

## Soldiers, families in S. Korea get feast

BY DAVID CHOI  
*Stars and Stripes*

**CAMP HUMPHREYS,** South Korea — The “Super Bowl” of Thanksgiving meals for U.S. troops, which included 3,097 pounds of turkey, was served by a bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation in South Korea on Thursday.

In addition to the turkey, the lavish meal throughout U.S. bases in South Korea included 2,088 pounds of roast beef, 1,251 pounds of steamship beef, 654 pounds of rib-eye steak and 2,449 pounds of ham, according to the 2nd Infantry Division fact sheet.

Sixty Army culinary specialists and 298 contractors prepared the meal for the roughly 28,500 troops, civilian employees and their families with U.S. Forces Korea.

Ice sculptures and cakes

greeted the line of U.S. and South Korean troops at the Spartan Warrior Restaurant, a dining facility at Camp Humphreys.

Culinary specialists went through extra lengths to decorate the dining facility because the “soldiers are away from their families,” according to Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hanspard, a culinary specialist and restaurant manager.

“This is a culinary specialist’s Super Bowl every year,” Hanspard told Stars and Stripes on Thursday. “This is what we want to throw down on. We really take pride in what we do, in terms of presentation and the taste of the food.”

A delegation of five House representatives — Democratic Reps. Mark Takano of California, Elissa Slotkin of Michigan,

Colin Allred of Texas, Sara Jacobs of California and Republican Nancy Mace of South Carolina — also helped serve meals to the troops.

“Come get your vegetables,” Slotkin, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and a former CIA analyst, shouted as she served mixed vegetables to a line of service members.

“It was great to meet some of our service members,” Takano, chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said to Stars and Stripes. “It’s always a great pleasure to take the Thanksgiving holiday with members of Congress, who give up time with their families, to come and be with our troops, who are also giving up time with their families.”

Mace, a member of the House Veterans’ Affairs Com-

mittee and a graduate of The Citadel Military College of South Carolina, toured the facility and stopped to chat with fellow South Carolinians.

“It’s just an honor to spend time with our soldiers who are stationed overseas, many of them don’t get to go home that frequently,” Mace said. “It’s an honor to be out here with our men and women in uniform who do so much for us.”

The delegation visited Japan earlier in the week and met with U.S. troops stationed on Okinawa. There, they warned about China’s rising influence in the Pacific region.

“There’s a growing sense of a new reality with China, a stronger China, a more equipped China, a China that is closing the innovation gap,” Takano told Stars and Stripes on Tuesday.

## No duty station transfers for unvaccinated airmen

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Airmen who have not been fully vaccinated against the coronavirus will not be allowed to proceed to their next permanent duty station beginning Monday, according to a memo issued by the Air Force.

Compliance with the guidance, which was issued Tuesday by Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, the Air Force’s deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services, is mandatory.

“Airmen who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19, including those awaiting final decision on a medical exemption or religious accommodation, are restricted from proceeding on existing [permanent change of station] orders, or selection for future PCS,” Kelly wrote in the memo, which was first reported by the Facebook page Air Force amn/nco/snco.

Phone calls from Stars and Stripes on Wednesday to the Department of the Air Force went unanswered.

In August, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered that all service members be vaccinated against the coronavirus but left the timeframe up to individual services.

The Air Force set a deadline of Nov. 2 for all active-duty airmen and U.S. Space Force guardians to be fully vaccinated.

The deadline for full vaccination for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members is Dec. 2.

The Air Force’s PCS restriction will remain in force for any airman until that person either becomes fully vaccinated against COVID-19, which is the disease caused by the coronavirus, or receives an approved medical exemption or religious accommodation, Kelly wrote.

As of Tuesday, 96.6% of active-duty air-

men had been fully vaccinated, leaving 7,874 airmen unvaccinated, according to the service’s statistics.

The Air Force has granted 1,254 medical exemptions for vaccination and none for religious reasons. The Air Force is currently processing 4,756 requests for religious exemption, according to the statistics.

Airmen not fully vaccinated and those awaiting exemption approval will be flagged in their personnel file to prevent them from being selected for future assignments, Kelly wrote.

“Airmen currently on assignment are not authorized to out-process and depart on PCS, with the exception of those who have out-processed and/or shipped household goods/vehicles on or prior to 29 November, who are permitted to proceed to their new duty location,” Kelly wrote.

## USS The Sullivans comes home for Thanksgiving Day

*The Florida Times-Union*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Travis Hensley gave a final salute, then became the first to bound down the gangway of the USS The Sullivans on its homecoming, his seabag with him as he hit the pier at Naval Station Mayport.

Within seconds, the bag was replaced in his arms with 3-month-old Alexander, 1-year-old son and wife Bryanna, greeting them with hugs after returning from a 7-month world cruise with Britain's Royal Navy.

"I am elated to see my new son and the rest of my family," the chief petty officer said Wednesday just in time for Thanksgiving. "Alex is great and I missed him so much. He looks so cute in his sailor's suit. It is perfect timing and I am grateful for the holidays."

