of the NBA's most prolific offenses to its second-lowest point total of the season. Washington entered averaging 119.1 points and had failed to score at least 100 just once in 15 games. It needed 35 in the fourth to reach the century mark this time.

Bradley Beal, the Wizards' leading scorer at 29.6 points per game, was held to 14 on 6-for-15 shooting. He was 2-for-10 from behind the three-point line.

Jordan McRae had 21 points for Washington.

NHL roundup

Kahkonen gets win for Minnesota in league debut

Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — The Minnesota Wild finally found a way to hold a third-period lead, and it came in a game where the referees made Bruce Boudreau's team work a little harder by blowing a call on a goal.

Kaapo Kahkonen made 32 saves in his NHL debut, defenseman Ryan Suter scored the winner early in the third period and the suddenly hot Wild beat the Devils 3-2 on Tuesday night in a game the NHL said New Jersey got credit for a goal that should not have counted.

The controversy centered on Jesper Boqvist's first NHL goal. It tied the score 1-all in the first period and it was allowed to stand despite a challenge by Boudreau, who claimed the play should have been blown dead before the goal because Devils forward Wayne Simmonds played the puck with a high stick in center ice and then

played it again in the offensive zone without anyone else touching it.

During the third period, the NHL put out a statement saying a mistake was made.

"I didn't need the league to tell me they made a mistake," said Boudreau, whose team blew third-periods leads in recent overtime losses to the Bruins and Rangers. "But they said the league made a mistake and that was it. We knew the rule and we called it and I was a little shocked when they said ... I think they said it's an unchallengeable thing."

So not only did the Wild lose the challenge, they drew a delay of game penalty.

Boudreau said referee Brad Meier apologized for the mistakes at the start of the second period, and, in the end, the Wild were the better team.

Zach Parise and Jordan Greenway also scored as the Wild

extended their point streak to seven games (4-0-3) while Kahkonen was solid.

Bruins 8, Canadiens 1: David Pastrnak recorded his second hat trick of the season and Eastern Conference-leading Boston routed host Montreal.

Jake DeBrusk, Brad Marchand, Anders Bjork, Charlie Coyle and Danon Heinen also scored for the Bruins (16-3-5), who have won four straight.

Marchand, Coyle, David Krejci and Torey Krug had two assists apiece, while Sean Kuraly had three.

Captain Shea Weber scored the only goal for the Canadiens (11-8-5), who have lost five straight.

Bruins backup Jaroslav Halak made 36 saves and improved to 6-0-0 against Carey Price, his former teammate in Montreal.

Price gave up five goals on 11 shots before being pulled in the second period. Keith Kinkaid

stopped 10 of 13 shots in relief.

Boston extended its points streak to eight games (5-0-3) and moved ahead of Washington atop the conference standings.

Wild 3, Devils 2: Kaapo Kahkonen made 32 saves in his NHL debut, defenseman Ryan Suter scored the winner early in the third period and suddenly hot Minnesota beat host New Jersey in a game the NHL said the Devils got credit for a goal that should not have counted.

Blackhawks 3, Stars 0: Corey Crawford made 32 saves for his team's first shutout this season and host Chicago ended Dallas' seven-game winning streak.

Brandon Saad, Patrick Kane and Connor Murphy scored for Chicago, which snapped a three-game slide.

The 34-year-old Crawford was sharp in stopping several prime Dallas chances in his 26th career shutout.