

Army touts prep course for recruits

Associated Press

FORT JACKSON, S.C. — Index cards taped to a large board on the wall at Fort Jackson, S.C., reveal the sometimes blunt and gritty reasons that new recruits took a chance at a last-ditch program to get into the Army.

“Eviction notices motivate me,” one said. Others talked about getting free college, a good job and a way to better themselves.

Known as the “Why Wall,” the board is meant as an inspiration for the recruits who could not meet the Army’s physical and academic test standards, so they went into the Future Soldier Prep Course. It provides weeks of instruction to help them bring up their scores.

Started as a trial program two years ago to help boost dismal recruiting numbers, the prep course is fueling the Army’s enlistment comeback. Recruiting has suffered for all the military branches in recent years coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, amid low unemploy-

ment and stiff competition from private companies able to pay more and provide similar or better benefits.

By the end of this budget year on Sept. 30, the Army had made its recruiting goal of 55,000, and service leaders said more than 13,000 of those recruits — or 24% — came into active duty through the prep course.

Army leaders increased the goal to 61,000 this year and are relying on the prep course to provide a significant chunk.

During a recent visit to Fort Jackson, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth spoke with recruits and program leaders to see how the course is going and what changes may need to be made. She said the successful program, which more than 31,000 trainees have gone through since it started, deserves to be made permanent.

Drill sergeants have expressed concerns that they are seeing more discipline issues, disrespect and complaints from trainees in the academic course.

And they say trainees whose first language is not English have a more difficult time understanding orders and dealing with computers.

While they see fewer discipline issues from recruits in the fitness section, they do see more injuries, including ankle, knee and hip problems.

So far, Wormuth said, the data does not reflect some of the concerns expressed by drill sergeants and commanders. Instead, she and other Army leaders said that on average, the graduation rate from basic training is a bit higher — about 94% — for those who went through the program versus those who did not, which is about 92%.

But so far, they are taking inspiration from the thoughts scrawled on the “Why Wall.”

Company commanders came up with the idea last year, to let recruits lay out their goals in their first few days so they can go back every week to get motivated or see their progress.

A bright yellow sign atop the

board tells recruits: “Your WHY will keep you going even when you want to QUIT the most.” The answer for many was they had something to prove — to themselves and others.

“I joined the Army because my family thought I couldn’t accomplish anything in life. So I had to prove them wrong,” one said. Another wrote: “I wanna show my family I’m worth something.”

Others said they wanted to “be a better man,” “gain my independence” and “prove to myself that I can accomplish something and I’m not a quitter.”

For Wormuth, the visit confirmed Army leaders’ intention to keep the program going.

Recruiting challenges are not going to end, she said.

“I think we’re going to probably continue to see pretty low unemployment. We’re still going to see 60% go to college. It’s a more competitive labor market,” she said. “So we’re going to have to keep fighting hard for our new recruits.”

Unknown Korean War vet laid to rest in South Korea

By DAVID CHOI

Stars and Stripes

BUSAN, South Korea — Military veterans and troops from over 20 countries gathered here Monday to pay their respects as an unknown Korean War service member was laid to rest at the U.N. Cemetery in Korea.

Roughly 1,000 people attended the service on International Memorial Day for U.N. Korea War Veterans, observed each year on Nov. 11. It was hosted by the U.N. Command and South Korea’s Ministry of Patriots and

Veterans Affairs, or MPVA, at the only cemetery overseen by the command.

The burial ground, roughly 200 miles southeast of Seoul, holds the remains of 2,329 veterans from 14 member states who participated in the 1950-53 Korean War. They include 40 service members from the United States; 892 from the United Kingdom; 38 from South Korea; 462 from Turkey; and 281 from Australia.

Monday’s service honoring war veterans included the cem-

etery’s first interment of an unidentified U.N. Command service member. The remains were initially recovered from Yeoncheon county in 2010 by South Korea’s Ministry of National Defense Agency for Killed in Action Recovery Identification.

The burial illustrates “the promise of [South Korea] ... to take full responsibility for each and every U.N. veteran who died fighting,” MPVA minister Kang Jung-ai told those gathered for the ceremony.

“South Korea will never forget the seeds of freedom that young heroes have sown with their lives,” she said.

DNA testing and dental records determined the 17- to-25-year-old service member was of Caucasian descent and likely to have been from Britain, according to the MPVA.

Unable to confirm the identity or nationality with certainty, the South Korean government allowed the service member to be buried in a new plot dedicated to unidentified remains.

AFRICOM probing crash of drone in Somalia

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A U.S. drone flying last week over southern Somalia, where the American military routinely conducts surveillance operations, crashed to the ground, U.S. Africa Command said Friday.

An investigation has been launched to determine why the

U.S. Army-operated MQ-1C Gray Eagle went down on Nov. 5, AFRICOM said. The crash, however, does not appear to be the result of any attempt to shoot down the aircraft, the Stuttgart-based command said.

The Gray Eagle, a derivative of the Predator unmanned aircraft, is used for both surveillance and strikes. It can operate at up to 29,000 feet and is capa-

ble of carrying four Hellfire missiles, according to contractor General Atomics.

AFRICOM troops have been in Somalia on a regular basis for many years to help local forces involved in a decadeslong struggle against the Islamic militant group al-Shabab.