"We are just overwhelmed, so excited and feeling so blessed that he's coming home," his wife said. "He's meeting his new baby too, so we are just so excited to have him home and get back to life. We are going to celebrate Thanksgiving and just spend time as a family."

Further down the pier, Jessica Nelson and her children spotted husband/father Anthony Nelson on an upper deck. Minutes later, it was a hug-fest after a 7-month absence at sea.

"I am pretty happy to see everybody and glad to be home, especially this little one," said Nelson, a logistics specialist, as he gazed at 9-month-old daughter Brynlee. "I am super happy for that and glad to be home for the holidays, be with the kids and eat lots of food, right guys?"

"Her second word was Dadda," added Jessica, joined by their other children Blake and Bryce. "I am so excited for him to hear her say Dadda in person. She absolutely knows her daddy, doesn't she?"

The 505-foot-long ship's name honors the memories of the five Sullivan brothers who died when a Japanese torpedo sunk their light cruiser 79 years ago.

The guided-missile destroyer is the second U.S. Navy vessel to honor George, Francis, Madison, Joseph and Albert Sullivan, all killed on Nov. 13, 1942, as the USS Juneau sank during the battle for Guadalcanal. The brothers served on the same ship despite a Navy wartime policy to separate family members.

## Hawaii groups want US to close military fuel tanks

*Associated Press*

HONOLULU — Citing threats to Honolulu's drinking water, the Sierra Club of Hawaii and other groups on Wednesday called on President Joe Biden and military leaders to shut down tanks that provide an important fuel reserve for U.S. forces in the Pacific.

"Enough is enough. We've lost all faith in the local Navy command," said Wayne Tanaka, the director of the Sierra Club of Hawaii, at a rally and news conference.

The military built 20 fuel tanks, each the equivalent of 25 stories tall, during World War II near Pearl Harbor on top of an aquifer that supplies drinking water to one-quarter of Honolulu.

The call to shut them down comes after a series of recent revelations about fuel leaks associated with the Red Hill fuel tanks or Pearl Harbor.

Tanaka called the tanks "an unacceptable threat to the drinking water supply for 400,000 Oahu residents."

Navy Region Hawaii said in a statement that it is committed to safeguarding the environment and drinking water while protecting national security.

"We will closely monitor all aspects of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility to ensure the safety of our operations," it said.

On Monday, the Navy said 14,000 gallons of a water and fuel mixture leaked into the Red Hill facility's lower tunnel from a fire suppression system drain line. No fuel leaked into the environment.

Last month, Honolulu Civil Beat reported that officials waited months to report a January leak at Pearl Harbor to the state Department of Health "amid concerns it would hamper its ability to secure a state permit" for the Red Hill tanks.

Hawaii's four-member congressional delegation has asked the Department of Defense's inspector general to investigate the January leak, saying they want to know whether the Navy properly investigated and notified state authorities.

## Ex-Army officer who advocated for Iraqi, Afghan detainees dies at 42

**By ROSE L. THAYER**

*Stars and Stripes*

Ian Fishback, a former Army officer who in 2005 raised concerns about the treatment of detainees in the Global War on Terror, died Nov. 19 at an adult treatment facility in Michigan. He was 42 years old.

In a statement posted with Fishback's obituary, the veteran's family thanked his hometown community in Newberry, Mich., for the support provided Fishback in "recent difficult times."

Fishback's mental health had declined recently and he struggled to get access to medical and mental health care from Veterans Affairs, said his longtime friend Justin Ford.

For those who knew Fishback, his friend said that his actions regarding the inhumane treatment of detainees came as no surprise. He always had a strong moral and ethical compass and held tightly to those principles,

Ford said.

"Standing up for what you believe in is never easy. And it wasn't easy on him," he said. "He paid a price."

In 2005, while a captain in the 82nd Airborne Division, Fishback wrote to Sen. John McCain about his concerns over the treatment of detainees and whether the Geneva Convention applied to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Later that year, the Senate passed legislation from McCain to prohibit inhumane treatment and Time magazine named Fishback to its list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Fishback went on to serve with the Green Berets and later taught at his alma mater, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He left the Army as a major and often spoke on panels about his decision to call attention to detainee treatment in Iraq and Afghanistan.

# Travelers emerge in time for Thanksgiving

Associated Press

DALLAS — Determined to reclaim Thanksgiving traditions that were put on pause last year by the pandemic, millions of Americans will be loading up their cars or piling onto planes to gather again with friends and family.

The number of air travelers this week is expected to approach or even exceed pre-pandemic levels, and auto club AAA predicts that 48.3 million people will travel at least 50 miles from home over the holiday period, an increase of nearly 4 million over last year despite sharply higher gasoline prices.

Many feel emboldened by the fact that nearly 200 million Americans are now fully vaccinated. But it also means brush-

ing aside concerns about a resurgent virus at a time when the United States is now averaging nearly 100,000 new infections a day and hospitals in Michigan, Minnesota, Colorado and Arizona are seeing alarming increases in patients.

The seven-day daily average of new reported cases is up nearly 30% in the last two weeks through Tuesday, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said unvaccinated people should not travel, although it is unclear whether that recommendation is having any effect.

