

Concussions need greater recovery time

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

Normal recovery time from a concussion is sometimes double what it was previously thought to be, according to a recent University of Michigan study that was heavily funded by the Pentagon.

Researchers studied 1,751 student-athletes, including service academy cadets, and found that full recovery can take up to 28 days. And even that was not long enough for some of the study subjects to fully heal.

The findings should reduce stigma for those previously considered slow in their healing and inform coaches, commanders and others about when concussed people should return to duty or sports, said Steve Broglio, lead

study author.

"There can be unintentional pressure to return," said Steve Broglio, lead author of the study. "(They're told) 'You're at day 16; why aren't you getting better?' Hopefully, they'll pump the brakes."

Half the participants in the study fully recovered from their concussions within two weeks of injury and were cleared for unrestricted sports activity. That finding was in line with previous concussion studies. But it was a month until 85% of them were fully recovered. The other 15% had not fully recovered even then.

The study by the NCAA-DOD Concussion Assessment, Research and Education Consortium, billed as the largest concus-

sion and repetitive head impact study in history, began in 2014 and involves athletes playing 22 sports at 30 colleges.

It found negligible differences in recovery time between men and women and in subjects experiencing their first concussion versus those who'd had previous concussions, Broglio said.

The Defense Department, which provided the majority of the funding for the study, has a huge stake in understanding how to respond to concussions, also called mild traumatic brain injury.

Although TBI has been called the "signature injury" of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a significant majority of concussions in service members occur outside of

combat, Broglio said. He listed scenarios such as sports, vehicle crashes and falls.

In 2015, two dozen U.S. Military Academy cadets were diagnosed with concussions after a traditional pillow fight marking the end of summer training turned into mayhem as some cadets swung pillowcases packed with hard objects like helmets, according to the academy.

"One of the most common and most disabling injuries of the last two decades of military conflict has been TBI, and particularly concussions," Navy Capt. Scott Cota, division chief of the TBI Center of Excellence, said in a statement. "Concussions represent more than 80% of the TBIs in the military since 2001."

USAF survey finds thousands of abuse cases go unreported

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force wants to create a one-stop shop for abuse victims after a survey administered last year found more than half of respondents had experienced psychological or physical abuse during the prior two years, but few reported it, service officials said Tuesday.

Self-identified abuse victims lacked confidence that reporting harmful incidents would accomplish anything, and those who sought help were largely dissatisfied with their experiences, according to an Air Force report released Tuesday.

Top service officials involved in administering the survey, which was the basis for the report entitled Interpersonal Violence in the Department of the Air Force, said the Air Force needed to do more to bridge a gap between victims and their commanders, who generally believe abuse victims receive proper care, the report found.

"It seems to be uniformly true that people at the lower levels who have experienced these things are telling us that there's a problem, and the senior leadership is not

perceiving that there is that problem," Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall told reporters in a news briefing to discuss the report's findings. "So, we've got an issue right there."

The survey was sent out in 2020 by the Air Force Interpersonal Violence Task Force, which was set up by service leaders during the summer in the wake of the Army's troubling findings of widespread abuse and harassment at Fort Hood, Texas.

The task force, led by Air Force Brig. Gen. April Vogel, issued the survey to the Air Force Department's about 654,000 airmen, Space Force guardians and civilian employees. The task force conducted more detailed follow-up surveys and focus groups to understand victims of interpersonal violence, which it defined as 81 behaviors in which abusers use "power or force resulting in psychological or physical harm or that detracts from a culture of dignity and respect." They described such abuses as ranging from "stalking and bullying to domestic violence and sexual assault."

About 54% of the 68,000 Air Force Department personnel who responded to the

survey reported they had experienced such abuse during the previous two years. This includes airmen, Space Force guardians and Air Force civilian employees. The report also found more than half of the respondents in each component of the department — the active-duty Air Force, the Space Force, the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserves and the civilian employees — reported facing such abuse.

Workplace bullying, reported by about 36% of survey respondents, was the most common abuse reported. About 29% reported workplace harassment. Some 9% reported intimate partner violence, and another 21% reported violence from others.

Less than 40% of victims reported their abuse to commanders or law enforcement authorities, according to the report. Most who did not report the abuse said they did not believe anything would happen if they did report it or they were concerned they would face negative consequences for reporting, the Air Force found. Those who did report the abuse or sought help found mixed results in the services offered to victims by the Air Force.

House Dems urge Biden to end Korean War

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

Twenty-three U.S. representatives have called on President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken to “prioritize active diplomatic engagement” with the two Koreas and end the Korean War.

The 23 lawmakers, including Democrats Andy Kim of New Jersey, Grace Meng of New York, Judy Chu of California and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, wrote a letter dated Nov. 4 urging the president and the top diplomat to seek a “binding peace agreement” that would formally declare a “final end” to

the Korean War. No Republican lawmakers signed the letter.

