

Special ops leader to report to Miller

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller on Wednesday ordered the Pentagon's top civilian overseeing the military's special operations community to report directly to him, effectively elevating U.S. Special Operations Command to the same level of the Pentagon's military departments.

The change makes the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict a service secretary-like position responsible for the oversight and advocacy of the military's special operations forces, said Miller, who is expected to serve in the Defense Department's top job for only about two months.

Miller announced the move during a visit to the Army's special operations home at Fort Bragg, N.C., his first official visit as defense secretary since he took the job Nov. 9 as former Defense Secretary Mark Esper

was fired by President Donald Trump via Twitter.

"This reform will immediately improve agility to the department and the command, and will enable us to streamline the information flow, enhance decision-making and more adaptively and adeptly support our commanders and their superb soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines," Miller said in brief, prepared comments.

Miller said he would prefer to raise the top special operations civilian post to an undersecretary of defense title, but he also said he lacked the authority to do so. Before Wednesday, the person filling that role reported to the defense secretary through the undersecretary of defense for policy, the de facto No. 3 civilian in the Pentagon.

Ezra Cohen-Watnick, a former aide to Trump's first national security adviser Michael Flynn, is now filling the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict role on an acting basis. Miller briefly served in that position on a

temporary basis earlier this year, as well.

The move on Wednesday aligns the Pentagon with the congressional intent for the top special operations civilian. In the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, lawmakers ordered the Pentagon to raise the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict to a service secretary-like job and report directly to the defense secretary "for issues impacting the readiness and organization of special operations forces, special operations-peculiar resources and equipment, and civilian personnel management."

Congress urged the Pentagon to speed up the elevation of the position in its fiscal year 2020 NDAA, the annual law that sets Pentagon policy and spending priorities. Esper told Congress last year that the Defense Department was making progress on the ordered changes.

Miller is a longtime veteran of the special operations community who retired from the Army in 2014 as a colonel.

Forearm planks, rowing added to Navy fitness test

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy is changing its fitness test in the spring, adding the forearm plank to better assess a sailor's core strength and rowing as an alternative cardiovascular exercise, the service announced Wednesday.

"Feedback I've received from the fleet as I've traveled ... is, for the most part, sailors are excited and they're just ready to start," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Eric Anderson, who is with the Navy Physical Readiness Program at the 21st Century Sailor office based in Millington, Tenn.

The Navy is responding to feedback from sailors who asked for a test that better determined core strength and relates more to the work that they have to do on ships, Anderson said.

The updated events are the biggest change to the test since the stationary bike and the elliptical machine were added as

cardio exercises in 2007, Anderson said. The elliptical machine was eliminated in 2018.

The Navy's Physical Readiness Test, or PRT, is typically conducted twice a year for sailors in a spring and fall cycle, or time frame, and involves three events: pushups, forearm planks replacing curlups and a cardio event, such as a run, swim or now the row exercise.

The fitness test cycles in 2020 were canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. In 2021, the Navy will only have one cycle for sailors to take the test, between March 15 and Sept. 15, according to the service. March will be the first time sailors will have to do the forearm plank and can choose the row event.

"I am excited about these changes coming to the Physical Readiness Test as I believe the plank is a better measure of core strength, it's easier on the back and I think it is safer in a [coronavirus] environment,"

Vice Adm. John Nowell, the chief of naval personnel, said in a statement. "Additionally, the row is a great full-body exercise and it's easy to fit a rower onboard ships. These changes will challenge us to be better, stronger and a more fit Navy."

First mentioned in 2019 by former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson for the PRT, the forearm plank and row were then tested by 500 sailors at three locations: Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii, Naval Station Mayport in Florida and Naval Station Norfolk and Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story in Virginia. The tests helped determine what the appropriate standards needed to be for each event.

The test takers "were happy that a change was coming," Anderson said. The forearm plank was chosen to replace the curlup because curlups also risk aggravating the lower back whereas the planks actually strengthen those muscles, Anderson said.

Can Trump end 'endless wars' during his term?

The Washington Post

President Donald Trump has begun his final battle against the open-ended U.S. conflicts he calls "endless wars." The Pentagon announced this week that it would halve the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan to 2,500, while the number in Iraq would fall from 3,000 to 2,500. U.S. troops will also depart from Somalia, although the precise number has not been announced.

The drawdown is slated to finish by Jan. 15, days before President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration. It comes after an abrupt post-election purge of top military officials: Acting defense secretary Christopher Miller made Tuesday's announcement just eight days after Trump ousted his predecessor, Mark Esper.

Trump's decision hardly came as a shock. From the time of his candidacy in the 2016 presidential election, Trump has railed against America's military commitments abroad. His rhetoric earned him unlikely allies among the leftists and libertarians who long argued that overreach and inertia had entrenched a global military presence that offered little benefit to Americans and even less to the countries where they fought.