More than 2.2 million travelers streamed through airport checkpoints last Friday, the busiest day since the pandemic

devastated travel early last year. From Friday through Tuesday, the number of people flying in the U.S. was more than double the same days last year and less than 9% lower than the same days in 2019.

For their part, airlines are hoping to avoid a repeat of the massive flight cancellations — more than 2,300 apiece — that dogged Southwest and American Airlines at different times last month.

The breakdowns started with bad weather in one part of the country and spun out of control. In the past, airlines had enough pilots, flight attendants and other workers to recover from many disruptions within a day or two. They are finding it harder to bounce back now, however, be-

cause they are stretched thin after pushing thousands of employees to quit when travel collapsed last year.

American, Southwest, Delta and United have all been hiring lately, which gives the airlines and industry observers hope that flights will stay on track this week.

“The airlines are prepared for the holidays,” said Helene Becker, an airlines analyst for financial-services firm Cowen. “They cut back the number of flights, the industry has enough pilots, they are putting more flight attendants through their (training) academies, and they are paying flight attendants a premium — what I’m going to call hazardous-duty pay — to encourage people not to blow off work.”

## EU authorizes Pfizer’s vaccine for children 5-11

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — The European Union’s drug regulator on Thursday authorized Pfizer’s coronavirus vaccine for use on children from 5 to 11 years old, clearing the way for shots to be administered to millions of elementary school pupils amid a new wave of infections sweeping across the Continent.

It is the first time the European Medicines Agency has cleared a COVID-19 vaccine for use in young children.

The agency said it “recommended granting an extension of indication for the COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty to include use in children aged 5 to 11.”

After evaluating a study of the vaccine in more than 2,000 children, the EMA estimated that the vaccine was about 90% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 in young children and said the most common side effects were pain at the injection site, headaches, muscle pain

and chills. The agency said the two-dose regimen should be given to children three weeks apart.

At least one country facing spiking infections didn’t wait for the EMA approval. Authorities in the Austrian capital, Vienna, already began vaccinating the 5 to 11 age group. Europe is currently at the epicenter of the pandemic, and the World Health Organization has warned the continent could see deaths top 2 million by the spring unless urgent measures are taken.

The EMA green light for the vaccine developed by Pfizer and German company BioNTech has to be rubber-stamped by the EU’s executive branch, the European Commission, before health authorities in member states can begin administering shots.

Earlier this week, Germany’s health minister Jens Spahn said shipping of vaccines for younger children in the EU would begin on Dec. 20.

## Justice Department to focus on prosecuting violence on flights

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Merrick Garland directed U.S. attorneys across the country to swiftly prioritize prosecution of federal crimes that happen on commercial flights as federal officials face a historic number of investigations into passenger behavior.

Garland’s memo, issued Wednesday, emphasizes that the Justice Department is committed to aggressively prosecuting violent passengers who assault crew members or endanger the safety of other passengers. Federal law prohibits interfering with a flight crew, including assaulting, intimidating or threatening crew members.

In a statement, Garland said such passengers do more than harm employees.

“They prevent the performance of critical duties that help ensure safe air travel. Similarly, when passengers commit violent acts against other

passengers in the close confines of a commercial aircraft, the conduct endangers everyone aboard,” he said.

The memo also notes that dozens of incidents have been reported to the FBI by the Federal Aviation Administration — it investigates some flight disturbances and can issue civil fines to disruptive passengers — as part of an “information-sharing protocol” between the two agencies.

The FAA said earlier this month that it had launched 950 investigations into passenger behavior on flights this year. That is the highest total since the agency started keeping track in 1995. In the five years from 2016 through 2020, the agency averaged 136 investigations a year.

The agency also said that it had referred 37 cases involving unruly airline passengers to the FBI for possible criminal prosecution since the number of disruptions on flights began to spike in January.



# Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade makes full return

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Crimped by the coronavirus pandemic last year, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade returned Thursday in full, though with precautions.

Balloons, floats, marching bands, clowns and performers — and, of course, Santa Claus — once again began wending Thursday morning though 2½ miles of Manhattan streets, instead of being confined to one block or sometimes pretaped last year.

Spectators, shut out in 2020, lined the route again. High school and college marching bands from around the country were invited back to the lineup; most of last year's performers were locally based to cut down on travel. The giant balloons, tethered to vehicles last year, got their costumed handlers back.

To President Joe Biden, the parade's full-fledged return was a sign of renewal, and he called NBC broadcaster Al Roker on-air to say so.

"After two years, we're back. America is back. There's nothing we're unable to overcome," Biden said over the phone from Nantucket, Mass., where he was watching the broadcast with his family.

Biden on Thursday wished Americans a happy and closer-to-normal Thanksgiving, in remarks welcoming the resumption of holiday traditions in many homes.

"As we give thanks for what we have, we also keep in our hearts those who have been lost and those who have lost so much," the president said in a video greeting recorded with first lady Jill Biden at the White House before their trip to Nantucket.

