

# Austin vows to counter Iran threats

*Associated Press*

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — America's top defense official vowed Saturday to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and to counter its "dangerous use" of suicide drones in the wider Mideast, a pledge coming as negotiations remain stalled over Tehran's tattered atomic deal with world powers.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's comments in Bahrain at the annual Manama Dialogue appeared aimed at reassuring America's Gulf Arab allies as the Biden administration tries to revive the nuclear deal, which limited Iran's enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

His remarks also come after Gulf sheikhdoms saw the U.S.' chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, raising concerns about America's commitment to the region as defense officials say they want to pivot forces to counter perceived challenges from China and Russia.

"The United States remains committed to preventing Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon. And we remain committed to a diplomatic outcome of the nuclear issue," Austin

told an event put on by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "But if Iran isn't willing to engage seriously, then we will look at all of the options necessary to keep the United States secure."

Iran long has maintained its nuclear program is peaceful, though U.S. intelligence agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency say Tehran had an organized weapons program until 2003. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment Saturday.

Since then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018, a series of escalating incidents have struck the wider Mideast.

That includes drone and mine attacks targeting vessels at sea, as well as assaults blamed on Iran and its proxies in Iraq and Syria. The U.S. also killed a top Iranian general in Baghdad in early 2020, which saw Iran target American troops in Iraq with ballistic missiles.

Under Biden, U.S. military officials are looking at a wider reshuffling of forces from the Mideast to other areas, though it still maintains a large presence at bases across the region. Austin hinted at that in his re-

marks, saying: "Our potential punch includes what our friends can contribute and what we have prepositioned and what we can rapidly flow in."

"Our friends and foes both know that the United States can deploy overwhelming force at the time and place of our choosing," Austin said.

Austin's comments also touched on the ongoing war in Yemen, for which the Biden administration halted its offensive support shortly after he came into office.

Saudi Arabia has led a military campaign since 2015 against the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels who hold Yemen's capital, Sanaa. The Houthis have launched drone and ballistic missile attacks on the kingdom to retaliate for a punishing aerial bombing campaign that also has killed civilians.

But while the kingdom constantly refers to every drone and missile fired by the Houthis as successfully intercepted by its defenses, Austin put the rate instead at "nearly 90%." The U.S. also withdrew its THAAD air defenses and Patriot missile batteries from Prince Sultan Air Base several months ago.

"We'll work with them until it's 100%," he said.

## US and China to up military talks in deescalation bid

*Bloomberg*

Officials in Washington and Beijing have agreed to open high-level channels of communication between their militaries, according to a person familiar with the matter.

During a 3½-hour virtual summit with President Joe Biden on Monday, Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to support such channels between the U.S. military and top officials from the People's Liberation Army, including the vice-chairman of the country's powerful Central Military Commission, said the person, who asked not to be identified discussing internal deliberations.

The White House is now defining a strategy on how to approach these engagements, including in the areas of cybersecurity, space and nuclear weapons, as well as testing and deployment issues of concern to the

U.S., the person said. The discussions won't be formal arms control negotiations of the kind that the U.S. previously held with the Soviet Union and Russia, according to the person, who said the exact format for the forthcoming military-to-military talks is still to be determined.

The agreement is a further sign of thawing ties between the world's two largest economies and comes after months of escalating tensions, fueled most recently by China's test of a hypersonic weapon and a warning from Pentagon intelligence officials that China's nuclear arsenal was growing more quickly than expected.

Asked about the prospect of high-level talks, Pentagon officials pointed to a briefing on Nov. 16, when Defense Department spokesman John Kirby said the Biden administration is seeking "ways that we can

cooperate with China on climate, for example" and "we'd like nothing more than to be able to deter any conflict or miscalculation."

A White House spokesman had no immediate comment, and the Chinese embassy in Washington didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

After almost nine months in office, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has yet to speak to his counterpart at China's defense ministry, a government organization that formally represents the Chinese military to the world but lacks the power of the Communist Party's Central Military Commission.

Following their virtual summit this week, Xi and Biden agreed in principle to talk again, but the U.S. didn't ask for a specific date or time, the person said.

# Speier closer than ever to reform goal

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., stood on the House floor weekly in 2011 to share the stories of service members who were sexually assaulted by fellow troops during their time in the military.

Her effort started April 6, 2011, and she called out the lack of action in Congress, despite holding 18 hearings on the issue during the previous 16 years.

"The longer it goes unaddressed, Congress becomes an accomplice in these crimes," Speier said. "Beginning today, I'm going to tell these women's stories on the House floor, and I'm going to keep telling them and keeping telling them until something is done about it."

Later that year, she filed her first legislation to reform the military justice system and now, as she announced her retirement Tuesday, she is as close as she's ever been to pushing major reforms into law.

Don Christensen, a former Air Force prosecutor and president of Protect Our Defenders, an advocacy group for military

sexual assault survivors, said Speier is the first person with whom he met about eight years ago to discuss reforms to the military criminal justice system.

"There has been no better voice in the House than Jackie Speier when it comes to taking care of military families and survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment. She's by far the strongest advocate for those who have been left behind by a system that's in need of reform," he said.