The 1950-53 Korean War was concluded through an armistice agreement rather than a peace treaty. The United States, through the United Nations Command, was a signatory to the agreement, along with China and North Korea.

“Despite this period of conflict ending many decades ago in 1953, a peace treaty was never officially signed,” the lawmakers said in the letter. “While North Korea’s nuclear weapons continue to pose a threat to peace and security around the world, a forever state of war

does not resolve this issue, nor does it serve the national interest of the United States and our allies.”

The lawmakers argued that a “forever state of war” hinders a resolution to North Korea’s weapons program and makes “progress on the nuclear issue more difficult.”

All of the congressional leaders who signed the letter are also cosponsors to Rep. Brad Sherman’s Peace on the Korean Peninsula Act, which would require the State Department to review travel restrictions for U.S. nationals bound for North Korea.

Roughly 100,000 Americans still have relatives living in North Korea, according to the bill sponsored by the California Democrat, and some of them have expressed a desire to attend funerals and other religious ceremonies.

U.S. nationals are prohibited from traveling to, from or through North Korea unless approved by the State Department. The department issues special validated passports to qualified applicants with a “national interest,” such as American Red Cross workers, those with “compelling humanitarian considerations” and journalists.

Yokosuka sailors tidy up American graves in Japan

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOHAMA, Japan—About 30 sailors from Yokosuka Naval Base made the trip Wednesday to the Yokohama Foreign General Cemetery, in the Naka Ward of Japan’s second-most populous city, to clean up areas dedicated to Americans in preparation for Veterans Day.

Using rakes, brooms, leaf blowers and hedge trimmers, they cleaned the final resting places of veterans of World War I, World War II and the crew of the sloop-of-war USS Oneida, which sank near Yokohama in 1870 after colliding with a British steamer.

“It’s very humbling,” Petty Officer 2nd Class Alexandra Nerio told Stars and Stripes. “To be able to give back to those who fought before us to honor them and honor their legacy, even with something as small as raking leaves, it paints a bigger picture.”

The cleanup efforts are part of

biannual visits to the cemetery organized by the naval base, said Petty Officer 1st Class Marc Vanta, who helped coordinate Wednesday’s event.

Vanta said the events demonstrate the Navy’s commitment to the Japanese community and provide a chance for sailors to remember their predecessors.

“Because of the history that’s attached to the cemetery, it gives our current generation of sailors a way to pay their respects and to honor these fallen sailors and soldiers,” Vanta said.

Vanta, along with Petty Officer 2nd Class Ignacio Fuentes, said that while cemetery groundskeepers maintain the graves, the families of the deceased may not necessarily be in Japan to take care of the individual plots.

“I think the main reason we’re out here is that, clearly, everybody didn’t get to make it home,” Fuentes said. “We’re out here to help out — for us, it might not seem like much, but it means a lot to the families.”

Chinese forces exercise near Taiwan, reacting to US visit

Associated Press

BEIJING — Chinese military forces are holding exercises near Taiwan in response to a visit by a U.S. congressional delegation to the island.

The drills in the area of the Taiwan Strait are a “necessary measure to safeguard national sovereignty,” China’s Defense Ministry said in an announcement Tuesday that gave no details on the timing, participants and location of the exercises.

It said the “joint war preparedness patrol” by the Eastern Theater Command was prompted by the “seriously incorrect words and actions of relevant countries over the issue of Taiwan” and the actions of those advocating the self-governing island’s independence.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said China considers the delegation’s visit a “serious violation” of U.S. commitments not to have formal relations with Taiwan, which China claims as its territory.

“China is firmly opposed to that and has made solemn representations to the U.S.,” Wang said at a daily briefing Wednesday.

“All risky and provocative actions against China’s reunification is like an ant trying to topple over a giant tree and is doomed to fail,” Wang said.

The United States has strong but informal relations with Taiwan, and tensions have been rising between the U.S. and China over several issues including Hong Kong, the South China Sea, the coronavirus pandemic and trade. Details on the U.S. delegation that reportedly arrived in Taiwan on Tuesday were not immediately available.

A Chinese Defense Ministry statement from an unidentified spokesperson strongly condemned the visit, saying “no one should underestimate the firm determination of the People’s Liberation Army to safeguard the Chinese people’s national sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

Judge refuses Trump's records request

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal judge rejected former President Donald Trump's request to block the release of documents to the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 Capitol riot.

In denying a preliminary injunction, U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan said Tuesday that Congress had a strong public interest in obtaining records that could shed light on a violent riot mounted by the former president's supporters. She added that President Joe Biden had the authority to waive executive privilege over the documents despite Trump's assertions otherwise.

Barring a court order, the

National Archives plans to turn over Trump's records to the committee by Friday. But Trump's lawyers swiftly promised an appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The case will likely eventually head to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"At bottom, this is a dispute between a former and incumbent President," Chutkan wrote. "And the Supreme Court has already made clear that in such circumstances, the incumbent's view is accorded greater weight."