In addition to training and advising local troops, U.S. forces carry out surveillance missions

and conduct airstrikes against enemy targets in coordination with the Somali government.

Over the past couple of years, the number of U.S. drone strikes in Somalia has dropped dramatically. In 2020, AFRICOM conducted a record 63 strikes in the country. This year less than 10 strikes have occurred, according to AFRICOM data.

Marine rotational force training on Indonesian island

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

A Marine Corps rotational force is getting to know a part of Indonesia it hasn't seen before, a territory close to a potential flashpoint with China.

Around 200 members of Marine Rotational Force-Southeast Asia are at Yonif10 Marinir, an Indonesian marine corps base on Batam Island, east of Singapore, the force's commander said Thursday.

The island flanks the 12-mile-wide Singapore Strait — a strategically important waterway where thousands of merchant ships transit daily to and from the South China Sea. Beijing claims nearly all the sea as its territory.

Indonesia's Natuna Islands, in the South China Sea northeast of

Singapore, are close to waters near China. Indonesian fishermen have reported intimidation by Chinese coast guard vessels near the islands in recent years.

The Chinese have also harassed Vietnamese fishermen and interfered with the Philippines' attempts to resupply a maritime outpost off its coast elsewhere in the South China Sea.

The rotational force Marines traveled to Singapore from Manila after taking part in the Kamandag exercise with Filipino forces last month, their commander, Col. Stuart Glenn, told Stars and Stripes by phone from Batam.

They're reinforced by members of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment from Twentynine Palms, Calif., he said.

The Marines took a commercial fast ferry from Singapore to Batam, home to Indonesia's 10th Marine Infantry Battalion. It's the first time U.S. Marines have trained in that part of Indonesia, where monkeys and cobras are part of the landscape, according to Glenn.

"We're getting the feel of operating in the tropics," he said.

They're participating in the third annual Keris Marine Exercise, alongside 360 Indonesian marines, which kicked off Wednesday and runs until Nov. 19. During last year's training, 150 members of the rotational force practiced coastal defense on West Java, Indonesia.

The Marines in the country this month are working with their local counterparts "driving towards a coastal defense ca-

pability," Glenn said.

The training includes fire support control, planning, maneuvering, jungle survival and medical training, he added.

"Keris MAREX will culminate in a final training event, pitting the combined force of Indonesian and U.S. Marines against a notational enemy attempting to execute an amphibious landing," the rotational force said in a statement Wednesday.

Force-on-force and live-fire training involving small arms and mortars are scheduled on Singkep Island, a four-hour ferry ride south of Batam, Glenn said.

"It is triple canopy jungle and remote," he said of the island, which lacks an airport. "It will stress the small unit leaders on both sides."

Marine recruiter accused of sexually assaulting teen girl

By CAITLYN BURCHETT
Stars and Stripes

A Marine Corps recruiter was arrested in California, accused of sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl while at a recruiting center, local police said.

Sgt. Jorge Lara-Pedroza is facing sexual assault charges brought by the Sunnyvale police department. Marine Corps offi-

cials confirmed Thursday that Lara-Pedroza is an active-duty recruiter assigned to the Marine Corps Recruiting Station in San Francisco.

Lara-Pedroza and the girl met Oct. 28 at the recruiting center, where he is accused of assaulting her, according to police investigators.

The two initially met the pre-

vious week during a recruiting event at the girl's school, police said.

Lara-Pedroza was arrested Oct. 29 after the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety was notified of the sexual assault. He is charged with oral copulation, penetration with a foreign object, and arranging to meet with a minor with the intent to engage

in sexual conduct, police said.

A spokesperson for Recruiting Station San Francisco said the station is aware of Lara-Pedroza's arrest.

"The Marine Corps takes any allegations of misconduct seriously and is cooperating fully with law enforcement authorities," said Cpl. Israel Ballaro, the spokesperson.

Trump has said Day 1 will be jam-packed

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump has said he wouldn't be a dictator — “except for Day 1.” According to his own statements, he's got a lot to do on that first day in the White House.

His list includes starting up the mass deportation of migrants, rolling back Biden administration policies on education, reshaping the federal government by firing potentially thousands of federal employees he believes are secretly working against him and pardoning people who were arrested for their role in the riot at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

“I want to close the border, and I want to drill, drill, drill,” he said of his Day 1 plans.

When he took office in 2017, he had a long list, too, including immediately renegotiating trade deals, deporting migrants and putting in place measures to root out government corruption. Those things didn't happen all at once.

How many executive orders in the first week? “There will be tens of them. I can assure you of that,” Trump's national press secretary, Karoline Leavitt, told Fox News on Sunday.

Here's a look at what Trump has said he will do in his second term and whether he can do it the moment he steps back into the White House:

Make his federal criminal cases go away

Trump has said that “within two seconds” of taking office that he would fire Jack Smith, the special counsel who has been prosecuting two federal cases against him. Smith is already evaluating how to wind down the cases because of long-standing Justice Department policy that says sitting presidents cannot be prosecuted.

Smith charged Trump last year with plotting to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election and illegally hoarding classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida.

Trump cannot pardon himself when it comes to his state conviction

in New York in a hush money case, but he could seek to leverage his status as president-elect in an effort to set aside or expunge his felony conviction and stave off a potential prison sentence.