The 71-year-old Speier announced that she will not seek reelection in 2022. Speier, who represents San Mateo County and a portion of San Francisco, said in a video posted to Twitter that it's time for her to go home and spend more time with family and friends.

"I'm going to make every day count," she said Thursday of her final year in Congress. "I want to make sure that our service members have the resources they need to do their jobs, and the training they need to do their jobs."

Whether the focus is reforming military housing, providing better support to service members who are victims of sexual assault, or improving resources for military-connected children with special needs, Speier has pushed major changes on the Defense Department from her seat as the chairwoman for the House Armed Services Committee's subpanel on personnel.

She first introduced a bill in November 2011 to remove the decision to prosecute cases of sexual assault from the military chain of command and instead have an independent prosecutor review the cases.

A decade later, the measure is finally close to becoming a law. Drafts of the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act in the House and Senate include measures to create independent prosecution offices, but the annual spending and policy bill for the Defense Department has yet to be voted on and signed into law.

Last year, Speier renamed her justice reform legislation in honor of Army Spc. Vanessa

Guillen, a 20-year-old soldier who was killed in April 2020 by a fellow soldier at Fort Hood, Texas. Prior to her death, Guillen told her family she had faced sexual harassment on base but was too afraid to report it. An Army investigation later found she did report the allegations to a supervisor who did not handle the information correctly.

Her death led to a nationwide movement to call for reforms that likely swayed the opinions of lawmakers who had been hesitant to support change, particularly to remove the chain of command from prosecution. Not only do more lawmakers back the measure now, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin also supports it.

Speier on Thursday laid out a packed agenda that she hopes to meet in the next year. She also pledged to continue to fight for reforms for military justice, particularly to create a method for victims of sexual assault to file a claim to seek compensation in circumstances where the military was negligent or failed to prevent the assault.

## IG report: Pentagon reacted appropriately on Jan. 6

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — An independent review has concluded that the Defense Department and its top leaders acted appropriately before and during the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, despite sharp criticism from some local and congressional leaders that the military did not respond quick enough as protesters breached the building.

The Defense Department's Office of Inspector General, in a report released Wednesday, said military and defense leaders "did not delay or obstruct"

the department's response. It said decisions made by two officials at the time, acting Defense Secretary Chris Miller and Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy, "were reasonable in light of the circumstances that existed on that day and requests from D.C. officials" and the Capitol Police.

Criticism has centered on the fact that it took about three hours for members of the District of Columbia National Guard to respond to the Capitol — a timeline the Pentagon has defended as appropriate and necessary to determine the

mission, equipment and riot preparedness of the citizen-soldiers and get new orders approved and delivered to commanders.

The IG report is one of a number of investigations and reviews of that tumultuous day, which saw a violent mob overrun police barricades, break into the Capitol and hunt for lawmakers, including then-Vice President Mike Pence, who had to be swiftly escorted out of harm's way.

The inspector general focused narrowly on the military response to the Jan. 6 riot, while

other probes are looking more closely at the roles of then-President Donald Trump and his supporters, including whether they fueled the assault or planned it. Many gathered at a rally before the riot and then marched up to Capitol Hill.

The Pentagon inspector general found that the process followed by the military was appropriate, and noted that many of the Guard were not trained in law enforcement. It described a "chaotic and confusing situation" and said initial reports to the Defense Department were contradictory.

# Vienna virus lockdown spurs protests

*Associated Press*

VIENNA — Tens of thousands of protesters, many from far-right groups, marched through Vienna on Saturday after the Austrian government announced a nationwide lockdown beginning Monday to contain the country's skyrocketing coronavirus infections.

Among those protesting were members of far-right and extreme-right parties and groups, including the far-right Freedom Party, the anti-vaccine MFG party and the extreme-right Identitarians.

Demonstrations against virus restrictions also took place in Switzerland, Croatia, Italy, Northern Ireland and the Netherlands on Saturday.

The Austrian lockdown will start Monday. Initially it will last for 10 days but it could go up to 20 days, officials said. Most

stores will close and cultural events will be canceled. People will be able to leave their homes only for specific reasons, including buying groceries, going to the doctor or exercising. The Austrian government also said starting Feb. 1, it will make vaccinations mandatory.

The march Saturday kicked off at Vienna's massive Heldenplatz square. About 1,300 police officers were on duty, and 35,000 protesters participated in different marches across the city, police said, adding that most didn't wear masks.

Chanting "Resistance!" and blowing whistles, protesters moved down the city's inner ring road. Many waved Austrian flags and carried signs mocking government leaders like Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg. Some wore doctor's scrubs; others donned tinfoil hats.

Freedom Party leader Herbert Kickl, who recently tested positive for COVID-19 and had to stay in isolation, made an appearance at the rally via video, denouncing what he called "totalitarian" measures from a government "that believes it should think and decide for us."

Vaccinations in Austria have plateaued at one of the lowest rates in Western Europe and hospitals in heavily hit states have warned that their intensive care units are reaching capacity. Average daily deaths have tripled in recent weeks. Not quite 66% of Austria's 8.9 million people are fully vaccinated.