Supporters of this vision welcomed Trump's last-minute decision to pull troops out. "There is little reason to wait for some more perfect moment in the future," Wil-

liam Ruger, Trump's nominee to be U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, and Rajan Me-non of the City College of New York wrote in an editorial for *The Washington Post*. "Moving with all due haste has the added advantage of making it more difficult politically to unwind."

Yet even if Trump wins this battle, he appears to have lost the larger war to bring U.S. soldiers home. Even with his latest moves, he will have made barely a dent in the estimated 200,000 U.S. troops stationed abroad. Grandier plans to move 12,000 troops out of Germany have made little progress. Trump's war against endless war seems set to end with a whimper, not a bang.

In seeking, and failing, to bring U.S. troops back to America, Trump's efforts fit with the record of recent presidents. His predecessor, President Barack Obama, often maintained, "there is no military solution," and once said that war was an "expression of human folly." During his first term, he oversaw an ambitious plan to withdraw around 150,000 U.S. troops from Iraq.

Ultimately, Obama failed to curtail America's overseas commitments. After the Islamic State filled a vacuum in the Levant, he sent thousands of U.S. troops back to Iraq, and also began bombing the group in Syria. He dramatically ramped up troop numbers in Afghanistan in the hopes of divisive victo-

ry over the Taliban that still proved evasive by the time he left office in 2017.

Trump was a fierce critic of the Obama administration's policies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now, even many of his allies on the right argue he is making the same mistakes. The Washington Free Beacon called the drawdown in Afghanistan and Iraq a "parting gift to libs and terrorists," while Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said a "premature American exit would likely be even worse" than Obama's 2011 Iraq withdrawal.

Liberal critics, meanwhile, argue that the Trump administration leaned into the worst aspects of Obama's war on terror. Data from the watchdog group Airwars that was published by *The Washington Post* on Wednesday shows that civilian deaths during U.S.-led coalition airstrikes against the Islamic State rose almost 300% in Trump's first year in office.

And Trump's aggressive actions on the world stage have often come into tension with his stated ideals. Escalating frictions with Iran have led to dramatic increases in the size of U.S. bases in Gulf states like Qatar. The U.S. strike in January that killed Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, brought the countries to the brink of war.

Dems: Inhofe blocking efforts to rename Army bases

BY STEVE BEYNON

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Oklahoma Republican Jim Inhofe, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, is attempting to block efforts to rename 10 Army bases that honor Confederate generals, causing a slowdown of negotiations on Capitol Hill to approve the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, two staffers for Senate Democrats said Wednesday.

"Chairman Inhofe's 11th-hour demand at the behest of outgoing President [Donald] Trump threatens troop pay raises and billions in funding for new military equipment in order to continue glorifying Confederate soldiers at U.S. military bases," said a Democratic aide, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The issue of renaming Army bases hit a boiling point during the summer amid nationwide protests over racial inequality and police brutality.

It picked up momentum when senior military leaders such as then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy backed the idea. The Senate and House then passed versions of the NDAA, which sets funding and policy priorities for the Pentagon each year, each with a provision to rename the bases.

Now a committee of House members and senators are negotiating a compromise version of the bill to send to the president to sign into law. However, Trump has threatened to veto the bill over provisions to remove Confederate names from military bases.

Inhofe's office did not respond this week to a request for comment, but the senator's position on renaming the bases was telegraphed months ago.

In July, Inhofe told his home state newspaper, *The Oklahoman*, that he spoke to Trump about the measures to rename bases and predicted it would be removed from a

compromise defense bill.

"We're going to see to it that provision doesn't survive the bill," Inhofe told the paper.

In a July tweet, Trump wrote he was relying on Inhofe to block the effort.

"I spoke to the highly respected (Chairman) Senator @JimInhofe, who has informed me that he WILL NOT be changing the names of our great Military Bases and Forts, places from which we won two World Wars (and more!). Like me, Jim is not a believer in 'Cancel Culture'."

The 10 Army posts named in honor of Confederate generals are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana; Fort Benning and Fort Gordon in Georgia; Fort Bragg in North Carolina; Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett in Virginia; Fort Rucker in Alabama, and Fort Hood in Texas. The installations were named primarily during the south's Jim Crow era in the 1910s and 1940s.

Marine commandant, Japanese PM pledge to maintain China deterrence

Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps commandant and the Japanese prime minister pledged this week to maintain a force strong enough to deter Chinese ambitions in the Western Pacific, according to the prime minister's office and the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A brief meeting Wednesday between Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and Gen. David Berger is another sign that the United States is rallying allies in the region to counter an assertive China.

"I understand this severe security environment you are in, and that, I think, drives us to move ahead to change, to maintain the

deterrence, and we do that together as one team," Berger said in a video of the meeting posted online by Suga's office.

Since 2012, Beijing has militarized dozens of islands and reefs in the East and South China seas, most of which it claims as territorial waters. The U.S. and Japan maintain that the seas are international waters.