Pardon supporters who attacked the Capitol

More than 1,500 people have been charged since a mob of Trump supporters spun up by the outgoing president attacked the Capitol nearly four years ago.

Trump launched his general election campaign in March by not merely trying to rewrite the history of that riot, but positioning the violent siege and failed attempt to overturn the 2020 election as a cornerstone of his bid to return to the White House.

As part of that, he called the rioters “unbelievable patriots” and promised to help them “the first day we get into office.”

Dismantle the ‘deep state’ of government workers

Trump could begin the process of stripping tens of thousands of career employees of their civil service protections, so they could be more easily fired.

He wants to do two things: drastically reduce the federal workforce, which he has long said is an unnecessary drain, and to “totally obliterate the deep state” — perceived enemies who, he believes, are hiding in government jobs.

Trump wants the ability to convert some of those career people into political jobs, making them easier to dismiss and replace with loyalists. He would try to accomplish that by reviving a 2020 executive order known as “Schedule F.” The idea behind the order was to strip job protections from federal workers and create a new class of political employees. It could affect roughly 50,000 of 2.2 million civilian federal employees.

Impose tariffs on imported goods, especially from China

Trump promised throughout the campaign to impose tariffs on imported goods, particularly those from China. He argued that such import taxes would keep manufacturing jobs in the United

States, shrink the federal deficit and help lower food prices. He also cast them as central to his national security agenda.

The size of his pledged tariffs varied. He proposed at least a 10% across-the-board tariff on imported goods, a 60% import tax on goods from China and a 25% tariff on all goods from Mexico — if not more.

Trump would likely not need Congress to impose these tariffs, as was clear in 2018, when he imposed them on steel and aluminum imports without going through lawmakers by citing Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. That law, according to the Congressional Research Service, gives a president the power to adjust tariffs on imports that could affect U.S. national security, an argument Trump has made.

Roll back protections for transgender students

Trump said during the campaign that he would roll back Biden administration action seeking to protect transgender students from discrimination in schools on the first day of his new administration.

The Biden administration announced new Title IX protections in April that made clear treating transgender students differently from their classmates is discrimination. Trump responded by saying he would roll back those changes, pledging to do some on the first day of his new administration and specifically noting he has the power to act without Congress.

Drill, drill, drill

Trump is looking to reverse climate policies aimed at reducing planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions.

With an executive order on Day 1, he can roll back environmental protections, halt wind projects, scuttle the Biden administration's targets that encourage the switch to electric cars and abolish standards for companies to become more environmentally friendly.

He has pledged to increase production of U.S. fossil fuels, promising

to “drill, drill, drill,” when he gets into office on Day 1 and seeking to open the Arctic wilderness to oil drilling, which he claims would lower energy costs.

Settle the war between Russia and Ukraine

Trump has repeatedly said he could settle the war between Russia and Ukraine in one day.

When asked to respond to the claim, Russia's U.N. ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, said “the Ukrainian crisis cannot be solved in one day.”

Leavitt, the Trump press secretary, told Fox News after Trump on Wednesday was declared the winner of the election that he would now be able to “negotiate a peace deal between Russia and Ukraine.” She later said, “It includes, on Day 1, bringing Ukraine and Russia to the negotiating table to end this war.”

Begin mass deportations of migrants in the US

Speaking last month at his Madison Square Garden rally in New York, Trump said: “On Day 1, I will launch the largest deportation program in American history to get the criminals out. I will rescue every city and town that has been invaded and conquered, and we will put these vicious and blood-thirsty criminals in jail, then kick them the hell out of our country as fast as possible.”

In one of his first personnel announcements, Trump announced via social media late Sunday that he would put Tom Homan, his former acting Immigration and Customs Enforcement director, “in charge of all Deportation of Illegal Aliens back to their Country of Origin,” a central part of his agenda.

Trump can direct his administration to begin the effort the minute he arrives in office, but it's much more complicated to actually deport the nearly 11 million people who are believed to be in the U.S. illegally. That would require a huge, trained law enforcement force, massive detention facilities, airplanes to move people and nations willing to accept them.

Ceremonies in Europe mark Armistice Day

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — With armed conflict again on their continent, many European leaders marked the end 106 years ago of World War I with warnings that liberty, so often taken as self-evident, should be cherished and defended.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron, leaders both of nations with nuclear arsenals, were in Paris under the iconic Arc de Triomphe, where dozens of wreaths were touched by a milky light and the eternal flame flickered to honor sacrifices of unknown French sol-

diers who perished in the first global conflict. That war killed almost 10 million soldiers.

"I am honored to be in Paris to stand united with President Macron in tribute to the fallen of the First World War who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedom we enjoy today," Starmer said.

His Defense Secretary John Healey told Sky News the ceremonies amounted to a reminder that "we can never take the freedoms we enjoy in Europe for granted."

World War I pitted the armies of France, the globe-spanning British empire, Russia and

the United States against a German-led coalition that included the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. Leaders from as far away as Australia, Canada and South Africa all joined in the remembrance.

Sometimes tens of thousands on a single day in northern France or in Flanders' Fields just across the border in Belgium along a front line that barely moved in four years. Such carnage was remembered under Ypres' Menin Gate in western Belgium, where some 55,000 names of soldiers whose remains were never found are engraved.