Schallenberg apologized to all vaccinated people on Friday, saying it wasn't fair they had to suffer under the renewed lockdown restrictions when they had done everything to help contain the virus.

# Dutch police open fire on Rotterdam rioters

*Associated Press*

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Police opened fire on protesters and seven people were injured in rioting that erupted in downtown Rotterdam around a demonstration against COVID-19 restrictions. The Dutch city's mayor called it "an orgy of violence."

Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb told reporters in the early hours of Saturday morning that "on a number of occasions the police felt it necessary to draw their weapons to defend

themselves" as rioters ran rampage through the port city's central shopping district, setting fires and throwing rocks and fireworks at officers.

"They shot at protesters, people were injured," Aboutaleb said. He did not have details on the injuries. Police also fired warning shots.

A number of police officers also were injured in the violence and officers arrested dozens of people and expect to arrest more after studying video footage from security

cameras, Aboutaleb said.

Photos from the scene showed at least one police car in flames and another with a bicycle slammed through its windshield.

Riot police and a water cannon restored calm after midnight.

It was one of the worst outbreaks of violence in the Netherlands since coronavirus restrictions were first imposed last year. In January, rioters also attacked police and set fires on the streets of Rotterdam after a curfew came into force.

# DC mayor, council clash over easing of mask mandate

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Mayor Muriel Bowser's decision to ease mask requirements in the nation's capital has sparked a public debate about timing, with the majority of the D.C. Council pleading with her to reconsider.

Starting Monday, masks will no longer be required in many indoor spaces in D.C. But masks must still be worn in multiple settings, including schools, libraries, public transportation, ride-share vehicles and group-living facilities like nursing homes, dorms and jails. Private businesses will still be able to require customers to wear masks.

Bowser has cautiously hailed the step as a "shift in where we are with the pandemic,"

saying the return of the mask mandate earlier this year helped blunt the late-summer surge of the delta variant.

The nation's capital originally lifted its indoor mask requirement for fully vaccinated individuals in May, but reinstated it in late July as cases began to rise again. According to D.C. Health Department statistics, the current seven-day average of new cases is higher than it was in May when the first mask requirement was lifted, but still well below the late-summer delta-variant peak in August and September.

Bowser's announcement brought a swift reaction. Within hours, D.C. Council member Robert White had tweeted, "Cold weather

states showing an uptick in COVID-19 cases, CDC metrics show the district in the substantial spread zone, neighboring jurisdictions are moving to reinstate mask mandates as they see a surge in coronavirus cases, and our youngest residents still aren't vaccinated. This is premature." Nine other members of the 13-member D.C. Council then publicly joined him in an open letter asking Bowser to rescind the change.

The council's letter states that D.C.'s virus mitigation policy so far has been "appropriately thoughtful, careful and protective of our residents." Dropping the indoor mask policy now would "place the district ahead of the science," the letter said.



## FBI eyes land near NJ landfill for Hoffa's body

*Associated Press*

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — The decadeslong odyssey to find the remains of Jimmy Hoffa, a tenacious leader of the Teamsters union, apparently has turned to the land next to a former New Jersey landfill that sits below an elevated highway.

The FBI obtained a search warrant to “conduct a site survey underneath the Pulaski Skyway,” said Mara Schneider, a spokeswoman for the Detroit field office.

“On October 25th & 26th, FBI personnel from the Newark and Detroit field offices completed the survey and that data is currently being analyzed,” Schneider said in a statement Friday.

She didn’t indicate whether anything was removed.

The FBI’s disclosure is another turn in a mystery that has gripped law enforcement for more than 45 years.

Hoffa was last seen on July 30, 1975, when he was to meet with reputed Detroit mob enforcer Anthony “Tony Jack” Giacalone and alleged New Jersey mob figure Anthony “Tony Pro” Provenzano at a restaurant in suburban Detroit.

The focus now is in Jersey City, below a four-lane bridge where the sound of cars and trucks doesn’t stop. Wild overgrown brush thrives in the gritty industrial area, and green dumpsters abound. No one nearby at Interstate Waste Services offered a comment.

Journalist Dan Moldea, who has written extensively about the Hoffa saga, said he was contacted by the FBI in September 2020, months after speaking to Frank Cappola, the son of a key figure, and publishing a detailed account.

Cappola, who was a teenager in the 1970s, said he worked at the old PJP Landfill with his father, Paul Cappola. Cappola said his father was dying in 2008 when he decided to reveal secrets. He explained how Hoffa’s body was delivered to the landfill in 1975, placed in a steel drum and buried with other barrels, bricks and dirt, according to Moldea.

Paul Cappola, worried that police might be watching, dug a hole on New Jersey state property, about 100 yards from the landfill, and dumped the unmarked barrel there, Moldea said Friday.

“Then he put 15 to 30 steel drums on top of it, which were filled with toxic adhesives, and bulldozed the area flat,” Moldea said.