On Nantucket, the Bidens visited the Coast

Guard station at Brant Point to meet virtually with U.S. service members from around the world and chat with personnel at the station. "I'm thankful for these guys," the president said when asked what he was thankful for, referring to the Coast Guard members standing ramrod straight in front of him on the grounds.

The Thanksgiving parade is the latest U.S. holiday event to make a comeback as vaccines, familiarity and sheer frustration made officials and some of the public more comfortable with big gatherings amid the ongoing pandemic.

Still, safety measures continued. Parade staffers and volunteers had to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and wear masks, though some singers and performers were allowed to shed them.

There was no inoculation requirement for spectators, but Macy's and the city encouraged them to cover their faces. A popular spectacle before the parade — the inflation of the giant balloons — was limited to vaccinated viewers.

The Thanksgiving event also came days after an SUV driver plowed through a Christmas parade in suburban Milwaukee, killing six people and injuring over 60. Authorities said the driver, who has been charged with intentional homicide, was speeding away from police after a domestic dispute.

New balloon giants joining the lineup include the title character from the Netflix series "Ada Twist, Scientist", the Pokémon characters Pikachu and Eevee on a sled (Pikachu has appeared before, in different form), and Groggu, aka "Baby Yoda," from the television show "The Mandalorian."

## Native American tribes mourning on Thanksgiving

Associated Press

Members of Native American tribes from around New England are gathering in the seaside town where the Pilgrims settled — not to give thanks, but to mourn Indigenous people worldwide who've suffered centuries of racism and mistreatment.

Thursday's solemn National Day of Mourning observance in downtown Plymouth, Mass., will recall the disease and oppression that European settlers brought to North America.

"We Native people have no reason to celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims," said Kisha James, a member of the Aquinnah Wampanoag and Oglala Lakota tribes and the granddaughter of Wamsutta Frank James, the event's founder.

"We want to educate people so that they understand the stories we all learned in school about the first Thanksgiving are nothing but lies. Wampanoag and other Indigenous people have certainly not lived happily ever after since the arrival of the Pilgrims," James said.

"To us, Thanksgiving is a day of mourning, because we remember the millions of our ancestors who were murdered by uninvited European colonists such as the Pilgrims. Today, we and many Indigenous people around the country say, 'No Thanks, No Giving.'"

It's the 52nd year that the United American Indians of New England have organized the event on Thanksgiving Day. The tradition began in 1970.

Indigenous people and their supporters planned to gather at noon in person on Cole's Hill, a windswept mound overlooking Plymouth Rock, a memorial to the colonists' arrival.

## Sweden's 1st female PM resigns hours after sworn in

The Washington Post

Sweden on Wednesday confirmed Magdalena Andersson as its first female leader, nearly 100 years after the Scandinavian country extended women the right to vote.

Her tenure was fleeting.

Hours after assuming office, Andersson resigned from the post when a member of the ruling coalition, the center-left Swedish Green party, quit the government in protest after lawmakers passed a budget bill backed

by three right-wing parties. Andersson's Social Democratic Party had put forward an alternative budget proposal that failed to pass.

Andersson had briefly joined the ranks of around two dozen current female heads of state and government, according to U.N. Women, the United Nations agency focused on gender equality. Around half of those women head European countries.

Sweden was the last of its Nordic neighbors — Denmark, Norway, Finland and Ice-

land — to elect a woman to their highest offices. Scandinavian countries have a reputation for some of the world's most progressive gender policies.

Andersson was Sweden's finance minister before her brief foray as prime minister, which is also a rarity: Women ministers are most commonly assigned portfolios that concern issues such as family, children, social issues, employment and women's affairs.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Civil War battlefield gets \$4M preservation grant

**VA** WILLIAMSBURG — The National Park Service announced that it has awarded the largest single grant in the history of its American Battlefield Protection Program to help preserve one of the nation's lesser-known Civil War battlefields.

The \$4.6 million grant will be used to purchase and preserve 250 acres of the Williamsburg Battlefield in York County, Va., which has sat on private land outside the city and former colonial capital.

The battle was part of what's known as the Peninsula Campaign of 1862, when Union forces tried to capture Richmond from the southeast.

### Landlord fined \$133K for 'horrific' conditions

**MN** MINNEAPOLIS — A Hennepin County district judge fined a north Minneapolis landlord \$133,500 for what he called horrific conditions in his rental properties.

The Star Tribune reported that Judge Patrick Robben ruled that landlord Steven Meldahl operated in bad faith by telling tenants that they were not allowed to contact city inspectors, violating the rights of 267 families who rented his properties.

"Infestations suggestive of biblical plague proportions — squirrels, mice, rats, gnats," the judge said.

Robben levied a fine of \$500 per family. He also issued a permanent injunction preventing Meldahl from engaging in illegal and deceptive practices, and

gave him until Dec. 15 to comply with all housing correction notices.

### Dempsey Challenge reaches \$1.5M goal

**ME** LEWISTON — The Dempsey Challenge has reached its \$1.5 million fundraising goal, garnering \$200,000 more than any previous year despite the coronavirus pandemic decreasing participation.