Trump "does not acknowledge the deference owed" to Biden's judgment as the current president, Chutkan said. She noted examples of past presi-

dents declining to assert executive privilege and rejected what she said was Trump's claim that executive privilege "exists in perpetuity."

"Presidents are not kings, and Plaintiff is not President," she said.

According to an earlier court filing from the archives, the records include call logs, drafts of remarks and speeches and handwritten notes from Trump's then-chief of staff, Mark Meadows. There are also copies of talking points from then-press secretary Kayleigh McEnany and "a draft Executive Order on the topic of election integrity," the National Archives has said.

Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-

Miss., who chairs the House committee, said in a statement after the ruling that the records are crucial for understanding the attack and "in my view, there couldn't be a more compelling public interest than getting answers about an attack on our democracy."

On CNN, Thompson said Trump should stop behaving like a "spoiled brat."

The nine-member House committee is investigating not just Trump's conduct on Jan. 6 — when he told a rally to "fight like hell" shortly before rioters overran law enforcement — but his efforts in the months before the riot to challenge election results or obstruct a peaceful transfer of power.

House Jan. 6 panel subpoenas ex-White House aides

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House investigators issued subpoenas to 10 former officials who worked for Donald Trump at the end of his presidency, an effort to find out more about what the president was doing and saying as his supporters violently stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 in a bid to overturn his defeat.

The subpoenas issued Tuesday, which included demands for documents and testimony from former senior adviser Stephen Miller and former press secretary Kayleigh McEnany, bring the House panel tasked with investigating the insurrection even closer inside Trump's inner circle — and

closer to Trump himself. They come a day after the committee subpoenaed six other associates of the former president who spread mistruths about widespread fraud in the election and strategized about how to thwart President Joe Biden's victory.

"The Select Committee wants to learn every detail of what went on in the White House on January 6th and in the days beforehand," said Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, the Democratic chairman of the panel. "We need to know precisely what role the former president and his aides played in efforts to stop the counting of the electoral votes and if they were in touch with anyone outside the White House attempting to over-

turn the outcome of the election."

It is so far unclear if the Jan. 6 panel will subpoena Trump, though the committee's leaders have said they haven't ruled anything out. The panel has now issued more than 30 subpoenas, including to White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, longtime ally Steve Bannon and others who were close to the former president.

The House later voted to hold Bannon in contempt after he said he would not comply, and the Justice Department is still deciding whether to prosecute the case. Meadows and others have "engaged" with the committee, according to lawmakers, but may still be held in contempt if they do not fully comply.

Investigation finds Trump officials violated Hatch Act

Associated Press

NEW YORK — At least 13 former Trump administration officials, including Jared Kushner and Mike Pompeo, violated the law by intermingling campaigning with their official government duties, according to a federal investigation.

The report from the Office of Special Counsel released Tuesday says the officials broke the

law without consequence and with the administration's approval as part of a "willful disregard for the Hatch Act," which prohibits government officials from using their official roles to influence elections, including supporting candidates while acting in their official capacities.

"The cumulative effect of these repeated and public violations was to undermine public

confidence in the nonpartisan operation of government," they wrote, adding that, "such flagrant and unpunished violations erode the principal foundation of our democratic system—the rule of law."

The office investigated officials' comments in the lead-up to the 2020 presidential election, including the Republican National Convention, which was

held at the White House in a major break from historical norms.

While the Office of Special Counsel concluded that hosting the event at the White House did not itself violate the Hatch Act, it found plenty of other instances where Trump officials did, mostly by promoting the former president's reelection in media interviews in which they appeared in their official capacity.

White House rushes infrastructure fixes

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The Biden administration is relying on infrastructure dollars to help fix the clogged ports and blanket the nation with internet access — but a series of initiatives rolled out on Tuesday show that the urgent pace might not be fast enough to address the immediate needs of an economy coping with a supply chain squeeze and a shift to remote work.

President Joe Biden spoke with the CEOs of Walmart, Target, UPS and FedEx on Tuesday about how to relieve the supply chain challenges as ships are still waiting to dock at some of the country's leading ports. The key problem is that these ports are experiencing record volumes of shipping containers as the economy has recovered from the pandemic.

Biden received updates from the CEOs on how deliveries are being sped up to ensure

that store shelves will be well-stocked this holiday season, according to a White House official. Bloomberg News first reported Biden's conversations with the corporate leaders.

Yet the concrete policy steps being discussed by the administration show that there is no quick fix to supply chain issues that are still hurting smaller businesses and causing consumers to face higher prices. Nor can the administration build out a national broadband network fast enough as more Americans are pivoting toward remote work.

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo highlighted at the White House briefing the \$65 billion for broadband access in the the \$1 trillion infrastructure package that cleared the House on Friday. She said that jobs would be created and poorer Americans would receive "affordable" internet service,

though she did not spell out a precise dollar amount on what the monthly bills could be.

