

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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## House Dems pass plan for impeachment

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Democrats moved a package of ground rules for their impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump through a sharply divided House Thursday, the chamber's first formal vote in a fight that could stretch into the 2020 election year.

The vote was 232-196, with all Republicans against the resolution and two Democrats joining them.

The vote laid down the rules as lawmakers transition from weeks of closed-door interviews with witnesses to public hearings and ultimately to possible votes on whether to recommend Trump's removal from office.

The action also took on more than technical meaning, with each party aware that the impeachment effort looms as a defining issue for next year's presidential and congressional campaigns.

Democrats spoke of lawmakers' duty to defend the Constitution, while Republicans

cast the process as a skewed attempt to railroad a president whom Democrats have detested since before he took office.

"What is at stake in all this is nothing less than our democracy," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

Underscoring her point, she addressed the House with a poster of the American flag beside her and began her remarks by reading the opening lines of the preamble to the Constitution.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said Trump had done nothing impeachable and accused Democrats of trying to remove him "because they are scared they cannot defeat him at the ballot box." Noting that elections are just a year away, he added, "Why do you not trust the people?"

The investigation is focused on Trump's efforts to push Ukraine to investigate a Democratic political opponent by withholding military aid and an Oval Office meeting craved by the country's new president.

Democrats said the procedures — which

give them the ability to curb the president's lawyers from calling witnesses — are similar to rules used during the impeachment proceedings of Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton. Republicans complained they were skewed against Trump.

It is likely to take weeks or more before the House decides whether to vote on actually impeaching Trump. If the House does vote for impeachment, the Senate would hold a trial to decide whether to remove the president from office.

Both parties' leaders were rounding up votes as Thursday's roll call approached, with each side eager to come as close to unanimity as possible.

Republicans said a solid GOP "no" vote would signal to the Senate that the Democratic push is a partisan crusade against a president they have never liked.

Democrats argued that GOP cohesion against the measure would show that Republicans are blindly defending Trump, whatever facts emerge.

## CIA accused of supporting rogue Afghan paramilitaries

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN

*Stars and Stripes*

JALALABAD, Afghanistan — The U.S. has trained and supported paramilitary groups in Afghanistan that have committed summary executions, forcibly disappeared people and have been behind more than a dozen serious abuse cases in the last 18 months, a human rights organization said Thursday.

Afghan strike forces, which have been accused of raiding medical facilities and killing civilians in night raids on their homes, sometimes in front of their families, are largely trained and overseen by the CIA, Human Rights Watch said in a report released Thursday.

The report follows a strike force raid last month in eastern Nangarhar province that resulted in the deaths of four brothers, prompting Afghanistan's president to announce a rare investigation into paramilitary actions.

U.S. special operations forces lent to the CIA often accompany the paramilitaries on the raids, and the U.S. military regular-

ly provides logistical and tactical support for the operations, including airstrikes that have "indiscriminately or disproportionately killed Afghan civilians," the report said.

"They are illustrative of a larger pattern of serious laws-of-war violations — some amounting to war crimes — that extend to all provinces in Afghanistan where these paramilitary forces operate with impunity," Human Rights Watch said.

The CIA said Human Rights Watch did not provide enough time to study the allegations in the report, but that it conducts its operations "in accordance with law and under a robust system of oversight." Many claims against the forces were "false or exaggerated," citing Taliban propaganda efforts aimed at discrediting the U.S. and the Afghan government, the CIA said in a response included within the report.

The U.S. military in Afghanistan said in a statement that it was committed to reducing violence in the country and that it was "fighting in a complex environment against those who intentionally kill and hide behind civilians."

It declined to answer specific questions about its association with the paramilitaries.

Some civilians were killed by the paramilitaries because they were misidentified, sometimes with intelligence and surveillance provided by the U.S., according to the report, which examined cases between late 2017 and August of this year.

Meanwhile, the Nangarhar raid last month gained attention across the country. The main local paramilitary group — the 02 Unit of the National Directorate of Security — stormed the home of a family that was celebrating the eldest son's return from a religious pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia.

The son's four brothers were separated from the rest of the family by the paramilitary as guests were leaving the celebration, their uncle, Mohammad Ibrahim, said during an interview with Stars and Stripes in the provincial capital of Jalalabad. All four were found dead several hours later.