The bike-and-run fundraiser in September raised a record \$1.3 million and additional fundraising from businesses and a virtual cycling event pushed the Dempsey Challenge past its fundraising goal, The Sun-Journal reported.

The challenge is the primary fundraiser for the Dempsey Center, a nonprofit organization founded by actor Patrick Dempsey that provides free services to cancer patients and their families.

### Former art dealer pleads guilty to \$86M in fraud

**NY** NEW YORK — A former London and Miami art dealer pleaded guilty to defrauding art buyers of over \$86 million.

Inigo Philbrick, 34, a U.S. citizen who has also lived in London, entered the plea in Manhattan federal court.

He pleaded guilty to a single count of wire fraud after prosecutors said he conducted a scheme from 2016 through 2019 to defraud individuals and entities to finance his art business.

Prosecutors said he carried out the scheme by misrepresenting the ownership of certain

artworks and by sometimes selling more than 100% ownership to multiple individuals and entities without their knowledge.

### Driver charged with desecrating cemetery

**SC** RAVENEL — A driver was charged with desecration of a human burial ground after he drove over several gravestones and knocked over a headstone in a Charleston County cemetery as he tried to run from police, investigators said.

When deputies checking a suspicious vehicle near the Saint Paul United Methodist Church Cemetery turned on their blue lights, the 31-year-old driver sped off through the graveyard, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office told news outlets. The chase reached speeds of more than 110 mph on U.S. Highway 17 and state Highway 162, deputies said.

Deputies said the chase ended when the car got stuck in a mud hole.

Along with desecrating the cemetery, the driver was also charged with receiving stolen goods and failure to stop for blue lights.

### Masked suspects rob diner, taking only purse

**CA** COSTA MESA — A group of masked people dressed in black ran onto a Southern California restaurant patio, ordered everyone down, then stole a diner's purse before fleeing, police said.

At least one of the suspects may have been armed with a

handgun during the robbery at Seasons52 restaurant at South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, police spokeswoman Roxy Fyad said.

Police are looking for three to five suspects, the Orange County Register reported.

### Fishpond restoration shows century-old grave

**HI** HONOLULU — Restoration of fishponds in Hawaii led to the discovery of a child's grave from nearly 100 years ago.

A nonprofit group has been restoring the fishponds at Honouliuli stream in Ewa Beach. Earlier this month, the group's founder saw a gravestone hidden in the tall grass, Hawaii News Now reported.

The inscription said a 1-year-old boy named Akira Matsuyama died in June 1927.

Through social media, Chance found members of the Matsuyama family who lived on the land in the 1900s.

### \$3M lottery prize is couple's second big win

**MO** POTOSI — An eastern Missouri couple recently won a \$3 million lottery prize — and it wasn't the first time they've claimed a big lottery win.

The Missouri Lottery said the couple from Washington County, who asked not to be identified, purchased the winning ticket for the "Big Riches" scratcher game in Potosi while recently picking up groceries.

Winning never gets old. The same couple won a \$250,000 lottery prize a few years ago.

— From wire reports

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# Stakes high for Ohio State-Michigan

*Associated Press*

COLUMBUS, Ohio — This year's version of The Game could hardly be bigger.

The annual clash between Ohio State and Michigan, held this year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, is already juiced by a century of tradition, mutual hatred and fanaticism.

A lot more than bragging rights are at stake this year in Ann Arbor for the No. 2 Buckeyes and No. 6 Wolverines.

The winner clinches the Big Ten East and advances to the conference championship game Dec. 4 — and stays alive for the College Football Playoff.

The loser picks up a second loss and will consider the season ruined.

"We've just been preparing for that team all winter, all summer," Ohio State senior defensive end Tyreke Smith said.

"Got that game always on our minds."

For the 24th time, The Game will be a top-10 matchup.

The Buckeyes (10-1, 8-0 Big Ten, No. 4 CFP) have dominated the series of late, winning the last eight matchups and 15 of the last 16.

Ohio State also has won the last four Big Ten championship games. The Wolverines (10-1, 7-1, No. 6 CFP) are looking for their first-ever appearance in the Big Ten title game, which was first played 11 years ago. Michigan hasn't won the conference since 2004.

A glaring subplot in all this is that Jim Harbaugh has never beaten Ohio State in five tries as the Michigan coach, a continuous source of frustration among Wolverines fans and gleeful schadenfreude in Columbus.

This may be Harbaugh's best

team and best chance yet. The Michigan defense is among the top 10 in the FBS and might have a chance to slow down the Buckeyes and the nation's most prolific offense (560 yards, 47.2 points per game).

Redshirt freshman quarterback C.J. Stroud was 32-for-35 for 432 yards and a school record-tying six touchdowns — all in the first half — in last Saturday's 56-7 rout of Michigan State, a week after he threw for five TDs in a blowout of Purdue.

The Ohio State defense had one of its best games of the season, neutralizing Michigan State's Heisman hopeful running back Kenneth Walker III, who gained just 26 yards.

The Buckeyes' loss to Oregon in Week 2 is a distant memory.

"The chemistry has been built on the field," Ohio State defensive tackle Haskell Gar-

rett said. "Each week we've gotten better."