Yet the horrors of the loss of life stood in sharp contrast to the gratitude of liberty regained for which the soldiers paid the ultimate price.

"This was the dilemma facing the man whose names line these walls. Back in 1914, should they fight to maintain values and a way of life in which there was a place for everyone? Or should they accept a false peace dominated by dictatorship," asked Benoit Mottrie, chairman of the Last Post Association, which makes sure a bugler plays a tribute to the fallen every day under the gate — to this day.

Russia hits major cities in southern, eastern Ukraine

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russian glide bombs, drones and a ballistic missile smashed into cities in southern and eastern Ukraine on Monday, officials said, killing at least six civilians and injuring about 30 others.

Russia recently intensified strikes that have long tormented civilian areas, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, in an apparent effort to unnerve Ukrainians and wear down their willingness to keep up a war that is approaching its 1,000-day

milestone.

"Every day, every night, Russia commits the same terror," Zelenskyy said in a post on the Telegram messaging app. "Except that an increasing number of civilian objects are becoming targets."

Both Russia and Ukraine are waiting to see how Washington will change its policy on the war after Donald Trump takes office in January. The U.S. is the biggest provider of military help to Ukraine but Trump has chided the Biden administration for giv-

ing Kyiv tens of billions of dollars of aid.

The major cities struck Monday by Russia are close to the war's 600-mile front line.

Russian drones hammered the southern city of Mykolaiv, killing five people and injuring a 45-year-old woman, local authorities said. Around two dozen people sought psychological help following the attack that damaged houses and stores, officials said.

Mykolaiv, located about 37 miles northwest of the front line in the Kherson region, frequent-

ly comes under Russian attack.

An overnight attack on Zaporizhzhia, also in the south, with three powerful glide bombs killed one person and injured 21, including a 4-year-old boy, Ukraine's National Police said.

The strikes partially destroyed a two-story apartment building and damaged a dormitory.

A five-story apartment building in Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy's hometown in central Ukraine, was hit by a Russian ballistic missile, injuring at least eight people.

China's work on 1st nuclear-powered carrier revealed

Associated Press

BANGKOK — China has built a land-based prototype nuclear reactor for a large surface warship, in the clearest sign yet Beijing is advancing toward producing its first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, according to a new analysis of satellite imagery and Chinese government documents provided to The Associated Press.

China's navy is already the world's largest numerically, and it has been rapidly modernizing.

Adding nuclear-powered carriers to its fleet would be a major step in realizing its ambitions for a true "blue-water" force capable of operating in seas far from China in a growing global challenge to the United States.

"Nuclear-powered carriers would place China in the exclusive ranks of first-class naval powers, a group currently limited to the United States and France," said Tong Zhao, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International

Peace in Washington, D.C. "For China's leadership, such a development would symbolize national prestige, fueling domestic nationalism and elevating the country's global image as a leading power."

Researchers at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in California said they made the finding while investigating a mountain site outside the city of Leshan in the southwest Chinese province of Sichuan, where they suspected

China was building a reactor to produce plutonium or tritium for weapons.

Instead they concluded that China was building a prototype reactor for a large warship. The project at Leshan is dubbed the Longwei, or Dragon Might, Project and is also referred to as the Nuclear Power Development Project in documents.

Neither China's Defense Ministry nor Foreign Affairs Ministry responded to requests for comment.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Student charged in shootings on highway

NC RALEIGH — A 23-year-old man suspected of shooting at least eight vehicles on a busy North Carolina highway and several homes in recent days, wounding one person, will remain in custody without bond for now, a judge ruled Friday.

Andrew Thomas Graney was arrested Thursday at a home in Raleigh. Graney, 23, is charged with one count of assault with a dangerous weapon with the intent to kill or inflict serious injury and 11 counts of firing a weapon into an occupied vehicle or dwelling, police said in a statement. Authorities have not disclosed a possible motive.

Graney, a senior at North Carolina State University, made his first court appearance on Friday.

Bullet casings found at most of the shooting scenes preliminarily matched the same firearm; Graney's vehicle matched descriptions of a vehicle at some of the locations; and cellphone tower data placed his phone at each of the sites, Wake County Assistant District Attorney Stacy Newton said.

YouTuber known for drag racing dies in car crash

NY NEW YORK — A car influencer who posted YouTube videos of drag races on New York City streets died when he crashed his speeding BMW into a light pole near John F. Kennedy airport, police said.

Andre Beadle, 25, crashed on the Nassau Expressway near the airport, the NYPD said in a news release. Beadle was thrown from the car in front of a

crowd of horrified spectators.

Beadle, who lived in the Bronx and was known on social media as 1Stockf30, had 240,000 followers on Instagram and 59,000 on YouTube. He had posted videos of himself racing his purple BMW M240 on city streets and at a racing track in Pennsylvania.

Man charged with murder of 2 workers at Navy Pier

IL CHICAGO — A Chicago man has been charged with murder in the fatal shooting of two workers at the city's popular Navy Pier tourist attraction, authorities said.

Raylon East, 36, is charged with two counts of first-degree murder and one count of felon in possession/use of a weapon in the shootings, Chicago police said.