The plan involves careful logistics that would take time to implement. Each state would receive at least \$100 million to help lay fiberoptic cables and ensure its citizens can access the internet. This process would occur as jobseekers are increasingly requesting remote work where they can work from home on their computers.

"The president wants us to get it right," Raimondo said. "And if it takes a little longer to lay the groundwork for fiber and broadband, then we're going to do that."

Similarly, the administration announced plans on Tuesday to identify and pay for possible upgrades to U.S. ports within the next 90 days — hoping to ultimately tamp down the inflation being caused by ships waiting to dock and a shortage of truck drivers to haul goods.

US-funded child care assistance is nearing reality

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Women — and some men — in Congress have been fighting for government child care assistance for almost 80 years. With President Joe Biden's \$1.85 trillion social services package, they are as close as they have ever been to winning.

And it's not just child care subsidies. Biden's bill making its way through Congress would put the United States on course to providing free prekindergarten, paid family leave to care for children or sick loved ones and an enhanced child tax credit in a massive expansion of federal support to working families.

Taken together, it's Democrats' answer to President Richard Nixon's veto of a 1971

child care bill and the earlier scrapping of World War II-era child care centers, potentially providing families with more government help than ever as many struggle in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I think COVID really illustrated to people how broken our child care system is in a way that people finally understood," said Sen. Tammy Duckworth, an Illinois Democrat with two young children.

Biden's big bill combines a series of long-sought Democratic goals to shore up families that have been tried before only to run into resistance, as they have again today, with Republicans in lockstep against the package.

The child care subsidies would attempt to guarantee that most Americans don't spend

more than 7% of their income on child care.

And while Congress approved the Family and Medical Leave Act nearly 30 years ago to guarantee time off, the U.S. remains among a handful of wealthy countries that do not offer paid time off to care for children or sick loved ones. Biden's bill would change that.

All told, the federal government's new programs for paid parental leave, child care and an expanded child tax credit "would be pretty major, if not landmark, change for social policy and expanding its reach into the depths of how families cope in the modern economy," said Sarah Binder, a political science professor at George Washington University.

Pfizer seeks approval of virus booster shots for adults

Associated Press

Pfizer asked U.S. regulators Tuesday to allow boosters of its COVID-19 vaccine for anyone 18 or older, a step that comes amid concern about increased spread of the coronavirus with holiday travel and gatherings.

Older Americans and other groups particularly vulnerable to the virus have had access to a third dose of the Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine since September. But the Food and Drug Administration has said it would move quickly to expand boosters to younger ages if they

were warranted.

Pfizer is submitting early results of a booster study in 10,000 people to make its case that it's time to further expand the booster campaign.

While all three vaccines used in the United States continue to offer strong protection against severe COVID-19 illness and death, the shots' effectiveness against milder infection can wane over time.

Pfizer's new study concluded a booster could restore protection against symptomatic

infection to about 95%, even as the extra-contagious delta variant was surging. Side effects were similar to those seen with the company's first two shots.

A median of 11 months after their last Pfizer vaccination, trial participants were given either a third dose or a dummy shot. Researchers tracked any infections that occurred at least a week later, and so far have counted five cases of symptomatic COVID-19 among booster recipients compared to 109 cases among people who got dummy shots.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

With a wink, judge bans Elf on the Shelf toys

GA MARIETTA — Santa may have fewer eyes in homes this Christmas season after a Georgia judge — jokingly — banned the Elf on the Shelf.

Cobb County Superior Court Chief Judge Robert Leonard posted a mock order on Twitter banishing these elves.

“Tired of living in Elf on the Shelf tyranny? Not looking forward to the Elf forgetting to move and causing your kids emotional distress? I am a public servant and will take the heat for you. My gift to tired parents,” Leonard tweeted.

According to the holiday tradition, the elves hide in homes for weeks before Christmas and report back to Santa on who’s been naughty and nice. The elf dolls are supposed to move to a different location each night.

Trash can makes its way from US to Ireland

SC MYRTLE BEACH — Instead of a message in a bottle, it was the decals on a barnacle-covered trash barrel that shows just how far it traveled, from the southeastern U.S. coast to a beach in Ireland, more than 3,500 miles from home.

The City of Myrtle Beach said a waste barrel had somehow washed up in County Mayo, on the emerald isle’s northwestern coast.

According to the city, Keith McGreal of Ireland wrote them and shared pictures of the bright blue barrel with city stickers on it. The city posted the photos online, showing that

the barrel’s Atlantic crossing took enough time for it to be encrusted with shells.

Man barred from selling or breeding dogs again

IA SEYMOUR — An Iowa man who violated federal animal welfare laws more than 100 times was barred from selling, breeding or brokering dogs and must give up 514 dogs he kept in various locations around the state.