Michigan also enters the game on a high note. Cade McNamara threw for two touchdowns and Hassan Haskins ran for two in the Wolverines' 59-18 win over Maryland last Saturday.

"We're a confident team. We know what we're capable of," McNamara said. "We're fired up and we're ready. This is the week."

The only blemish on the Michigan record is a 37-33 loss to Michigan State on Oct. 30.

"Everything that was planned, built for, all the energy that was put in since way back in early 2021 — January, February — all the things that the guys have done, the coaches have done, has put us in this position," Harbaugh said. "That's the position we wanted to be in, and we want to finish it."

## Defense brought Cowboys to first Big 12 title game

*Associated Press*

LUBBOCK, Texas — Mike Gundy was an Oklahoma State quarterback who handed the ball off to Barry Sanders and Thurman Thomas. As the Big 12's longest-tenured coach, he has overseen many big-play and high-scoring offenses led by other All-Americans.

Now Gundy is just trying to stay out of the way with the seventh-ranked Cowboys being defensive-minded and headed to their first Big 12 championship game.

"It's just important that we stay the course," Gundy said. "I just let everybody do their job, not mess with them."

The Cowboys (10-1, 7-1 Big 12) have a suffocating defense that is demoralizing opposing teams and their quarterbacks, allowing 164.3 yards per game and only one offensive touchdown over their past four games. The latest was a 23-0 win over a Texas Tech team that hadn't been shut out at home since 1987 — when Gundy, now the 17th-year coach, was still quarterback for the Cowboys playing in a different league.

Asked if he could sense on the sideline how much the defense wanted a shutout Saturday night, when the Cowboys locked

up their title game spot, Gundy responded, "I stay as far away as I can, so I don't mess them up."

Before playing in the Big 12 championship game, Oklahoma State hosts Bedlam at home in what could be the first of two games in two weeks against 10th-ranked Oklahoma (10-1, 7-1). The six-time defending Big 12 champion Sooners get into the Dec. 4 title game with a win over the Cowboys on Saturday night, or a loss by ninth-ranked Baylor (9-2, 6-2) earlier that day to Texas Tech.

"This is why I came back ... to get a Big 12 championship, and honestly beat OU," said linebacker Devin Harper, one of Oklahoma State's super seniors.

For these Cowboys, who haven't beaten Oklahoma since 2014 or won a conference title since 2011 when there wasn't a Big 12 championship game, there could be even bigger things this season.

Oklahoma State moved up from ninth to seventh in the latest College Football Playoff rankings this week after lopsided losses Saturday by Oregon and Michigan State ahead of them. The Cowboys then have the opportunity to get two victories over 10-win teams, whether twice over Oklahoma or

once each over the Sooners and Baylor, which would have to get its 10th win to play in the Big 12 title game.

"We take it game by game. We've been in the water forever, we see land and we've just got to keep pushing," Harper said. "We've got to beat OU, and whoever we play in the Big 12 beat them, and talk about the playoff then."

Texas Tech, which had scored in 302 consecutive games since a shutout loss at Nebraska in 1997 a decade after last being held scoreless at home, didn't even reach 100 yards in total offense until a 25-yard pass on the final drive.

The Red Raiders finished with 108 yards on 57 plays, including 13 that lost yards and 21 incomplete passes.

Red Raiders redshirt quarterback Donovan Smith, who was 25-of-35 passing for 322 yards and three touchdowns against Iowa State in his first start the previous week, finished 9 of 29 for 83 yards. Texas Tech had only 31 yards in the first half, including two completions for negative yards.

It was the third week in a row for Oklahoma State stymying a quarterback coming off a standout game.



# Two-game skid has Stafford, Rams adjusting

Associated Press

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — At least until the past two games, Matthew Stafford had smoothly handled just about every aspect of the enormous adjustment in moving from the Detroit Lions to the Los Angeles Rams.

This week, he faces another new challenge: A Thanksgiving without a football game to play.

"I loved playing on Thanksgiving," Stafford said after practice on a 77-degree Wednesday with the Rams (7-3), who travel to Green Bay on Sunday. "For the tradition, for the game, for all of that, but also ... because I was back in my house at 5, 5:30. Could have a normal Thanksgiving meal, watch some football with your family. Almost felt like a fan for a little while. And then it was fun having the next couple of days off so you could eat leftovers."

Stafford grew to enjoy the Lions' annual fixture of a holiday game on a short week, but he's got plenty of work to do this week with the Rams, who are on the first losing streak of his tenure.

Back-to-back defeats heading into their bye week have forced the Rams to take stock of themselves after an eight-game start in which Stafford appeared to be capable of leading this team to the Super Bowl with a supporting cast and a coaching staff to maximize his talents.

Stafford passed for 309.6 yards per game with 22 touchdowns, four interceptions and a 118.0 rating in the Rams' first eight games. His play in a new offensive system was undeniably impressive and worthy of MVP discussion.