Japan faces off against China over control of the Senkaku Islands, a small, uninhabited chain west of Okinawa. The islands sit near vital sea lanes, near fishing grounds and close to potential oil and natural gas reserves.

Japan administers the islands, but China and Taiwan also claim them. Chinese coast

guard vessels have spent a record number of days near the islands this year, watched by their Japanese counterparts.

The U.S.-Japan alliance has "never been more important," Berger said in the meeting. It's "very important for me to listen to understand how you view ... what the Marine Corps and the U.S. military can do as partners."

Berger is the latest top U.S. commander to comment on the Japanese alliance. On Oct. 26, during the Keen Sword exercise, U.S. Forces Japan commander Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider emphasized the two nations' ability to deploy rapidly and defend the Senkaku.

Navy secretary seeks 1st Fleet revival in the Western Pacific

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

The United States should boost its military presence in the Indo-Pacific region with a new numbered fleet, possibly based in Singapore, according to the U.S. Navy's top civilian leader.

Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite on Tuesday called for the reactivation of the 1st Fleet to increase U.S. power in a region where it is being challenged by a rapidly growing Chinese military machine, USNI News reported that day.

"We want to stand up a new numbered fleet. And we want to put that numbered fleet in the crossroads between the Indian and the Pacific oceans, and we're really going to have an [INDOPACOM] footprint," Braithwaite told the Naval Submarine League's annual symposium, according to the magazine.

The 7th Fleet, based at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, is the only U.S. fleet in the region. It includes the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group, which is supported at times by ships from the San Diego-based 3rd Fleet.

Seventh Fleet is the Navy's largest deployed fleet with 50-70 ships and submarines, 150 aircraft and approximately 20,000 sailors assigned to it. Its almost 48

million-square-mile operations area stretches from the International Date Line in the central Pacific to the India/Pakistan border and from the Kuril Islands in the north to the Antarctic in the south.

But the Navy can't just rely on 7th Fleet to cover that area, Braithwaite said.

Its ships deploy frequently for missions such as freedom-of-navigation patrols in the South China Sea, where China has built military bases on artificial islands in disputed waters.

Meanwhile, China's navy has been growing rapidly. In September, Beijing sent both of its aircraft carriers to sea as construction on a third continued.

"We have to look to our other allies and partners like Singapore, like India, and actually put a numbered fleet where it would be extremely relevant if, God forbid, we were to ever to get in any kind of a dust-up," Braithwaite said.

A new fleet could provide a much more formidable deterrent, he said.

"So we're going to create the First Fleet, and we're going to put it, if not Singapore right out of the chocks, we're going to look to make it more expeditionary-oriented and move it across the Pacific until it is where our allies and partners see that it could best assist them as well as assist us," he said.

Australia: Proof shows that elite troops illegally killed Afghans

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — A shocking Australian military report into war crimes has found evidence that elite Australian troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners, farmers and civilians.

Australian Defence Force Chief Gen. Angus Campbell said Thursday that the shameful record included alleged instances in which new patrol members would shoot a prisoner in order to achieve their first kill in a practice known as "bleeding." He said the soldiers would plant weapons and radios to support false claims the prisoners were enemies killed in action.

Campbell told reporters in Canberra the illegal killings began in 2009. He said some members of the elite Special Air Service encouraged "a self-centered, warrior culture."

The chief was announcing the findings of a four-year investigation by Maj. Gen. Paul Brereton, a judge and Army reservist who was asked to look into the allegations and interviewed more than 400 witnesses and reviewed thousands of pages of documents.

Jobless claims at 742K; millions to lose aid

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans seeking unemployment aid rose last week to 742,000, the first increase in five weeks and a sign that the resurgent viral outbreak is likely slowing the economy and forcing more companies to cut jobs.

The worsening pandemic and the arrival of cold weather could accelerate layoffs in the weeks ahead. Of the roughly 20 million Americans now receiving some form of unemployment benefits, about half will lose those benefits when two federal programs expire at the end of the year.

“The risk of further job and income loss is high now from business operations being curtailed,” said Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, a forecasting firm. “Also, expiration of federal benefits later this year will put renewed strain on household incomes. Overall, the labor market remains under stress.”

The Labor Department's report Thursday showed applications for jobless aid rose from 711,000 in the last week. In March, when the virus first intensified, the number hit 6.9 million. Before then, applications usually hovered around 225,000 a week.

The surge in confirmed infections, and worry about its effect on the economy, are putting pressure on financial markets. The Dow Jones Industrial Average declined in early trading Thursday for a third day.

The economy's modest recovery is increasingly at risk, with newly confirmed daily infections in the United States having exploded 80% over the past two weeks to the highest levels on record. More states and cities are issuing mask mandates, limiting the size of gatherings, restricting restaurant dining, closing gyms or reducing the hours and capacity of bars, stores and other businesses. At least 15 states have tightened curbs on businesses to try to slow infections.