East was arrested after police released surveillance camera images of the suspect gaining access to an office space near a Navy Pier loading dock just before the shootings, media outlets reported. Police said East had been fired from his job at the pier, which features shops, restaurants, entertainment and its iconic Ferris wheel along Lake Michigan.

The assailant shot Lamont Johnson, 51, and Peter Jennings, 47, before fleeing, police said. The victims were pronounced dead at a hospital.

Retired research chimps to be moved to sanctuary

NM ALBUQUERQUE — The National Institutes of Health decided to relocate nearly two dozen retired research chimpanzees from a facility in New Mexico to a sanc-

tuary in Louisiana, a move celebrated by animal advocates who have been fighting for years to get the animals moved.

NIH representatives confirmed in an email that the transfer of the 23 chimps from the Alamogordo Primate Facility at Holloman Air Force Base in southern New Mexico will happen in the coming months.

Staffing issues, namely the planned retirement of the chimps' caretakers, prompted the decision to move the chimps, the agency stated.

The animals have not been used as test subjects since 2015, when the NIH retired chimpanzees — humans' closest relatives — from invasive research.

Court says jilted bride must give back \$70K ring

MA BOSTON — Who gets to keep an engagement ring if a romance turns sour and the wedding is called off?

That's what the highest court in Massachusetts was asked to decide with a \$70,000 ring at the center of the dispute.

The court ultimately ruled that an engagement ring must be returned to the person who purchased it, ending a six-decade state rule that required judges to try to identify who was to blame for the end of the relationship.

The case involved Bruce Johnson and Caroline Settino, who started dating in the summer of 2016, according to court filings. Eventually, Johnson bought a \$70,000 diamond engagement ring and in August 2017 asked Settino's father for permission to marry her.

Johnson said he felt like after that Settino became increasing-

ly critical and unsupportive, including berating him and not accompanying him to treatments when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, according to court filings. At some point Johnson looked at Settino's cell phone and discovered a message from her to a man he didn't know.

Johnson ended the engagement. But ownership of the ring remained up in the air.

In their ruling the justices said the case raised the question of whether the issue of "who is at fault" should continue to govern the rights to engagement rings when the wedding doesn't happen.

Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree arrives

NY NEW YORK — The Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree arrived in New York City on Saturday, signaling the start of the holiday season in the Big Apple.

The 74-foot Norway spruce was driven into Manhattan's Center Plaza, where it was hoisted in place by a crane. It will take 5 miles of light strands with more than 50,000 multicolored LED bulbs to wrap the tree, whose diameter measures 43 feet. A Swarovski star crown sparkling with 3 million crystals will top it.

The towering conifer, donated by the Albert family in West Stockbridge, Mass., was cut down Thursday morning and loaded onto a flatbed truck for the 140-mile trip. It is the first Rockefeller Center Christmas tree to come from Massachusetts since 1959.

The lighting ceremony is Dec. 4.

— From wire reports

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Chiefs reach 9-0 by blocking late FG

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Chiefs blocked Broncos kicker Wil Lutz's 35-yard field goal attempt as time expired on Sunday, and Kansas City escaped with a 16-14 victory over the Broncos to extend its winning streak to 15 games dating to last season.

The Chiefs had taken the lead on Harrison Butker's field goal with 5:57 remaining, but Bo Nix and the Broncos converted on a trio of third downs while marching right back down the field. They proceeded to set up Lutz for the winner, but Leo Chenal was given credit for coming up the middle amid a big push by the Kansas City defensive line to get his hand on the kick.

Patrick Mahomes finished with 266 yards passing and a touchdown for Kansas City, which became only the fifth team to follow up a Super Bowl triumph by winning its first nine games. That also matches the best start to a season in franchise history.

The Chiefs' winning streak dating to last season is the longest in the NFL since the Packers won 19 in a row from 2010-11.

Travis Kelce had eight catches for 64 yards and a touchdown for Kansas City. DeAndre Hopkins caught four passes for 56 yards.

Nix finished with 215 yards passing and two touchdowns for the Broncos (5-5). Courtland Sutton had six catches for 60 yards and a score, and his 13-yard reception on third-and-6 with 1:45 left gave Denver a chance to kick as time expired.

Eagles 34, Cowboys 6: Jalen Hurts threw two touchdown passes and ran for a pair of scores, and visiting Philadelphia rolled to a victory over stumbling Dallas in the first game since Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott tore a hamstring.

Hurts shook off two sacks from Micah Parsons in the star

pass rusher's return from injury, connecting with Dallas Goedert for one of the TDs after his tight end missed three games with a hamstring issue.

The Eagles (7-2) took over first place in the NFC East with their fifth consecutive victory while defending division champion Dallas (3-6) fell to 0-4 at home in a fourth straight loss overall.

49ers 23, Buccaneers 20: Jake Moody redeemed himself after missing three earlier field goals by booting a 44-yarder as time expired to give visiting San Francisco a victory over Tampa Bay in running back Christian McCaffrey's season debut.

Moody, in his first game back after being sidelined three weeks with a sprained ankle, also kicked field goals of 28 and 33 yards for the defending NFC champion 49ers (5-4), who have won consecutive games for the first time this season.

But the usually reliable kicker, who was 13 of 14 entering Sunday, also missed wide left from 49 and 50 yards before missing wide right on a 44-yard attempt that would have given San Francisco a six-point lead with 3:09 remaining.