In Los Angeles' two losses since, Stafford has passed for 268.5 yards per game with two touchdowns, four interceptions and a 69.4 rating while getting sacked seven times. Those four interceptions were critical: Stafford made glaring mistakes on three of the picks, and two of the four were returned for touchdowns that contributed to putting Los Angeles in a hole it couldn't escape.

Fixing those problems at Lambeau Field is a particularly difficult task, as the quarterback knows well. Stafford faced the Packers 20 times during his dozen seasons

with Detroit, going 7-13 with 37 touchdown passes — the most he has thrown against any opponent — and 20 interceptions. Stafford and Aaron Rodgers went head-to-head 16 times, with the Packers winning 12 of those.

"It's one of my favorite places to play in the NFL," Stafford said. "Got to do it a bunch of times. Played some fun snow games. I loved playing in the snow there. That's what you dream about as a kid, is getting to play the Packers at Lambeau Field in the snow. Don't think it's going to snow this week, but it's going to be nice and chilly this week, which is always fun."

Offensive coordinator Kevin O'Connell repeatedly pointed out fundamental areas for improvement in the past two games, most related to winning the turnover battle and not falling into early deficits.

"We've got to get off to better starts on early downs and be efficient," O'Connell said. "I think we can kind of, as a group, coaches included, we can all get into a rhythm early and figure out how we want to attack opponents."

# Kuznetsov, Ovechkin help Capitals whip Canadiens

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Evgeny Kuznetsov scored his seventh goal and added an assist, Alex Ovechkin had three assists in a game for the first time in nearly four years, and the Washington Capitals cruised to a 6-3 win over the Montreal Canadiens on Wednesday night.

Dmitry Orlov, John Carlson and Nic Dowd also had a goal and an assist each as Washington won its seventh out of nine in its return from a four-game West Coast trip.

Michael Sgarbossa scored his first career goal for the Capitals. Tom Wilson completed Ovechkin's three-assist night when he scored on a one-timer off his feed, bringing Ovechkin's season assist total to 18.

**Rangers 4, Islanders 1:** Chris Kreider and Kevin Rooney each scored twice, and the visiting New York Rangers beat the New York Islanders.

Igor Shesterkin made 20 saves as the Rangers won for the sixth time in seven games. Ryan Reaves added two assists.

**Oilers 5, Coyotes 3:** Leon Draisaitl and Connor McDavid each had two goals and two assists to lead visiting Edmonton past Arizona.

Draisaitl has 10 goals in his last eight

games, and McDavid got right back in the scoring column after his season-long, 17-game point streak ended in a 4-1 loss Tuesday at Dallas.

**Penguins 4, Canucks 1:** Tristan Jarry stopped 36 shots to win his fourth straight start and host Pittsburgh cruised past reeling Vancouver.

Evan Rodrigues, Bryan Rust, Zach Aston-Reese and Brock McGinn scored for Pittsburgh, which has outscored opponents 15-2 during its winning streak. The surge has coincided with the team's emergence from a COVID-19 outbreak and Jarry's spectacular play.

**Panthers 2, Flyers 1 (OT):** Aaron Ekblad scored 2:39 into overtime and Florida won its record-tying 11th straight home game to start the season by topping Philadelphia.

**Avalanche 5, Ducks 2:** Nazem Kadri kept up his scoring tear with a goal and an assist to lift host Colorado over Anaheim for its sixth straight victory.

**Red Wings 4, Blues 2:** Adam Erne scored the go-ahead goal early in the third period, streaking rookie Lucas Raymond got his eighth of the season and host Detroit beat St. Louis.

**Wild 3, Devils 2 (SO):** Kevin Fiala scored

the lone goal in a shootout, Cam Talbot made 42 saves and visiting Minnesota beat New Jersey after arriving late to the arena because of traffic.

**Bruins 5, Sabres 1:** Patrice Bergeron, David Pastrnak and Charlie Coyle each had a goal and an assist to lead visiting Boston over Buffalo.

**Golden Knights 5, Predators 2:** Chandler Stephenson and Mark Stone each had a goal and an assist, and visiting Vegas beat Nashville.

**Blue Jackets 3, Jets 0:** Elvis Merzlikins made 36 saves for his seventh career shut-out and host Columbus handed Winnipeg its fourth consecutive defeat.

**Maple Leafs 6, Kings 2:** John Tavares and Pierre Engvall had a goal and an assist apiece while visiting Toronto scored four consecutive times during the second period in a win over Los Angeles.

**Kraken 2, Hurricanes 1:** Marcus Johansson beat Frederik Andersen on a wrist shot with 3:08 remaining, Philipp Grubauer made 35 saves and Seattle edged Carolina.

**Sharks 6, Senators 3:** Timo Meier scored the go-ahead goal with 8:42 remaining and added two assists as host San Jose handed Ottawa its third straight loss.

# Booker, Paul keep Suns streaking

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — With the Suns' long winning streak in serious danger, Devin Booker and Chris Paul knew exactly what had to be done.

Phoenix's season is still rising.

Booker scored 35 points, Paul had 12 assists and made four free throws in the final 8.8 seconds, and the Suns extended their winning streak to 14 games by holding off the Cleveland Cavaliers 120-115 on Wednesday night.