Evidence is emerging that consumers are losing confidence in the economic outlook and pulling back on shopping, eating out and other activities. Spending on 30 million credit and debit cards tracked by JPMorgan Chase fell 7.4% earlier this month compared with a year ago. That marked a sharp drop from two weeks earlier. Consumer sentiment also declined in early November and is down nearly 21% from a year ago, according to a University of Michigan survey.

Retail sales rose just 0.3% in October, the smallest gain since stores reopened in April after a nationwide shutdown in March. The weak gain suggests that consumers began pulling back on spending even before new business restrictions were imposed.

The number of people who are continuing to receive traditional unemployment benefits fell to 6.4 million, the government said Thursday, from 6.8 million. Some of that decline reflects more hiring. But it also indi-

cates that many jobless people have used up their state unemployment aid — which typically expires after six months — and have transitioned to a federal extended benefits program that lasts 13 more weeks.

Yet that extended benefit program is one of two federal supports set to expire at year's end, eliminating benefits for 9.1 million people, according to a report Wednesday from The Century Foundation. Congress has so far failed to agree on a new stimulus package for jobless individuals and struggling businesses. The cutoff of aid will sharply reduce income for the unemployed, force a further reduction in their spending and could weaken the economy.

One of those programs is Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, which made self-employed and contract workers eligible for unemployment for the first time. PUA was established by a multi-trillion-dollar aid package Congress enacted in the spring.

The second measure provided the additional 13 weeks of benefits for unemployed people who used up their state benefits.

When those two programs expire on Dec. 26, the Century Foundation estimates that 12 million people will lose their benefits. About 2.9 million will probably transition to a state extended benefit program that can last from six to 20 weeks, the report said. The rest will lose benefits that average about \$320 a week nationally.

Biden reaches out to governors as Trump stymies transition

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — Joe Biden's meeting Thursday with a group of Democratic and Republican governors is his latest attempt to fight through President Donald Trump's unprecedented attempt to block the president-elect's transition to power.

Biden and Vice Presiden-elect Kamala Harris planned a virtual session in the afternoon with the National Governors Association's leadership team, which includes five Republicans and four Democrats. All the Democrats and a majority of the Republicans involved have acknowledged Biden as the winner of the White House election.

One expected participant, Gov. Larry Hogan, R-Md., told The Associated Press recently that Trump's wild and unsupported claims of widespread voter fraud were “dangerous” and “embarrassing.”

The highest-ranking Republican on the NGA's executive committee, Asa Hutchin-

son of Arkansas, said over the weekend that Biden would be the next president and he called on the Trump administration to give Biden access to the intelligence briefings he needs in order to be fully prepared to lead the country on Jan. 20, Inauguration Day.

So far, the governors have not swayed the Republican president.

Before Biden's meeting, Trump came out with a new round of false claims of voter fraud in key states, even as courts continue to reject his challenges and a small, but growing, number of Republican officeholders publicly begin to accept Biden's victory.

Beyond being a pillar of democracy, the peaceful transfer of power after an election is especially critical this year given the extraordinary governing challenges Biden will inherit in just nine weeks. The United States is struggling through the worst public health crisis in a century, state and local government are facing massive budget shortfalls, and millions of Americans re-

main out of work.

But more than two weeks after the Nov. 3 election, the Trump administration is refusing to let Biden receive briefings on national security and pandemic planning that leaders in both parties say are vital to ensure Biden can govern effectively on Day One.

With Trump dug in and Republicans on Capitol Hill largely unwilling to challenge him, Biden has been forced to turn to diverse collection of outside allies to ratchet up the pressure on Trump to concede.

The CEOs of America's largest companies have released a statement recognizing Biden and Harris as the clear winners. The heads of the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association and the American Nurses Association issued a joint statement on Tuesday urging the Trump administration to share “all critical information related to COVID-19” with Biden. Not doing so, they warned, would jeopardize American lives.

Prehistoric sturgeon washes up on beach

VA VIRGINIA BEACH — A rare and prehistoric fish has washed up on Virginia Beach's oceanfront.

The slow-moving, armor-plated species sometimes falls victim to ship strikes. And the sturgeon's head was nearly severed.

Atlantic sturgeon are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. The species used to have vast populations along the Atlantic coast.

Female Atlantic sturgeon lay eggs in the fall in the rivers of the Chesapeake Bay, and then migrate offshore, marine biologist Noelle Mathies said. She added that it's rare to find a sturgeon so quickly after it has died.

In recent years, scientists have been seeing increased numbers of sturgeon in some rivers because of cleaner water, dam removals and fishing bans. These discoveries provide some hope for a fish that is among the world's most threatened.

Dog reunites with owner year after being lost

MO ARNOLD — Nearly a year after Walter the dog went missing in suburban St. Louis, apparently wandering the woods behind an industrial park, the golden retriever is back with his owner.

Kate Olson of New Hampshire was in Arnold visiting relatives last Thanksgiving when Walter slipped out of his collar and took off. Olson stayed in Missouri for weeks searching for the dog and printing and distributing fliers.