TV cameras caught 49ers wide receiver Deebo Samuel exchanging words and appearing to shove long snapper Tabor Pepper when the wide receiver approached Moody on the sideline after the third miss.

Steelers 28, Commanders 27: Russell Wilson shook off his first interception in 11 months and hit trade-deadline pickup Mike Williams for a 32-yard touchdown with less than 2½ minutes left in the fourth quarter — the quarterback's third scoring throw — to lift visiting Pittsburgh to a comeback victory over Jayden Daniels and Washington.

Coming off a bye, the AFC North-leading Steelers (7-2) won their fourth game in a row, including all three since Wilson took over from Justin Fields as

the starting QB. Wilson's stats were not the prettiest, but he got the job done: 14 for 28 for 195 yards, the three TDs and the one pick.

Washington (7-3) led 24-14 but couldn't hold on as it attempted to get to 8-2 overall for the first time since 1986 and 5-0 at home for the first time since 1991, when the team went on to win the Super Bowl under coach Joe Gibbs.

Lions 26, Texans 23: Jake Bates made a 52-yard field goal as time expired, and visiting Detroit overcame a career-high five interceptions by Jared Goff to rally for a win over Houston.

Detroit trailed 23-7 at half-time after Goff threw three interceptions in the first two quarters, and he threw two more picks in the third quarter. Nonetheless, the Lions scored 16 straight points to tie it with about five minutes to go on Bates' 58-yard field goal.

Bills 30, Colts 20: Taron Johnson returned Joe Flacco's first pass 23 yards for a touchdown, and Josh Allen and James Cook each scored on TD runs to lead AFC East-leading Buffalo past host Indianapolis.

The Bills (8-2) extended their winning streak to five with their first victory at Indianapolis since 1998. Allen was 22-for-37 for 280 yards with two interceptions while running eight times for 50 yards.

Flacco had four turnovers — three interceptions and a fumble — in his second start since replacing the benched Anthony Richardson. He was 26-for-35 for 272 yards and two TDs.

Vikings 12, Jaguars 7: Minnesota's stingy defense held Jacksonville to 143 yards — the fewest in coach Doug Pederson's three seasons — and the visitors overcame Sam Darnold's three interceptions to win.

It was Darnold's first three-interception game in three years. All of them came while

targeting All-Pro receiver Justin Jefferson, who finished with five catches for 48 yards.

Patriots 19, Bears 3: Drake Maye got the better of Caleb Williams in a matchup between top rookie quarterbacks and visiting New England beat struggling Chicago.

Maye led five scoring drives and the Patriots sacked Williams a season-high nine times, helping New England (3-7) come away with the win after losing seven of eight.

Saints 20, Falcons 17: Marquez Valdes-Scantling caught three passes for 109 yards and two touchdowns in his second game for New Orleans, and the team began Darren Rizzi's tenure as interim coach by snapping a seven-game skid with a victory over visiting Atlanta.

The 54-year-old Rizzi, the Saints' special teams coordinator, was given his first head coaching opportunity on Monday after the firing of third-year coach Dennis Allen.

Chargers 27, Titans 17: Justin Herbert threw for a touchdown and ran for one as host Los Angeles won its third straight game, pulling away in the second half to beat Tennessee.

The Chargers (6-3) have won four of five and are the first team since the 2013 Kansas City Chiefs to allow 20 or fewer points in each of their first nine games.

Calvin Ridley scored both of Tennessee's touchdowns and had five catches for 84 yards.

Cardinals 31, Jets 6: Kyler Murray threw for 266 yards and a touchdown and also ran for two scores and host Arizona won its fourth straight game by racing to a big lead and easily handling New York.

The Cardinals (6-4) scored touchdowns on four of their first five drives and never trailed.

Murray completed 22 of 24 passes — including a franchise-record 17 in a row during one stretch.

Logano wins third NASCAR championship

Associated Press

AVONDALE, Ariz. — Eliminated from the playoffs at the end of the second round, Joey Logano received a second chance when another competitor was disqualified.

He pounced on the opportunity.

Logano was added to the round of eight following Alex Bowman's disqualification and immediately went to Las Vegas Motor Speedway to win the third-round opener. It made Logano the first driver locked into Sunday's winner-take-all finale at Phoenix Raceway with three weeks to prepare his Ford for the title run.

He capitalized with his third NASCAR Cup Series championship, using a near-flawless drive to hold off teammate Ryan Blaney and give Team Penske its third major motorsports title in less than a month and third consecutive NASCAR title.

Logano actually called his shot after qualifying second Saturday when he confidently acknowledged it was his Cup

Series title to lose.

"Yeah, I do. I feel like our car is strong. We got them down now," Logano boasted. "We just have to put our foot on their throats. We feel pretty strong about our team, and these type of pressure situations we feel really solid about as far as our team in these moments."

It may not have been how boss Roger Penske would have phrased it, but it showed the team owner how relentless his team leader can be.

"I might have used different words, but that's OK," Penske said. "When you win, you can say whatever you want, I guess."

Logano held off Blaney over the final 20 laps to beat him for the Cup series title by 0.330 seconds. Blaney was trying to become the first back-to-back champion since Jimmie Johnson won five straight from 2006 to 2010.