A federal judge approved an agreement against Daniel Gingerich, whose main site was in rural Seymour, KCCI-TV reported. The agreement settles a lawsuit filed against Gingerich by the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USDA said Gingerich violated the Animal Welfare Act 120 times since March.

Officials disrupt drug ring over several states

WA SEATTLE — Sixteen people were indicted after a series of arrests disrupted a multistate methamphetamine and fentanyl distribution ring, according to federal officials.

The drugs were coming from California and being sold in at least six Washington counties, said U.S. Attorney Nick Brown.

The investigation started in early 2020 when people working with law enforcement agencies provided information about the drug sales. Officials seized 10 pounds of meth in a May 2020 traffic stop and 44 pounds of meth in an April 2020 stop. In September 2021, officials seized 83 pounds of meth and 20,000

fentanyl pills.

Prosecutors said the leaders of the drug distribution ring, Jose Maldonado-Ramirez, 33, and his fiancé, Iris Amador-Garcia, 30, of Bellflower, Calif., were arrested Oct. 28.

City passes referendum to study reparations

MD GREENBELT — Voters in a Maryland city passed a referendum to establish a commission to study reparations for African American and Native American residents.

The referendum asked Greenbelt residents if they wanted the city to establish a 21-member council to review, discuss and make recommendations related to local reparations. It passed in a vote of 1,522 to 910, according to city spokeswoman Chondria Andrews.

Mayor Colin Byrd has said that reparations could reverse harm to families of color and reduce the racial wealth gap.

Used cars must be sold with working airbags

NY ALBANY — A new law will prohibit used car dealers in New York from selling vehicles that don’t have working airbags.

Democratic New York Gov. Kathy Hochul announced she signed the bill into law. It’s named after 18-year-old Anthony Amoros, a Rockland County resident who died in a crash in 2013 while driving a car without airbags.

The bill will require dealers to give buyers documentation showing the vehicle has an airbag and a readiness indicator

light that shows it is functioning.

National park caves vandalized with graffiti

CA PINNACLES NATIONAL PARK — A famous cave system at Pinnacles National Park in central California was closed for removal of extensive graffiti damage.

Officials expected to reopen the Balconies Caves on Nov. 10, the park said in a Facebook posting.

“This act of vandalism also provides us all an opportunity to reflect on how we care for our public lands,” the park said. “Graffiti that took a couple of minutes to spray will take well over 100 personnel hours and 500 pounds of equipment to remove.”

Voters OK early closing time for beach bars

FL MIAMI BEACH — Last call could come three hours earlier in Miami Beach, where a majority of voters fed up with nighttime violence chose “Yes” to rolling back the 5 a.m. closing time for alcohol sales.

The voter referendum was held in response to increasingly raucous crowds and public drinking in the South Beach entertainment district, where tension has been bubbling for years as party crowds grew from a few weekends into a year-round presence. It worsened during the pandemic when city officials closed the main drag to vehicles and allowed restaurants to offer more outdoor seating along Ocean Drive.

— From wire reports

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Duke wins opener against Kentucky

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Mike Krzyzewski's farewell tour started with a win thanks to his latest group of stellar freshmen at Duke.

Trevor Keels scored 25 points and classmate Paolo Banchero added 22 to help the No. 9 Blue Devils open their coach's final season by beating 10th-ranked Kentucky 79-71 on Tuesday night in the nightcap of the Champions Classic.

"It was an amazing game that felt so good with the Garden crowd and playing against an outstanding team," Krzyzewski said. "They are tough, and we are tough. That was a big-time game. Really big time."

Krzyzewski announced that he would retire at the end of the season. The Hall of Famer has won 1,098 games and five national championships in his 42 years coaching the Blue Devils. Overall he has 1,171 wins, the most in the history of the sport.

"We wanted to get this win for Coach in this first game," Banchero said. "We had a chance to make a statement with this game and come out and play well. That's what we were thinking about coming in."

The two basketball blue bloods, who have quite the history between them on the game's biggest stage, put on a spectacular

show to open the season. The loud split crowd at Madison Square Garden that included many members of the New York Knicks and Bruce Springsteen was on its feet for most of the second half.

Duke, which led by four at halftime, built the advantage to 15 with just under 10 minutes left behind Keels. The Wildcats didn't go away, scoring the next 11 points to get to 69-65 on a three-point play by Oscar Tshiebwe with 6:07 left.

That's as close as Kentucky got.

"We got it to four and then we'll watch the tape," Wildcats coach John Calipari said. "Two shots blocked. All I said all week is if you drive, don't get it blocked."

Keels scored on the Blue Devils' next possession and Banchero followed with a three-point play after a huge block by Mark Williams to start a 7-0 run.

Kentucky only got within six the rest of the way.

Parting gifts

With this being Krzyzewski's last game at MSG, the Garden front office staff presented his family with a few gifts before the game. They made a donation to the Emily K Center and gave him a framed photo mosaic

that had more than 300 images from his time at MSG. Finally, they gave him six bottles of wine, each with a custom label from some of his top moments at the Garden, including his 1,000th victory and one from when he was a player for Army and his team played South Carolina at MSG.