## Kyle Rittenhouse acquittal sparks protests across US

*The Washington Post*

There were sporadic demonstrations across the United States on Friday evening after a jury cleared Kyle Rittenhouse of all criminal charges for his role in shooting and killing two people, and injuring a third, during mass protests in Wisconsin against police violence last year.

In Kenosha, Wis., Democratic Gov. Tony Evers had placed 500 National Guard members on standby ahead of the verdict, however, there were no signs of major clashes or unrest there on Friday night or early Saturday. Protesters had gathered in front of the courthouse as Rittenhouse was acquitted. Some carried placards in support of Rittenhouse while others expressed their disappointment at the verdict.

One protester said she had been fined \$767.50 for writing “White supremacists ARE COWARDS” in white chalk on the facades of the court building. A local pastor Rev. Monica Cummings led a prayer vigil Friday evening and urged the Kenosha community to “now begin the long process of healing.” Her remarks echoed those of President Joe Biden who on Friday also asked that people “express their views peacefully, consistent with the rule of law.”

The relative calm in Kenosha was a con-

trast from last year, when the police shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man who was wanted for alleged sexual assault, set off peaceful protests and then bursts of rioting and property damage in the city. Blake survived the shooting but his family say he has been left paralyzed. Rittenhouse had traveled to Kenosha, joining a mass of armed civilians that took to the city’s streets amid the unrest, where he shot the three men.

Friday’s acquittal also sparked protests in Portland, Ore., and New York City. In Portland, which has seen multiple street clashes between left and right-wing activists following the shooting of Blake, as well as the 2020 murder of George Floyd, police declared a riot, saying protesters attempted to breach the Justice Center building and threatened to “burn it down.” There were also reports of vehicle car windows being smashed as well as the windows of a city print shop, police said, adding that one arrest was made for a warrant while five citations and 17 warnings were issued.

Meanwhile, in New York, about 300 people protested outside the Barclays Center in Brooklyn. About 10 people held signs in front of the entrance in remembrance of Joseph Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber, the two men shot dead by Rittenhouse.

## Biden: Pardoned Thanksgiving turkeys ‘boosted,’ not ‘basted’

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on Friday pardoned two Thanksgiving turkeys, saying that the white male birds were selected based on their “temperament, appearance and, I suspect, vaccination status.”

“Instead of getting basted, these two turkeys are getting boosted today,” Biden joked.

Biden was in a jovial mood when he appeared before White House staffers and their families in the Rose Garden to pardon the Indiana turkeys, who gobbled merrily throughout the event. And while they were given a reprieve from the fate met by millions of turkeys on Thanksgiving Day, Biden said their names — Peanut Butter and

Jelly — reminded him of the sandwich he often enjoys for lunch.

The pardoning comes as Biden’s agenda has seen fresh signs of life, with the president signing his \$1 trillion infrastructure bill on Monday and the House passing an even bigger companion bill — the \$2 trillion social services and climate change bill — on Friday. That bill will have to make it through the 50-50 Senate before landing on Biden’s desk.

On Friday, Biden poked fun at his recent speeches on the infrastructure bill, declaring that “turkey is infrastructure” and that “Peanut Butter and Jelly are going to help build back the butterball as we move along,” a reference to his administration’s “Build Back Better” catchphrase.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Break-in suspect drank beer, ate ice cream**

**NC** ASHEVILLE — Officers with a North Carolina police department appeared to have no trouble finding the suspect in a break-in, possibly because he had a stomach ache.

Asheville police said in a news release that patrol officers apprehended the man who broke into a downtown restaurant on Patton Avenue and apparently helped himself to some beer and ice cream.

The man is charged with two counts of larceny after breaking and entering, felony breaking and entering. The man was also served with an open warrant for second-degree trespass.

**Politician criticized for insensitive costume**

**MA** MALDEN — Advocacy groups in Massachusetts are condemning Malden City Councilor Jadeane Sica for a photo of her posted online two years ago where she dressed up as an employee of Orchids of Asia, the Florida spa at the center of a high-profile prostitution case that implicated Patriots owner Robert Kraft.

Groups in the area including the Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition released a statement demanding that Sica apologize for the photo and calling her out for her use of what they called “yellow face,” which has “historically led to the dehumanization of Asian people.” The Boston Globe reported.

In the photo, Sica is wearing an Orchids of Asia T-shirt and a bamboo rice hat. Sica’s husband, who is also in the photo, is wearing Patriots gear and sunglasses that resemble the style Kraft often wears.

In a statement, Sica said she and her husband were trying to make light of Kraft’s implication in the case but that she can and will do better.

**Snapchat video helps ID church attack suspects**

**IN** LYNNVILLE — Investigators identified six young suspects in the vandalism of a historic southwestern Indiana church after one of the culprits posted video of the incident to social media, police said.

Warrick County deputies called to Mount Zion Church found most of the windows on the building’s north and south sides had been shattered, and a back door had been kicked in. Police said pages from the church’s hymnal books had also been used in an apparent attempt to start a fire.

The six suspects are two 18-year-olds and four juveniles. A video posted to Snapchat allowed police to identify one of the juvenile suspects, which led them to the other suspects, the Evansville Courier & Press reported.