Instead, Logano became the 10th driver in NASCAR history to win three or more championships. Kyle Busch is the only other active driver with multi-

ple titles.

"I love the playoffs, I love it man," Logano said. "What a team, what a Penske battle there at the end. Three of them? That's truly special."

It was the first time in Team Penske history the organization finished 1-2 in the championship. It also came after Penske's sports car team in IMSA won the title last month and his World Endurance Championship team won the title last weekend in Bahrain.

Penske said he worried in the closing laps his two drivers would crash into each other, ending the title hopes for both. He also praised longtime sponsor Shell-Pennzoil, which was on Indianapolis 500 winner Josef Newgarden's car for his victory in May for Penske.

Penske also deferred taking too much of the credit for the team success.

"It's all about the people," Penske said. "My name might be on the door, but it's all about the people who make the difference and we sure have them on this team."

Blaney was exhausted after the race, and despite his disappointment was thrilled for the Penske organization.

"At least a Penske car won it," Blaney said. "They put together a great playoffs, and we're happy. If we're going to race somebody, I'm happy it was him for the championship, and happy to be 1-2 for Roger, three in a row for Roger, super amazing, and Ford."

Penske and Ford have won three consecutive Cup Series championships. Logano won in 2022 and Blaney won last year.

"One-two for Team Penske, three championships in a row, can't be more proud of this team," Logano said."

The finale was winner-take-all to the highest finisher between Logano, Blaney, William Byron in a Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports and Tyler Reddick of the 23XI Racing team owned by NBA Hall of Famer Michael Jordan and three-time Daytona 500 winner Denny Hamlin.

Byron finished third in the race and Reddick was sixth.

Kurashev's OT goal helps Chicago halt skid vs. Wild

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Philipp Kurashev's goal at 1:48 of overtime lifted the Blackhawks to a 2-1 win over the Minnesota Wild on Sunday night, snapping Chicago's two-game slide.

Kurashev ripped a shot from the left wing that sailed past Filip Gustavsson's glove.

Petr Mrazek finished with 32 saves to help the Blackhawks halt a 12-game losing streak against the Wild. Chicago hadn't beaten Minnesota since Dec. 15, 2019.

Mrazek lost his goal stick in the final minute of the second period after being bumped in the crease. Forward Taylor Hall gave the goalie his stick, which he used to stop Jake Middleton's shot with 25 seconds left.

Matt Boldy scored with 4:31 left in the third period to tie it at 1 on Minnesota's 32nd shot of the game. He whipped the puck into the upper right corner for his ninth goal.

Jason Dickinson scored in the first and

Chicago nearly preserved a 1-0 lead.

At 10-2-3 and 23 points, the Wild have their best record after 15 games.

Sharks 1, Devils 0: Nico Sturm scored late in the first period and Mackenzie Blackwood made 44 saves as visiting San Jose beat New Jersey.

Sturm scored his third goal of the season when his backhand caromed off New Jersey's Timo Meier and past Devils netminder Jake Allen with less than four minutes to play in the opening period. Carl Grundstrom and Henry Thrun assisted.

Blackwood, who played five seasons for the Devils before he was traded to the Sharks in June 2023, recorded the 11th shutout of his career in his first game as a visiting netminder at Prudential Center.

The loss ended the Devils's three-game winning streak. New Jersey was coming off Saturday's 4-3 comeback overtime road win against the Islanders.

Allen made 26 saves.

Ducks 4, Blue Jackets 2: John Gibson made 38 saves, Brett Leason and Jackson LaCombe each scored their first goals of the season and host Anaheim ended a four-game losing streak with a victory over Columbus.

Gibson made his season debut after having an emergency appendectomy in September.

The Ducks got off to a fast start when Leason scored 3:13 into the game off a feed from Cutter Gauthier.

Columbus tied it late in the first period when Yegor Chinakhov scored his fourth goal of the season. Anaheim grabbed a 2-1 lead at 4:22 of the second period when LaCombe converted off a loose puck.

Leo Carlsson scored for the Ducks with 9:40 left in the game, but the Blue Jackets moved back within a goal on a shot from the slot by Kirill Marchenko with 3:03 left.

Curry, Warriors hold off rally to top Thunder

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Stephen Curry scored 36 points, and the Golden State Warriors held off a late rally to defeat the Oklahoma City Thunder 127-116 on Sunday night.

It was a double whammy for the Thunder as forward Chet Holmgren didn't return after suffering a pelvic injury in the first quarter. The injury put a damper on a matchup between two of the top teams in the Western Conference.

Jonathan Kuminga scored 20 points, De'Anthony Melton had 19 points and 10 rebounds and Andrew Wiggins added 18 points for the Warriors.

Golden State led by 30 late in the third quarter before the Thunder stormed back. A steal and dunk by Alex Caruso cut Golden State's lead to six with 4:46 left before the Warriors regained control.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 24 points and Jalen Williams added 20 for the Thunder, who suffered their first home loss of the season.

Rockets 101, Pistons 99: Alperen Sengun scored five of his 27 points in the final 2:28 to lead visiting Houston to a victory over Detroit.

Trailing 101-99 with six seconds left, Pistons guard Cade Cunningham intentionally

missed a free throw and Jaden Ivey got the offensive rebound. His shot missed, but Tobias Harris was fouled on the rebound.