She eventually returned to New England but got calls about sightings. She returned in January to search again. No luck, so she created a "Where's Walter?" Facebook page and enlisted animal rescue groups in the search.

Finally, Olson got the call she had been waiting for. A group based in Belleville, Ill., called Lost Paws Trapping was able to capture Walter. Olson immediately got on a plane and was reunited with Walter.

Man finds mortar shell while digging flower bed

MA WESTBOROUGH — A Massachusetts man found a mortar shell in his yard while digging up a spot for a new flower bed.

Department of Fire Safety spokesperson Jennifer Meith said bomb squad members determined that the mortar shell was a training mortar, which only contains a

small charge called a "spotter charge."

Police Lt. Chet Hallice said that the Massachusetts State Police bomb squad removed the mortar and detonated it,

"The homeowner was cutting out a new flower bed when he hit something hard," Hallice said Monday. "He dug it out and it was a metal item that looked like a shell. It was a 20-inch metal cylinder that he believed to be an explosive."

High school disciplined for band's costumes

PA PITTSBURGH — Officials disciplined a western Pennsylvania high school because of costumes worn by some members of its marching band that were perceived as blackface.

The Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League placed the Peters Township School District on probation until Oct. 31, 2021, and ordered it to submit a written plan to "educate and eradicate the social and racial insensitivity displayed by the marching band."

At least two members of the band wore black full-body suits during a pregame performance when the school, which is comprised of mostly white students, played Woodland Hills, a predominantly Black school, on Oct. 30.

The community likened the outfits to wearing blackface. In a statement to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, a Peters district spokeswoman said the district found the students "acted without racist or harmful intent." "Nonetheless, their choice of costumes, in the context of the game, was insensitive."

Monastery will close after 74 years

NH CONCORD — A monastery in New Hampshire is closing after 74 years, according to The Concord Monitor.

The news was announced by the Diocese of Manchester, in conjunction with Carmelite Communities Associated, a national association of Carmelite monasteries.

The 39-acre property is owned by the Carmelite Communities Associated and has an assessed value of nearly \$600,000.

University to get Apple store managed by students

SC COLUMBIA — The University of South Carolina announced that a store selling Apple products is coming to its campus in Columbia in early

2021 — and will be managed largely by students as part of their curriculum.

It will be the second store of its kind in the U.S. that is managed and operated by students, according to a news release.

The store, which will be located in the Byrnes Building, will sell a range of Apple products including laptop computers, tablets and accessories.

Faculty from the College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management are leading the project and will help with store management, while students will manage daily operations.

Shark tagged off Canada found along Outer Banks

NC CHARLOTTE — A 17-foot great white shark that was tagged off Canada last month has made its way to North Carolina's Outer Banks, an ocean research group said.

OCEARCH, which tagged Nukumi on Oct. 2, posted data showing the 3,541-pound apex predator had popped up off Wilmington, then turned around and headed north to Buxton on Hatteras Island.

Tagged sharks show up on satellite only after their dorsal fin breaches the water surface for more than a few seconds. According to OCEARCH, the shark has spent the past two days off Avon.

Nukumi, named by OCEARCH, counts as the largest of seven white sharks currently tracking off North Carolina's coast. She is considered unique among the more than 60 sharks being tracked in the Northwest Atlantic because she is the biggest and likely, estimated to be more than 50 years old, the oldest.

Police say thief cooked pizza during burglary

CA FULLERTON — A thief took a break during his burglary of a Southern California pizzeria to make himself a pizza pie before fleeing with the restaurant's delivery car, authorities said.

The suspect, later identified as Oscar Sanchez, 25, broke into Big Slice Pizza in Fullerton on Nov. 8, police said. After he was arrested, police posted security video of the pizza-making to Facebook.

Sanchez allegedly also stole the pizzeria's cash and tablets, police said. Security footage shows him stretching dough at the restaurant's counter. Prosecutors have charged him on suspicion of grand theft, grand theft auto, second degree burglary, the possession of burglary tools and other crimes. "Needless to say, jail doesn't serve his favorite meal," Fullerton police said.

Indiana's Allen real as it gets

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Tom Allen rubbed his chin, took a couple of deep breaths and composed himself Monday.

It was yet another moment for the college world to steal a glimpse of the pure, raw emotion flowing through the Indiana coach. Allen proudly embraces letting those around see what fuels him, even if it involves his injured son, a Hoosiers linebacker, and especially now as fans increasingly follow the No. 9 Hoosiers (4-0) and their best start in decades.

The fun moments have been must-see videos — the 50-year-old Allen crowd-surfing through the locker room, players chanting "We Love You" and the cheek wound he suffered after sprinting down the sideline to hug Devon Matthews following an interception.

But with Indiana's biggest game since its 1967 Rose Bowl season looming Saturday at No. 3 Ohio State (3-0), Allen struggled with the reality that his

son, Thomas, would miss the rest of this historic season with a fractured hip.