No arrests have been made and an investigation is ongoing.

**Fake lawyer sentenced for fraud, lying on loan**

**CA** SACRAMENTO — A San Francisco woman who posed as a lawyer and lied to get more than \$350,000 in pandemic relief money was sentenced to 18 months in prison in exchange for her guilty plea, federal prosecutors said.

Miranda Devlin, 37, was sentenced in federal court after pleading guilty to making false statements on a loan application and to committing mail fraud to steal a California attorney’s bar license, the Sacramento Bee reported.

In her plea agreement, Devlin detailed crimes she committed from March 2012 through May of last year, said the U.S. Department of Justice in a press release.

Devlin must also pay nearly \$600,000 in restitution.

**Kids get creative with snowplow names**

**VT** MONTPELIER — Captain Snowpants; Yo Bro, No Snow; and Jennifer Snowpez are among the names that will be on some of Vermont’s snowplows this winter.

Vermont school students participated in the state transportation department’s Name a Plow contest to come up with names for the snowplows serving their communities.

Participating schools got a visit from their newly named plows.

The full list of the Vermont names — including Snowb-gone Kenobe, Plowy McPlow-Face, Brr-rito and Steve — can be found on the transportation department’s website.

**Family faces fine for early Christmas display**

**FL** TAMPA — A Florida family is in trouble with their homeowners association for putting up their Christmas lights too early.

The Moffa family hired a company to decorate the yard of

their Tampa home on Nov. 6, WFLA reported.

Days later, they received a letter notifying them that they now face a fine for violating their HOA agreement. If they don’t remove the lights, they could face fines of \$100 a day, up to \$1,000, the letter said.

Moffa said he has no plans to remove the lights.

“That was their only availability, and I can’t climb up on the roof myself,” he told the TV station, adding he didn’t know it was against the rules to put up Christmas lights before Thanksgiving.

**Man arrested twice on I-95 in same day**

**ME** WATERVILLE — A Maine motorist accused of striking three vehicles while under the influence was arrested twice in the same day on Interstate 95 — the first time for driving and the second time for walking.

The man was showing signs of “very obvious impairment” on I-95 in Waterville and told authorities he was walking 30 miles home after his vehicle was seized, the Kennebec Journal reported.

Police had arrested him earlier in the day north of Augusta on I-95 after he crashed into three vehicles in Manchester.

Prosecutors ultimately dropped a charge for walking on the interstate, allowing him to be released from jail.

The man still faces charges of operating under the influence, driving without a license, failure to stop for law enforcement and leaving the scene of three accidents, officials said.

From The Associated Press

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# Hughes helps Air Force top Wolf Pack

*Associated Press*

RENO, Nev. — DeAndre Hughes rushed for a school-record 279 yards — scoring two touchdowns and adding a successful two-point conversion run in the third overtime — to lift Air Force to a 41-39 victory over Nevada in Mountain West Conference play on Friday night.

Hughes ran for 122 yards and a score — a 10-yard TD run in a 17-point second quarter — as the Falcons (8-3, 5-2) took a 17-3 lead into halftime.

Carson Strong came out firing for the Wolf Pack (7-4, 4-3)

in the second half, connecting with Cole Turner for a 13-yard TD to get Nevada within 17-10.

Hughes answered with a 9-yard scoring run to put the Falcons ahead 24-10 heading into the fourth quarter.

Midway through the quarter, Nevada recovered a Haaziq Daniels fumble and Strong fired a 61-yard scoring strike to Romeo Doubs on first down, pulling the Wolf Pack within 24-17. Strong struck again with 3:13 left, connecting with Turner for a 2-yard score to send the game to OT.

Air Force had the ball first,

and took the lead on Dane Kinamon's 2-yard TD run, but Nevada's Toa Taua answered with a 6-yard TD run that sent the game to a second OT.

The Wolf Pack took a 39-31 lead when Strong connected with Doubs for a 25-yard TD on first down before adding a two-point conversion toss to Turner. Air Force stayed alive, however, scoring on Brad Roberts' 1-yard TD run and Hughes' two-point run.

New rules this season state that after two overtimes the teams will take turns trying to score two-point conversions un-

til a winner is decided. The Falcons were successful thanks to Hughes, while the Wolf Pack came up short.

Hughes set his rushing record on 23 carries. Roberts carried 28 times for 111 yards as Air Force piled up 522 yards on the ground.

Strong completed 25 of 43 passes for 346 yards and four TDs with one interception. Doubs caught 16 passes for 159 yards.

Hughes topped Chad Hall's single-game mark of 275 yards rushing set against Army in 2007.

## Tune, No. 17 Houston cruise past Memphis

*Associated Press*

HOUSTON — Clayton Tune threw for 264 yards and a touchdown and ran for another score as No. 17 Houston extended its winning streak to 10 games with a 31-13 victory over Memphis on Friday night.

Tune tossed a 19-yard touchdown pass to Nathaniel Dell in the second quarter but was picked off twice, the first snapping a streak of 192 attempts without an interception. The QB also rushed for 59 yards, including a 20-yard touchdown as the Cougars (10-1, 8-0 American Athletic Conference) built a 21-3 lead at halftime.