Celtics 113, Bucks 107: Jayson Tatum had 31 points, 12 rebounds and six assists and visiting Boston rallied in the second half to beat slumping Milwaukee.

Tatum put the Celtics ahead for good by hitting two free throws with 5:51 left as Boston erased a nine-point halftime deficit.

Pacers 132, Knicks 121: Benedict Mathurin scored a career-high 38 points, including a career-best seven 3-pointers, and Tyrese Halliburton added 35 points and 14 assists to lead host Indiana to a victory over New York.

Myles Turner finished with 26 points for the Pacers, who drained a season-high 21 3-pointers and outscored the Knicks 63-21 from beyond the arc. Indiana went 8-for-13 on 3s in the fourth quarter, while New York suffered through a 7-for-25 effort for the game.

Magic 121, Wizards 94: Franz Wagner had 23 points and seven assists, Goga Bitadze added 10 points and 12 rebounds and host Orlando pulled away in the second half to a win over Washington.

Mo Wagner (16), Cole Anthony (16) and Anthony Black (12) came off the bench with double-digit scoring, and Jett Howard hit all

three of his 3-point shots for the Magic.

76ers 107, Hornets 105 (OT): Jared McCain had a career-high 27 points as host Philadelphia snapped a five-game losing streak with an overtime win over Charlotte.

The Sixers' first-round draft pick out of Duke had 23 points in the second half and overtime was 9 for 15 from the floor.

Heat 95, Timberwolves 94: Nikola Jovic made the tying layup and go-ahead foul shot with 7.8 seconds left to send visiting Miami past Minnesota and stop its three-game losing streak.

Jovic, who had 15 points and seven rebounds in his first game off the bench this season, drove to the rim with four-time NBA Defensive Player of the Year Rudy Gobert subbed out. Jovic went to the line to give the Heat their first lead since 63-61.

Nuggets 122, Mavericks 120: Michael Porter Jr. hit a mid-range jumper with seven seconds left and host Denver won its fifth straight over Dallas.

Nikola Jokic had 37 points, 18 rebounds and 15 assists for his fourth straight triple-double and his NBA-best sixth this season. Jamal Murray had 18 points and Porter finished with 17.

Kings 127, 118 Suns 118 (OT): DeMar DeRozan had 34 points and scored the Kings' first

eight points in overtime, and visiting Sacramento snapped Phoenix' winning streak at seven with a win.

The Suns led through the fourth quarter until Keegan Murray tipped in his own missed shot with 3.9 seconds to play to give Sacramento a one-point lead. But Murray committed a foul on the Suns' inbound play, and Devin Booker made a free throw to tie the game at 111. Booker missed a shot from the corner that would have won it.

Grizzlies 134, Trail Blazers 89: Jaren Jackson Jr. had 20 points and seven rebounds, and visiting Memphis routed Portland.

Jake LaRavia added 18 points off the bench for the Grizzlies, who led by as many as 45 points and have won five of their last six games.

Lakers 123, Raptors 103: LeBron James recorded his second straight triple-double, and Anthony Davis scored 22 points before leaving with an eye injury in the third quarter of host Los Angeles' victory over Toronto.

Davis was hit in the face by Jakob Poeltl's off hand while he blocked the Raptors center's dunk attempt with 5:16 left in the third quarter. The nine-time All-Star, who began the night leading the NBA in scoring, was ruled out after he went to the locker room.

Huff scores 21 off bench as Gonzaga tops Arizona State

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Braden Huff scored 21 points off the bench and Ryan Nembhard tallied 13 points and 11 assists as No. 6 Gonzaga hung on for an 88-80 victory over Arizona State on Sunday.

Huff went 9-for-13 from the field and missed only two 2-point attempts for the Bulldogs (2-0), who won their 21st straight home opener.

Khalif Battle scored all 19 of his points in the second half, including a trio of 3-pointers and an alley-oop dunk. Battle and Huff contributed 17 of Gonzaga's last 21 points to help the Zags avoid the loss in the first-ever meet-

ing between the programs.

Basheer Jihad added 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Sun Devils (2-1). The Ball State transfer was just 1-for-10 in his first two games under Bobby Hurley before going 7-for-14 against Gonzaga.

In the first half, the Zags shot 3-for-12 from 3-point range, but Graham Ike and Huff combined to go 8-for-10 inside the arc to keep them competitive. Gonzaga's bench got 30 points in the second half.

No. 15 Creighton 96, Fairleigh Dickinson 70: Ryan Kalkbrenner scored 24 points, Steven Ashworth added 15 points on five 3-pointers and the Bluejays rolled past the

visiting Knights.

The victory gave coach Greg McDermott win No. 327 in 15 seasons at Creighton, tying Dana Altman for the program's most.

No. 17 Indiana 90, Eastern Illinois 55: Mackenzie Mgbako scored 18 points, Oumar Ballo and Malik Reneau each had 17 and the Hoosiers defeated the visiting Panthers.

Indiana (2-0) trailed upset-minded Eastern Illinois by five points before going on a 24-2 run early in the second half. Mgbako, Ballo and Reneau combined to make 23 of 32 shots overall and grab 22 rebounds. The Hoosiers outscored the Panthers 54-18 in the second half.