"It's been a long journey, but it's been awesome. My kids have sacrificed, my wife," Allen said, pausing. "That's why I hurt so much for Thomas because I know what he's been through to get here. He's a tough sucker."

Those who know Allen understand this is real as it gets.

He put this long-languishing program back on the national map with an unwavering set of principles — playing with conviction, confidence and spirit, demanding accountability, developing the kind of relationships coaches respect and players revere and making sure priorities take precedence over wins and losses.

Including being a father first.

It took former Indiana athletic director Fred Glass one phone call to recognize Allen's unique skill set would be a perfect fit as the Hoosiers' new defensive coordinator in 2016.

Then, just weeks before Indiana made its first bowl appearance in nine seasons, Glass fired head coach Kevin Wilson, now the Buckeyes' offensive coordinator, and handed the reins to Allen. Why?

"He's authentic, I'd say that's his greatest quality," Glass told The Associated Press on Monday. "Some coaches, I think, try to relate too much with the kids. He's got his administrator's license and some might say he's a little nerdy but he is who he is. I think that makes it OK for those kids to be who they are."

Allen feels the same way about every player on the Hoosiers roster, and it's something he wants them to see and feel.

"I love this place and I love these kids and we're going to fight, man, I don't care what anybody says about this stinking game," Allen said. "We're going to compete and we're going to fight and good Lord willing, we're going to find a way to keep proving everybody wrong."

Navy has 3rd straight postponed

The Washington Post

The Navy football team has had its third consecutive game postponed due to a COVID-19 outbreak.

The American Athletic Conference announced Wednesday that the game between Navy and South Florida has been postponed due to positive tests at USF. Navy hasn't played since a 51-37 loss to SMU on Oct. 31. Games against Tulsa and Memphis were postponed due to an outbreak on the Navy grounds.

The Midshipmen have one final game scheduled for Dec. 12 against Army in West Point, N.Y., after local safety guidelines prompted a venue change from Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia. Cadets and Midshipmen will be permitted to attend the game in West Point.

South Florida has one final game scheduled against Central Florida on Nov. 27, so both teams have the first weekend of December open as a landing spot for a rescheduled game. Navy, however, is also trying to make up two other games.

The Midshipmen took a nearly two-week break from in-person football activities while dealing with the outbreak. They returned to the field Friday and had been preparing for USF this week. The team lost its Senior Day against Memphis at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium.

"Really excited about this game," Navy coach Ken Niumatalolo said Monday. "Our practices on Friday and Saturday, our young men were just excited to get out of their rooms. Just that part, getting out of their rooms, some of our more spirited practices. Just the fact of being able to get out of their rooms is definitely beneficial for them."

Following in his father's footsteps

Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — Like any other college freshman, Brenden Rice is determined to carve his own path and make a name for himself.

What makes his quest so different is he's the son of Hall of Famer Jerry Rice.

No matter how many catches he makes, the Colorado receiver realizes comparisons to his dad will inevitably trail him.

To make his own name, he has to step out from the shadow of his powerful last name.

"I have my first name Brenden," he said, "and that's what it starts with every day."

Brenden Rice, freshman receiver — that's how the coaching staff treats him. He's not Jerry Rice's kid. He's just another wideout who has the size (6-foot-3, 205 pounds) and skills to be molded into something special.

"I want him to be him," said Colorado coach Karl Dorrell, whose 2-0 team is slated to be off this weekend after the Pac-12 canceled its game with Arizona State due to a number of positive CO-

VID-19 cases with the Sun Devils. "Brenden Rice is a really good player and he's got a chance to have his own great career and he's going to do it on his own merit."

Sorry dad. Ask him whom his game most resembles and he says Arizona Cardinals receiver DeAndre Hopkins. The younger Rice's regard for Hopkins was only enhanced last weekend with Hopkins' 43-yard winning catch — in heavy traffic — from Kyler Murray against Buffalo on a play now dubbed "Hail Murray."

"Big, physical dude that's able to run routes but at the same time you throw a jump ball up and he's going to go get it," Brenden Rice explained. "I love that mentality."

It's the same sort of mentality as his father, who played for two decades with the 49ers, Raiders, Seahawks and very briefly the Broncos. Jerry Rice holds the NFL records for career receptions (1,549), yards receiving (22,895) and total touchdowns (208).

So he has his dad to lean on, too.

Chiefs look to avenge loss to Raiders

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — It takes a lot to get Big Red to turn red.

When he's not in the pressure cooker of an NFL sideline, Kansas City Chiefs coach Andy Reid is about as mild-mannered as it gets. He wears floral print shirts by Tommy Bahama, prefers sweat shorts to slacks, and the Southern Californian exudes the kind of surfer chic that comes with the laid-back lifestyle of the beach.

The sight of the Las Vegas Raiders doing a victory lap around Arrowhead Stadium in their caravan of buses after ending the Chiefs' 13-game winning streak last month? Well, that was enough to get under Reid's rather thick skin.