Phoenix's streak started with a win at home over Cleveland on Oct. 30, which came after a 1-3 opening to the season for the defending Western Conference champions. The surge has also corresponded with allegations of racism and misogyny surfacing against Suns owner Robert Sarver.

"That's just coincidence,"

Paul said of the timing. "Our plan wasn't to start out 1-3. We've got a great group, a great locker room. I've never seen anything like it."

**Lakers 124, Pacers 116:** LeBron James made the tie-breaking three-pointer in overtime and followed with a back-breaking three in his return from the first suspension of his career to help visiting Los Angeles beat Indiana.

**Warriors 116, 76ers 96:** Stephen Curry scored 25 points to younger brother Seth's 24 for visiting Philadelphia, and NBA-leading Golden State won its fifth straight.

**Rockets 118, Bulls 113:** Danuel House Jr. had 18 points, Christian Wood added 16 points and 10 rebounds and host Houston beat Chicago to end its losing streak at 15.

**Nets 123, Celtics 104:** Kevin Durant scored 21 points to

pass Allen Iverson and move into the top 25 on the NBA's career scoring list, and visiting Brooklyn beat Boston.

**Bucks 114, Pistons 93:** Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 33 points, Bobby Portis added 28 and defending champion Milwaukee beat visiting Detroit for its fifth straight victory.

**Jazz 110, Thunder 104:** Donovan Mitchell scored six straight points in the final minute and visiting Utah held off Oklahoma City.

**Timberwolves 113, Heat 101:** Anthony Edwards had 33 points and 14 rebounds and led his team's three-point spree in the second half, as host Minnesota beat Jimmy Butler and Miami for its fifth straight victory.

**Hawks 124, Spurs 106:** Trae Young scored 31 points and visiting Atlanta beat San

Antonio for its sixth straight victory.

**Hornets 106, Magic 99:** Terry Rozier scored 27 points, LaMelo Ball added 22 and visiting Charlotte beat Orlando.

**Raptors 126, Grizzlies 113:** Gary Trent Jr. scored 17 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, and visiting Toronto rallied to beat Memphis.

**Pelicans 127, Wizards 102:** Brandon Ingram scored 26 points, Jonas Valanciunas added 21 points and 11 rebounds, and host New Orleans won for just the fourth time this season, beating Washington.

**Kings 125, Trail Blazers 121:** De'Aaron Fox scored 21 points before being ejected in the fourth quarter, Marvin Bagley III made a clutch three-pointer with 30 seconds remaining and host Sacramento held off Portland.

## Hurley brothers connect at Battle 4 Atlantis

Associated Press

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas — For once, Dan and Bobby Hurley are together for Thanksgiving — sort of.

The brothers are coaching in the Battle 4 Atlantis this week. Dan's No. 22 UConn has advanced into the winners' bracket while Bobby's Arizona State team is playing in the consolation rounds. That ensures they won't have the Hurley-vs.-Hurley matchup both dreaded in this eight-team tournament, and instead can now try to squeeze in a few conversations or maybe a brief get-together while bouncing between the locker room, arena and hotel towers around the Atlantis resort.

"I'm thankful that I'm going to see him and that he's here and usually we're always playing somewhere generally over Thanksgiving, and we don't get

to see each other," Bobby said in an interview with The Associated Press. "So it's just a blessing to see him, I think moreso than (having a Thanksgiving) meal and things."

The brothers said their first encounter here came as they happened to pass by each other while walking through the casino Tuesday.

"Good to see big brother," Dan said with a chuckle.

They hadn't seen each other since the summer recruiting season, and that followed more than a year of being separated amid the COVID-19 pandemic while leading programs on different sides of the country.

Both said the goal in the Bahamas was figuring out when there might be opportunities to connect throughout their stay for the three-day tournament, even though that would take some work.

"We've got practice times that are different times, we're watching film with our teams at different times," Bobby said. "We all have our own kind of schedules."

"It's always better if we can do it before we start playing because then if things don't go well for either one of us, then you really go into hiding a little bit more and you're not as accessible for each other. That's usually how it works for us: one guy loses and then that guy needs a little time to decompress."

A day later, Dan's Huskies survived a wild double-overtime win against No. 19 Auburn to earn a Thanksgiving Day matchup with Michigan State. Those extra sessions pushed back the rest of the first-round schedule, meaning Bobby's Sun Devils ultimately ended up meeting sixth-ranked and reigning national champion

Baylor in Wednesday's final game about 45 minutes later than scheduled.

Arizona State lost that one, sending it into Thursday's final matchup against Syracuse in the consolation bracket.

That meant the sons of legendary New Jersey high school coach Bob Hurley Sr. would continue to avoid having to coach against each other a little longer. Their only time competing in college basketball came in a 1992 matchup as players in the NCAA Tournament's Sweet 16: Bobby with Duke on its way to a repeat championship, Dan with Seton Hall.

Bobby got his coaching start as an assistant under Dan, first at Wagner and then at Rhode Island before becoming head coach at Buffalo. He's now in his seventh season with the Sun Devils, while Dan is in his fourth with the Huskies.