Big picture

Duke's sensational freshmen didn't disappoint and could carry the Blue Devils a long way this season. Kentucky looked good in spurts and the early season loss will only help the Wildcats get better.

Cheering on their schools

The Knicks players were divided with their rooting interests. Julius Randle, Nerlens Noel and Kevin Knox II all went to Kentucky, while RJ Barrett attended Duke. They were all sitting courtside. Obi Toppin didn't go to either school, but his brother Jacob plays for Kentucky. The Knicks' second-year forward was sitting with his mom, Roni, who was celebrating her birthday.

Blue Devils success at MSG

Krzyzewski has gone 34-11 at MSG, including winning five of the last six there.

Navy knocks off 25th-ranked Virginia

Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — John Carter Jr. scored 19 points, Sean Yoder added 15 and Navy got its first win over a ranked team since the David Robinson era, stunning No. 25 Virginia 66-58 in the season opener for both teams on Tuesday night.

The Midshipmen beat a team ranked in The Associated Press Top 25 — where Virginia's stay will be brief — for the first time since Robinson led them past Syracuse 97-85 on March 16, 1986.

Facing one of college basketball's top programs over the past decade, Navy was the better team in every respect. The Midshipmen outshot Virginia 45.3% to 41.2%, outrebounded the Cavaliers 35-30, got 10 second-chance points to Virginia's six and had 15 bench points to the Cavaliers' six.

"I just try to concentrate on who we are in our three things: defend, rebound, take care of the ball. And if we win two of the three of those things, we got a chance to win the game," Navy coach Ed DeChellis said.

East Carolina transfer Jayden Gardner

led Virginia with 18 points and 10 rebounds, but after the Cavaliers tied the game at 55-all with 8:53 left, they didn't score again for more than 8½ minutes. Another transfer, Armaan Franklin, made a three-pointer with 15 seconds left.

Yoder, meanwhile, scored twice inside and Daniel Deaver had a putback while Virginia went cold, making one of its last 10 shots.

Cavaliers coach Tony Bennett was more concerned with the defensive breakdowns.

"They shot lights out and sometimes we were there, sometimes we weren't," he said. "And then any time we broke down, they kind of took advantage."

Franklin's three-pointer was his second field goal. The Indiana transfer, coveted for his outside shooting, missed nine of 11 shots and six of seven threes in his Virginia debut.

Carter scored 16 of his points in the first 13 minutes as the Midshipmen blistered the Cavaliers from long range, making eight of its first 10 three-point tries. The Mids made two of their next 10 before Carter connected

for his fifth with 24 seconds to play. That gave Navy a 64-55 lead and sent fans filing for the exits.

Big picture

Navy: A hot shooting start in a hostile atmosphere demonstrated that while the Midshipmen lost their best player from last year's team, their four returning starters play with a confidence born of experience. Carter and Yoder led the long-distance success, but three others made a three.

"I credit our players. They just did a great job of handling the pressure," DeChellis said, noting it was Navy's first game in front of a crowd since 2019.

"We've got some guys with some minutes on them."

Virginia: Bennett's signature pack-line defense often struggles early in the season, especially when incorporating new players like Gardner and Franklin. That was especially true early as the Mids made eight three-pointers in the first 13 minutes.

Embiid, Harris sit again; 76ers fall to Bucks

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 31 points and 16 rebounds, Grayson Allen scored 25 points and hit a key three-pointer late in the fourth quarter, and the Milwaukee Bucks held off the short-handed Philadelphia 76ers 118-109 on Tuesday night.

Bobby Portis added 19 points for the NBA champions, who played a day after celebrating the franchise's first title in 50 years with a trip to visit President Joe Biden at the White House. The Bucks won for just the second time in the last seven.

"Always feels good to get a win," Antetokounmpo said. "I was just trying to be competitive and trying to do whatever it takes to get a win. That's what my team wants me to do, that's what my team needs me to do."

Bucks coach Mike Budenhol-

zer said Antetokounmpo took his game to another level.

"I think he had that extra competitiveness tonight," Budenholzer said. "He made some plays that are special. He can do some unique things, and he did it multiple times tonight. There was just that extra desire, that extra competitive gear that he needed, that we needed."

Tyrese Maxey scored 31 points for the 76ers, who played without four-time All-Star Joel Embiid for the second straight game. Embiid was one of four 76ers out due to the NBA's health and safety protocols, along with Tobias Harris, Matisse Thybulle and Isaiah Joe.

Seth Curry (left foot contusion) also sat for the 76ers, and Ben Simmons (personal reasons) hasn't played all season.

All of the absences led Philadelphia general manager Daryl

Morey to tweet Tuesday afternoon that "the hits just keep on comin".

Jazz 110, Hawks 98: Donovan Mitchell scored 27 points to lead host Utah over Atlanta.