"We just hammer through whatever adversity we are faced with," Tune said. "Whatever challenges it is for that week, we keep hammering and playing. Don't let outside noise and distractions get in the way of what we are trying to do. It just speaks to the character of this team and what we know we can do."

Ta'Zawn Henry rushed for 73 yards and a touchdown and Alton McCaskill rushed for 58

yards and a touchdown. Dell caught seven passes for 100 yards and Jeremy Singleton finished with five catches for 80 yards.

Houston gained 461 yards and was 8-for-15 on third downs.

Houston went undefeated in conference play for the second time in school history, matching the 2011 team.

"We are a good team," Houston coach Dana Holgorsen said. "We finished the American 8-0. We've won 10 in a row. It's hard to win in college football. It's hard to win every week... I'm very proud of this football team."

Seth Henigan threw for 208 yards and a touchdown for Memphis (5-6, 2-5), while Calvin Austin III had five catches for 103 yards. The Tigers gained 322 yards.

"There's frustration, there's hurt, there's anger in the locker room and there should be," Memphis coach Ryan Silverfield said. "I'm all those things. ... It starts with me, and I am frustrated. We've got to find a way. Our players are frustrated, and I understand."

## No. 23 San Diego State holds off stubborn UNLV

*Associated Press*

LAS VEGAS — Lucas Johnson completed 18 of 24 pass attempts for 192 yards and threw three touchdowns, and No. 23 San Diego State survived a scare to beat UNLV 28-20 on Friday night.

The Aztecs led just 21-20 before Johnson found Jesse Matthews for a 7-yard strike with 3:33 left in the game.

San Diego State linebacker Seyddrick Lakalaka intercepted UNLV quarterback Justin Rogers with less than 2 minutes left in the game to thwart the Rebels' last-ditch effort.

San Diego State, which finished with a 5-0 road mark, improved to 10-1 overall, matching its best 11-game start since starting 10-0 in 1969. The Aztecs are one of five teams in the country currently with 10 wins, joining Cincinnati, Georgia, Houston, and UTSA.

Matthews finished with nine receptions for 75 yards and had three touchdowns, becoming the first San Diego State player to score three TDs in one game since Colin Lockett's trio in the 2001 New Orleans Bowl.

Las Vegas product Elijah Kothe finished with five receptions for 84 yards for the Aztecs, while Greg Bell ran for 52 yards on 14 carries.

While San Diego State improved to 21-10 all-time against the Rebels (2-9), UNLV outgained the Aztecs, 394-290.

"I didn't think we played Aztec football, especially on the defensive side," said San Diego State coach Brady Hoke. "We've got to do a better job. We can't give up big plays thrown over our heads. We've got to coach better. We as a staff, we got to look at some things."

UNLV lost starting quarterback Cam Friel midway through the first half and turned to Rogers, the original starter at the beginning of the season. Rogers looked nothing like the shaky quarterback who stepped in at times during the Rebels' campaign.

Rogers finished 15-for-21 for 305 yards and two touchdown passes, while Steve Jenkins had five receptions for 176 yards.

Charles Williams, the Rebels' career rushing leader, was held to 40 yards on 16 carries.



# Photos of missing tennis star seen online

Associated Press

BEIJING — An employee of Chinese state TV has posted photos of missing tennis star Peng Shuai online in a new effort to dispel concern about her disappearance after she accused a senior leader of sexual assault.

The photos appeared Friday on Twitter, which cannot be seen by most internet users in China. The state TV employee, Shen Shiwei, wrote they were on Peng's account on the WeChat message service with the comment, "Happy Weekend."

The ruling Communist Party faces mounting appeals from tennis stars and the sport's professional tour to prove Peng, a

three-time Olympian and former No. 1-ranked women's doubles player, is safe and let her speak freely.

Meanwhile, the editor of a newspaper published by the party said Peng would "show up in public" soon.

The controversy is politically awkward as the Chinese capital prepares to hold the Winter Olympics in February. A Foreign Ministry spokesperson on Friday denied knowing about the outcry over Peng's disappearance.

Peng, 35, hasn't been seen in public since posting a statement on social media this month accusing Zhang Gaoli, a former member of the party's Standing

Committee, the ruling inner circle of power, of forcing her to have sex despite repeated refusals.

Shen works for CGTN, the English-language arm of China Central Television that is aimed at foreign audiences. His Twitter post came after CGTN this week distributed a statement it said came from Peng that retracted the accusations against Zhang.

The editor of Global Times, an English-language newspaper published by the Communist Party, said on Twitter he had confirmed from unidentified sources that the photos "are indeed Peng Shuai's current state."

"In the past few days, she stayed in her own home freely and she didn't want to be disturbed," wrote the editor, Hu Xijin. "She will show up in public and participate in some activities soon."

The photos showed Peng with a gray cat and holding a panda figurine in what appeared to be a private home with stuffed animals lined up behind her. There was no indication when the photos were taken.