"I don't think either team likes each other that much," he said, "as they've stated before."

Making the entire scene all the more galling is the fact that Reid considers Raiders coach Jon Gruden a close friend. Big

Red spoke glowingly of him when Gruden chose to return to the AFC West from his plush gig in the television booth.

For his part, Gruden didn't want any part of discussing the victory lap ahead of Sunday's rematch in Las Vegas.

"I mean, you can find the smart aleck bus driver in Kansas City who made some snide comments when we got on the bus, maybe that's why we drove around the stadium — just to tick him off," Gruden said. "This is ridiculous. Next question."

Oh, don't expect that to be the last time the parade around the Truman Sports Complex gets brought up.

The Chiefs (8-1) haven't had a lot of chances to exact a little bit of revenge on opponents the past few years. They've only lost four regular-season games in three of the past four seasons, and each of those years ended with an AFC West title.

So they usually end up having the last laugh.

When the Chiefs do get a chance for payback, they tend to make it count. They lost to Houston in Week 6 last season, then trounced the Texans in the divisional round of the playoffs. They lost to Tennessee in Week 10 and beat the Titans a couple of months later for the AFC championship.

"Any time you lose to anyone, the next time you play them you want to win," Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes said. "In this league, when you're in the same division, you get that opportunity. We're going to be ready, I promise you that."

The mystique of the rivalry only ups the ante. The two franchises trace their animosity to the earliest days of the AFL, and it grew when Al Davis purchased the Raiders in the late 1960s. Both teams have experienced success over the years, and the hatred has kept pace, passed down from one generation of players to the next.

From one generation of own-

ers to the next, too. Now it's Al Davis's son, Mark, who runs the Raiders. And it's Lamar Hunt's son, Clark, who owns the Chiefs. And while their relationship is cordial — friendly, even — the two of them have a unique understanding of the rivalry and the importance of beating each other is to their fan bases.

"I learned early on that if you were a Chiefs fan you didn't like the Raiders," Hunt said. "I don't know if my dad taught me that or our fan base taught me that. I certainly remember seeing the tape from the 1970 game where there was a big fight. That was the Raiders' style back then. They were the bad guys and that's how we looked at them."

After their victory lap around Arrowhead Stadium last month, that's how a lot of Chiefs fans look at them now.

"I think part of having a great rivalry is the other side has to be successful," Hunt said. "They're having a great year this year."

NFL placing all teams in intensive virus protocols

Associated Press

The NFL is placing all teams in intensive protocol starting Saturday to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 as the number of cases rises around the country.

Use of masks will be mandatory at all times at team facilities, including during practice and in weight rooms. Meetings must be held either virtually or in the largest indoor space with approval by the league. Meals have to be made available for grab-and-go to avoid players and staff congregating in cafeterias. Time spent in the locker room also has to be limited.

Clubs operating under the intensive protocols have reduced close contacts by more than 50% since the fifth week of the regular season, according to a memo obtained by The Associated Press that was sent from NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell to teams on Wednesday.

"These sustained reductions and the resulting health and safety benefits make it appropriate to implement the intensive pro-

ocols on a mandatory, league-wide basis," Goodell said in the memo.

So far, 28 teams have entered intensive protocol at some point and 16 teams have done it more than once.

"The upcoming holidays, beginning with Thanksgiving next week, will introduce new risks of exposure that we need to address now," Goodell wrote. "Because we have a highly sophisticated program of daily testing, we know when the virus enters our facilities, which underscores the importance of contact tracing and other steps to minimize close contacts within a facility."

"Recent experience has highlighted the importance of minimizing high-risk close contacts; on multiple occasions, we have seen individuals identified on that basis test positive within a short time. We have also seen many instances in which effective action by clubs to minimize these close contacts prevented the virus from spreading within the club, and avoided players or coaches being ruled out of practice or

games."

The NFL said Tuesday there were 17 new confirmed positives among players and 35 among other personnel during testing from Nov. 8-14. That brought the league's total to 95 players and 175 other personnel since Aug. 1, not counting new cases this week.

"The biggest motivator I find when we talk to the clubs about this is simply that if they are not in compliance with the protocols from a mask-wearing perspective or for some reason somebody forgot their device or something like that, they're much more likely to be identified as a high-risk close contact than they would otherwise," said Jeff Miller, the league's executive vice president of communications, public affairs and policy.

"So when that individual coach or player is removed from the team environment for five days because their mask was down, that's a lesson learned throughout the facility. And so I don't think we see a lot of repeat problems as far as that goes."

Edwards, Wiseman go 1-2 in draft

Associated Press

Anthony Edwards paid tribute to his mother and grandmother. Onyeka Okongwu recalled his brother. Obi Toppin thought about coming home.

Tears flowed freely for those and many more players Wednesday night when their long-awaited, months-delayed NBA dreams were finally realized.