Bojan Bogdanovic and Jordan Clarkson added 16 points apiece for the Jazz. Rudy Gobert grabbed 14 rebounds. Utah shot 51% from the field to beat the Hawks for the second time in five days.

Kevin Huerter scored 28 points and Trae Young added 27 for Atlanta. Cam Reddish had 16 points, while Clint Capela finished with 13 points and 12 rebounds. Atlanta lost despite shooting 51% from three-point range.

The Jazz scored baskets on seven straight possessions at one point in the second quarter and shot 12-for-18 from the field during the period to break open a

close game.

Clippers 117, Trail Blazers 109: Paul George scored 24 points, Reggie Jackson added 23 and Los Angeles extended its winning streak to five, beating visiting Portland.

Nicolas Batum added a season-high 22 points for the Clippers, who are 6-4 after losing four of their first five to start the season.

George, the reigning Western Conference player of the week, played only 33 minutes after getting into foul trouble midway through the third quarter.

Despite the decreased playing time, he was near a triple-double with nine rebounds and seven assists.

Damian Lillard led the Trail Blazers with 27 points and Norman Powell scored 23. Jusuf Nurkic had 15 points and 13 rebounds for Portland, winless in its first five road games.

Ohio State moves into CFP position; Cincinnati is 5th

Associated Press

No. 3 Oregon, No. 4 Ohio State and No. 5 Cincinnati all moved up one spot behind No. 1 Georgia and No. 2 Alabama in the second College Football Playoff rankings, which were released Tuesday night.

Two Southeastern Conference teams sat atop the ranking for a second straight week, but after Michigan State lost last weekend, at least one spot in the top four was certain to change.

The CFP selection committee simply bumped up the Ducks, Buckeyes and Bearcats and dropped Michigan State to No. 7 behind No. 6 Michigan.

"It's worth noting that teams ranked two through six all won, but the committee just didn't see a separation," committee chairman and Iowa athletic director Gary Barta said.

The Spartans beat the Wolverines 37-33 just two weeks ago, but the head-to-head result

didn't carry the debate with the committee.

"The Michigan-Michigan State discussion started last week," Barta said. "The committee went back and forth. Michigan, statistically, is probably a more complete team."

For the second straight week, Cincinnati set a new mark for best ranking for a team outside the Power Five conferences. The Bearcats were sixth in the first rankings.

Unbeaten Oklahoma remained at No. 8 and Notre Dame and Oklahoma State rounded out the top 10.

There are three more regular-season rankings before the CFP selection committee sets the semifinal matchups and other New Year's Six bowls with its final Top 25 on Dec. 5.

The College Football Playoff semifinals will be played at the Orange Bowl and Cotton Bowl on Dec. 31.

The national championship

game is scheduled for Jan. 10 in Indianapolis.

Sooners have a shot

The Sooners and the Big 12 have quite a bit of ground to make up, but will have plenty of fuel left on the schedule to get a boost.

Oklahoma's next three are against Baylor, the committee's No. 13 team, Iowa State (unranked but 6-3), and Oklahoma State. The Cowboys have already split games with Baylor and Iowa State.

"The committee noted, as probably anybody who has been watching Oklahoma, the quarterback change to Caleb Williams has changed that team," Barta said.

The freshman Williams took over for Spencer Rattler four games ago an Oklahoma's offense has taken off since.

No unbeaten Power Five conference champion has ever been left out of the playoff and

it is doubtful the Sooners would be the first.

The Sooners have also taken this path to the playoff. In 2015, they were 12th in the rankings at this point and made the field. In 2019, they were 10th at this point and got in.

Though it should be noted that in both those seasons, Oklahoma had already lost a game at this point.

Eyes on the Irish

So far Notre Dame's impact on the rankings has mostly been felt in how beating the Fighting Irish (8-1) has boosted Cincinnati.

Don't count the Irish out yet.

Assuming they win out, and they will be favored on all of their remaining games (at Virginia, vs. Georgia Tech, at Stanford), the Irish at 11-1 could become an interesting team if the Big Ten and Big 12 teams cannibalize each other and Georgia clears out the rest of the SEC.

Devils hand Panthers 2nd straight loss

Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — Mackenzie Blackwood made 34 saves and the New Jersey Devils beat Florida 7-3 Tuesday night, handing the Panthers a second-straight regulation loss after they went 11 games without one.

Andreas Johnsson scored twice and defenseman P.K. Subban had the go-ahead goal as the Devils had their biggest offensive output of the season.

"We've been looking for offense," Devils coach Lindy Ruff said. "Hopefully we can use this a springboard."

Florida lost for the first time in regulation against the Rangers on Monday after a 10-0-1 start.

"The last two games we haven't really grabbed those momentum swings," Panthers coach Andrew Brunette said. "We allowed two goals in 30 seconds in a 4-3 game and next thing you know, it's 6-3."