The chairman and CEO of the Women's Tennis Association, Steve Simon, on Wednesday questioned the legitimacy of the statement released by CGTN. Simon said it "only raises my concerns as to her safety."

## Canucks end 5-game winless streak by beating Jets

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Oliver Ekman-Larsson and Conor Garland scored power-play goals for the Vancouver Canucks to snap a five-game winless streak with a 3-2 victory over the Winnipeg Jets on Friday night.

Defenseman Kyle Burroughs, with his first NHL goal, also scored for the Canucks, who were 0-4-1 in their previous five games.

"It's big," said goaltender Thatcher Demko, who stopped 36 shots, including one off Nikolaj Ehlers in the dying seconds of the game with the Jets playing with an extra attacker. "Things haven't been going the way we want them the last few. We have some ground to make up. Hopefully, tonight is the start of stringing a few together and building some confidence in the room."

Ehlers and Pierre-Luc DuBois scored for the Jets, who lost their second consecutive game. Eric Comrie had 26 saves.

"For the most part we played a decent game," Adam Lowry said. "It wasn't like we weren't

in it or were giving up a lot of zone time or things like that. It's just a couple of areas of our game we want to clean up. Maybe the sharpness wasn't there."

The win was just the third in 12 games for Vancouver but may cool the temperature of disgruntled fans who have been calling for general manager Jim Benning and coach Travis Green to be fired.

Demko said the team hasn't let the criticism it has faced become a distraction.

"We are all on the same page as far as what we want to accomplish," he said. "Guys aren't turning on each other and getting negative. That's a huge sign. It's something we have to keep building with."

Ekman-Larsson took a pass from Elias Pettersson in the high slot for a shot that traveled through traffic and past Comrie with about six minutes left in the first period.

Burroughs made it 2-0 at 3:12 of the second on another shot through traffic that hit the left post and into the net. Ehlers cut the lead in half just a minute later.

Garland notched Vancouver's second power-play goal at 6:54 of the second after Blake Wheeler was called for high-sticking. Dubois made it interesting with his tenth goal of the season with 2:28 remaining.

**Avalanche 7, Kraken 3:** Cale Makar had two goals and an assist, Andre Burakovsky scored two power-play goals and visiting Colorado beat Seattle.

Darcy Kuemper had 25 saves and Nazem Kadri extended his points streak to eight games with two assists for Colorado. The Avalanche have won four straight games, outscored opponents 24-7 during that streak and are 6-1-1 in their last eight after starting 1-3.

"I think it took a while to find some chemistry," defenseman Erik Johnson said. "We had some COVID absences. We had some injuries and then I think we had a lot of new faces that had to acclimate adjust to our lineup and even a new goalie. So I think sometimes that takes time for guys and we're finding our rhythm right now."

Jordan Eberle, Brandon Tanev and Colin Blackwell scored

for the Kraken, who lost their sixth straight and seven of eight. Chris Dreidger made his second start in goal for the Kraken, but he looked uncomfortable from the start and allowed four goals on Colorado's first 13 shots, bookended by Burakovsky's power-play goals.

"I think we just needed to go back to the simplicity of things and tonight you saw that it was one or two passes and then straight to the net," Makar said. "And I think that's just what we need to focus on more, is just having that attack mentality and creating chaos."

The approach worked. Kraken coach Dave Hakstol pulled Dreidger at 5:33 of the second period for Philipp Grubauer, who didn't fare much better, giving up three goals as the Avs built a 7-0 lead. The seven goals tied Seattle's season high for goals allowed.

"There's only one way out of it and that's to keep grinding, that's to stick together and that's to find a way to dig out a win and all of a sudden the weight comes off and things head in the right direction," Hakstol said.

# Moore, No. 7 Duke roll past Lafayette

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Wendell Moore Jr. scored 23 points and No. 7 Duke used a few smooth stretches in the second half to pull away for an 88-55 victory over Lafayette on Friday night.

AJ Griffin came off the bench to score 18 points for the Blue Devils (5-0), which had too many weapons despite some early snags.

Mark Williams added 14 points and 15 rebounds, Paolo Banchero scored 11 points and Trevor Keels had 10 points for Duke.

Kyle Jenkins, who had four of his team's seven three-pointers, scored 18 points for Lafayette (0-3).

**No. 1 Gonzaga 92, Bellarmine 50:** Drew Timme scored 25 points as the Bulldogs dominated the Knights, extending the nation's longest home winning streak to 55 games.

Julian Strawther added 19 points for Gonzaga (4-0), which has not lost at home since 2018. Freshman center Chet Holmgren had 18 points on 8-for-10 shooting, plus five rebounds and five assists.

**No. 4 Michigan 74, UNLV 61:** Eli Brooks scored 22 points, including four three-pointers, to help the visiting Wolverines beat the Runnin' Rebels.

Moussa Diabate had 14 points and seven rebounds for the Wolverines (3-1), and Hunter Dickinson added 13 points and seven rebounds.

Bryce Hamilton led UNLV (3-1) with 21 points, which lost for the first time under new coach Kevin Kruger.