Edwards was taken by the Minnesota Timberwolves with the No. 1 pick in an NBA draft delayed multiple times because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Commissioner Adam Silver announced the pick from ESPN headquarters in Bristol, Conn. The draft was originally scheduled for June 25 before multiple delays caused by the virus pushed it back and out of its usual home at Barclays Center in Brooklyn. Boxes of hats were shipped to the top prospects to put on the one they needed after their name was called.

Edwards watched while seated next to portraits of his late mother and grandmother. They both died of cancer and he was emotional after his name was announced.

“As far as just being excited and just being happy and ready to go and ready to work and ready to get there as soon as possible, those emotions were overwhelming with just my mother and grandmother being there,” Edwards said. “I mean, it was just a dream come true and just a blessing.”

And though there wasn't the usual family table in the green room and trip on stage to meet the commissioner, some players still were outfitted in fashionable attire — perhaps none more than No. 12 pick Tyrese Haliburton of Sacramento, whose blue, floral

suit had the words “Black Lives Matter” on the inside.

They celebrated with family, friends, coaches — and in Cole Anthony's case, even celebrity fans. Movie director Spike Lee jumped up and down with his family when Orlando took Anthony, whose father, Greg played for the Knicks, at No. 15.

Some moments triggered deeper emotions. Okongwu, taken No. 6 by Atlanta, recalled his older brother, Nnamdi, who died after a skateboarding accident in 2014.

Toppin, the national player of the year last season at Dayton, struggled to speak after New York took him at No. 8, bringing the Brooklyn-born forward to his hometown.

“I'm from New York, that's why it's important,” Toppin said. “Me repping my city, it's amazing.”

Edwards became the 11th straight one-and-done player to be the No. 1 pick, coming in a year where there was no clear obvious choice. He averaged 19.1 points for the Bulls, tops among all freshman.

The Golden State Warriors, stung by the news that Klay Thompson sustained another leg injury earlier Wednesday, took Memphis center James Wiseman with the second pick. They stumbled to the bottom of the league while Thompson missed the entire season with a torn ACL in his left knee.

The severity of his injury had not been revealed as the draft began but it didn't persuade the Warriors to take another guard. Instead they went with the 7-foot-1 center who arrived as the No. 1 recruit out of high school and averaged 19.7 points and 10.7 rebounds in three games before he was suspended for eligibility reasons and eventual-

ly left the program to prepare for the draft.

LaMelo Ball then went to the Charlotte Hornets, the next stop on a lengthy basketball journey that sent the guard from high school in California to stops as a professional in Lithuania and Australia. He joined brother Lonzo, taken No. 2 by the Lakers and now in New Orleans, to give the Balls two brothers taken in the top three picks.

After all his travels, Ball is eager to make a home playing for Michael Jordan's team in Charlotte.

“I feel like I can go out there and play basketball,” Ball said. “I feel like I was born to do this.”

The newcomers will have precious little time to prepare for their debuts and need to knock off months of rust or more — Wiseman hasn't played an organized game in a year — without the benefit of summer league. Training camps open in early December and the 72-game 2020-21 season is set to begin on Dec. 22.

“This draft process has been the longest for me, so I've just been working on my game,” Wiseman said.

“I've actually been playing pickup games with pros already, so I've been getting a lot of experience. But really just focusing on myself. I'm truly ready to play with these great guys.”

Teams had to evaluate prospects without benefit of the usual draft combine in Chicago or the ability to invite them to their facilities for workouts and meetings. And with the coronavirus shutting down the sports world in March, there was no NCAA Tournament for the players to make a final impression before entering the draft.

As usual, NBA draft has an international flavor

Associated Press

It never takes long for the international flavor to hit the NBA Draft, and Wednesday was no exception.

With Killian Hayes and Deni Avdija going seventh and ninth respectively, it was the eighth consecutive year where a pair of international players went in the draft's first 10 picks. Hayes was born in Lakeland, Fla., but holds French citizenship, and going seventh overall made him that nation's highest pick ever.

Hayes, picked by Detroit, obviously also

became the first European player taken this year.

“It's a cool title to hold, but it's not something I was aiming for,” Hayes said. “I'm just trying to be in a great situation where I'm able to play and show what I can do.”

Avdija was picked by Washington. The Israeli player was in Tel Aviv for the announcement, which came at about 4 a.m. Thursday local time.

“Israel is such a small country that doesn't provide as many NBA players as other countries, but for me just to represent

my country and to make history, that's a blessing,” Avdija said.

No. 3 pick LaMelo Ball played internationally in Australia, as did No. 24 pick R.J. Hampton. No. 17 pick Aleksej Pokusevski is a Serbian who played in Greece. No. 18 pick Josh Green played college basketball at Arizona, but hails from Australia.

No. 20 Precious Achiuwa hails from Nigeria originally, and now is part of the Miami Heat. Nigeria had two first-rounders for the first time; Kansas' Udoka Azubuike went 27th overall to Utah.