Nico Hischier, Pavel Zacha, Ty Smith and Jimmy Vesey also scored for the Devils, who are 6-3-2.

Red Wings 4, Oilers 2: Vladislav Namestnikov scored in the first and second period, leading host Detroit past Ed-

monton.

The Oilers had won nine of their first 10 games for the first time in franchise history. They went 0-for-2 on the power play after becoming the first team since Pittsburgh in 2007 to open a season with a power-play goal in 10 straight games.

Dylan Larkin had a goal and Moritz Seider scored into an empty net as the Red Wings won their third straight.

Edmonton goalie Stuart Skinner stopped 35 shots in his season debut, filling in for Mikko Koskinen on the first night of a five-game road trip.

Bruins 3, Senators 2: Patrice Bergeron scored the tie-breaking goal late in the second period and host Boston held on to beat short-handed Ottawa.

The Senators, who canceled practice Monday for precautionary reasons, were without five players and an assistant coach who have been placed on the COVID protocol list.

Hurricanes 2, Lightning 1 (OT): Martin Necas scored from the left circle 3:26 into overtime and visiting Carolina won its 10th game of the season.

The Hurricanes (10-1-1) set a team record for the fewest

games to reach 10 wins. Carolina had its season-opening, nine-game winning streak end Saturday in a 5-2 loss at Florida.

Steven Stamkos scored for the Lightning, who are 4-0-2 in the past six games.

Kings 3, Canadiens 2 (OT): Adrian Kempe scored on a sweeping move at 3:39 of overtime and visiting Los Angeles extended its winning streak to six games with a victory over Montreal.

Brendan Lemieux and Alex Iafallo also scored for the Kings, who boast the longest current winning streak in the NHL.

Blues 3, Jets 2 (SO): Ryan O'Reilly was the only scorer in the shootout and visiting St. Louis beat Winnipeg.

Eight skaters took shots in the contest, with O'Reilly beating Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck, who finished with 31 saves.

Blackhawks 3, Penguins 2 (SO): Marc-Andre Fleury made 42 saves and then two more stops in the shootout, and host Chicago won again under interim coach Derek King, topping Pittsburgh.

King took over after Jeremy Colliton was fired Saturday

with a 1-9-2 record for a team that began the season with play-off aspirations.

Jeff Carter scored twice for Pittsburgh, which lost for the fifth time in six games.

Golden Knights 4, Kraken 2: Shea Theodore and Reilly Smith scored 46 seconds apart early in the third period to lift host Vegas past Seattle.

It was the second meeting of the NHL's two newest franchises. The Golden Knights beat the Kraken on opening night, 4-3.

After a 1-4 start to the season, Vegas is on a 6-2-0 surge.

Ducks 3, Canucks 2 (OT): Troy Terry scored 3:52 into overtime to give visiting Anaheim a win over Vancouver.

Cam Fowler and Isaac Lundstrom scored in regulation for the Ducks, who extended their win streak to five games.

Sharks 4, Flames 1: Logan Couture's third-period goal proved to be the winner, leading visiting San Jose over Calgary.

Tomas Hertl and Jonathan Dahlen added empty-net goals for the Sharks.

San Jose was without head coach Bob Boughner for a fifth straight game because he's in COVID-19 protocol.

Scoring down, home-field struggles among trends

Associated Press

Scoring is down, home-field advantage hasn't returned even if the fans have, and the AFC could be in a wild race for play-off spots.

As the NFL gets set to start the second half of its 18-week season, there are a few notable statistical trends to pay attention to, with the two most notable being the reduction of scoring and home-team struggles.

Points per game have dropped by nearly two points per contest per team so far this season as a marked increase in offensive penalties and a small decrease in passing efficiency has

taken a toll.

The average team is scoring 1.95 fewer points per game through nine weeks this season than in 2020, the third-biggest one-week drop through nine weeks since the merger. The only bigger ones came in 1991 (2.58 per game) and 1977 (1.97 per game).

One factor could be a big increase in offensive penalties with holding, false starts and delay of games all increasing from last year's pace. That has contributed to a 35% increase in offensive penalties, while defensive penalties have remained flat.

While some of those pre-snap penalties could be because of the return of fans, the sold-out stadiums have not made life more difficult overall for road teams and reversed the trend from last season when home teams had a losing record (127-128-1) for the first time since the merger.

Instead, road teams have gotten even better in 2021, finishing the first half of the season with a 70-64 record (.522), not counting two games played in London when the designated "home" team won.

Here are some others:

Jam-packed AFC

The standings are tight at the top of the AFC with nine teams with exactly five wins, including all four in the AFC West.

Tennessee (7-2) and Baltimore (6-2) sit at the top of the conference, but the 11 teams with winning records through nine weeks matches the most in NFL history. The only other time that happened was in 2014.

That season ended with six AFC teams getting double-digit wins and four missing the play-offs despite posting winning records.