**No. 11 Memphis 74, Western Kentucky 62:** Jalen Duren had 22 points, 19 rebounds and five blocks as the host Tigers beat the Hilltoppers in a sloppy game.

Deandre Williams added 13

points and Early Timberlake finished with 10 for Memphis (4-0).

**No. 13 Kentucky 77, Ohio State 59:** Keion Brooks scored 22 points to lead the Wildcats past the visiting Bobcats.

Ben Vander Plas finished with a team-high 19 points and six rebounds for Ohio (3-1), followed by Jason Carter with 15 points and Mark Sears with 10.

**No. 14 Alabama 86, Oakland 59:** Jaden Shackelford scored 20 points as the host Crimson Tide beat the Golden Grizzlies, giving Alabama its first 4-0 start since the 2017-18 season.

Jamal Cain scored 31 points, making 10 of his 23 shots from the field for the Grizzlies (2-2) and nine of his 11 free throws. He also had 10 rebounds and three steals.

**No. 20 Maryland 69, Hofstra 67:** Ian Martinez made two free throws with 4.2 seconds remaining, allowing the Terrapins to edge the visiting Pride and avoid another loss this week.

Eric Ayala led Maryland (4-1) with 14 points coming off a home loss to George Mason.

**No. 21 Auburn 58, South Florida 52:** K.D. Johnson scored 15 points, Zep Jasper added 13 and the Tigers rallied to beat the host Bulls.

Caleb Murphy scored 19 points and Javon Greene added 12 for South Florida (2-2).

**No. 22 St. Bonaventure 68, Clemson 65:** At Charleston, S.C., Kyle Lofton scored 22 points, Jaren Holmes added 19 and the Bonnies rallied from a 16-point deficit to beat the Tigers in the semifinals of the Charleston Classic.

PJ Hall matched his career high with 22 points, David Collins had 14 and Nick Honor scored 12 for Clemson (4-1).

# Tatum scores 37 as Celtics top Lakers

Associated Press

BOSTON — Jayson Tatum scored 37 points and the Boston Celtics beat Los Angeles 130-108 on Friday night to spoil LeBron James' return to the Lakers' lineup.

Marcus Smart had 22 points, and Dennis Schroder 21 to help Boston climb back to .500 at 8-9. Al Horford added 18 points, and Tatum had 11 rebounds.

Anthony Davis led Los Angeles with 31 points, and James had 23 in 32 minutes. They each had six rebounds and two assists.

James missed eight games with an abdominal strain, and the Lakers went 3-5 while he was sidelined. They've lost their last four road games.

**Bucks 96, Thunder 89:** Giannis Antetokounmpo had 21 points, 19 rebounds and seven assists to help host Milwaukee withstand Oklahoma City's comeback attempt Friday night.

Milwaukee never trailed but nearly allowed Oklahoma City to come all the way back from a 20-point deficit.

**Suns 112, Mavericks 104:** Mikal Bridges and Devin Booker each scored 19 points, Chris Paul added 18 points and 14 assists and Phoenix beat visiting Dallas for its 11th straight victory.

The winning streak is the Suns' longest since the 2006-07 season — and the latest victory followed a familiar pattern.

**Warriors 105, Pistons 102:** Jordan Poole stepped up in Stephen Curry's absence to score 22 of his season-high 32 points in the first half, Andrewiggins had 27 and Golden State beat host Detroit.

The NBA-leading Warriors sat out Curry with a bruised hip, a night after he had 20 of his 40 points in a fourth-quarter comeback victory at Cleveland. They also were without Draymond Green because of a bruised thigh.

**Nets 115, Magic 113:** James Harden had 36 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists and Brooklyn overcame a 19-point deficit and the absence of Kevin Durant to beat visiting Orlando.

Durant did not play due to a right shoulder sprain.

**Hornets 121, Pacers 118:** LaMelo Ball had a season-high 32 points along with 11 rebounds and eight assists and host Charlotte held off Indiana for its fifth straight victory.

Gordon Hayward added 25 points, and Kelly Oubre Jr. had 16 to finish off a 4-0 homestand that included wins over Golden State and Washington.

**Pelicans 94, Clippers 81:** Jonas Valanciunas had 26 points and 13 rebounds and New Orleans overcame a 20-point first-half deficit to beat visiting Los Angeles.

After challenging the Pelicans to "grow up" after they'd blown double-digit leads at Washington and Miami earlier this week, Josh Hart had 19 points, 10 rebounds and two steals.

**Bulls 114, Nuggets 108:** Zach LaVine scored 12 of his 36 points in a pivotal stretch of the fourth quarter, DeMar DeRozan hit eight straight late free throws and Chicago won in Denver for the first time since 2006, beating a Nuggets team without reigning MVP Nikola Jokic.

Jokic sat courtside in a tan suit with a dark turtleneck, his sprained right wrist in a brace. He appeared to hurt the wrist on Thursday night in a lopsided loss to Philadelphia.

**Raptors 108, Kings 89:** Pascal Siakam scored 18 of his season-high 32 points in the first half and Toronto beat host Sacramento.

Gary Trent Jr. had 23 points to help the Raptors end a three-game skid and win for the second time in eight games.