The National Directorate of Security in a Sept. 5 statement said the slain men were Islamic State facilitators. However, people who knew the victims rejected the claim.

# North Korea fires 2 missiles off coast

BY KIM GAMEL  
AND YOO KYONG CHANG  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired two short-range missiles on Thursday, officials said, days after the communist state warned it was losing patience with the United States over stalled nuclear talks.

The launch, which came about a month after the North test-fired a new missile capable of being launched from a submarine, was the 12th this year, raising fears of new tensions.

The projectiles were fired from the western city of Suncheon, northeast of Pyongyang, the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul said.

They flew a maximum distance of 230 miles and reached an altitude of 55 miles before landing in the sea between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, it added.

“This kind of action from North Korea does not help efforts to ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula and we urge the North to stop immediately,” it said.

“Our military is tracking and monitoring relevant movements and maintaining readiness posture in case of additional launches,” it said.

The national security council expressed “strong concern” about the launch.

The South Koreans didn’t immediately identify the pro-

jectiles, but Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono was quoted as saying they were short-range ballistic missiles.

Misawa Air Base, 700 miles north of Tokyo on the northern tip of the island of Honshu, issued a “real world missile alert” and urged personnel to “seek shelter” on its official Facebook page at 4:50 p.m. Thursday.

The base declared “all clear” within minutes, according to the 35th Fighter Wing public affairs office.

North Korea has expressed increasing frustration over the lack of progress in diplomatic efforts over its nuclear weapons program as a year-end deadline set by leader Kim Jong Un

looms.

A senior official hinted Sunday that even the “close personal” relationship between Kim and President Donald Trump was being tested and warned “there can be the exchange of fire any moment.”

“The U.S. is now more desperately resorting to the hostile policy towards (North Korea), misjudging the patience and tolerance,” of the North, Kim Yong Chol said in a statement carried on the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

Trump has dismissed concerns about past launches, and his administration has maintained confidence that it can get diplomatic efforts back on track.

## Pentagon says Islamic State will likely regroup

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — A high-risk raid last week that resulted in the death of Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is expected to temporarily disrupt the group’s activities, but the militants are likely to regroup and may launch revenge attacks against the United States, a senior U.S. commander said Wednesday.

“It will take some time to re-establish someone to lead the organization, and during that period of time, their actions may be a little bit disjointed,” Gen. Kenneth “Frank” McKenzie Jr., who heads U.S. Central Command, told reporters at the Pentagon. “We don’t see a bloodless future, because, unfortunately, this ideology is going to be out there.”

Long-term success against ISIS and other extremist groups will not entail the elimination of such ideologies, McKenzie said, but would include a situation in which local security forces contain threats and the

United States ensures that such groups aren’t able to directly threaten the U.S. He said U.S. forces were positioned against near-term counterattacks.

McKenzie spoke as the Pentagon for the first time released video and photos showing portions of the operation targeting al-Baghdadi in his hideout in northwest Syria’s Idlib province.

The raid took place as the Pentagon scrambles to reorient its campaign against ISIS, which no longer holds territory but, officials say, remains a potent threat in the wake of President Donald Trump’s withdrawal of forces from the area along the Turkish border. Critics have said that decision enabled a Turkish military offensive against Syrian Kurdish forces that have been the main U.S. partner against ISIS in Syria, which in turn has permitted the Syrian government and its ally Russia to move into territory that was off-limits to them for years.

## US military base students outperform peers in tests

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — U.S. military base students in fourth and eighth grades earned the highest percentage of reading proficiency in the nation and outpaced civilian schools in math, the latest national test results show.

Department of Defense Education Activity fourth graders topped the nation in math proficiency, while DODEA eighth graders ranked second in the subject, alongside New Jersey and behind Massachusetts.

DODEA eighth grade reading scores held steady since the last time they took the National Assessment of Educational Progress test in 2017, while fourth graders slightly improved theirs, the results show.

Meanwhile, DODEA’s black and Hispanic students outperformed students from the same minority groups in civilian schools in all 50 states, DODEA director Thomas M. Brady said in a statement.

“Two out of three of our na-

tion’s children aren’t proficient readers,” Education Secretary Betsy DeVos said in a statement Wednesday, lamenting that fourth grade reading scores in the NAEP test declined in 17 states and eighth grade reading scores were down in 31 states.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress — also known as The Nation’s Report Card — tests fourth grade and eighth grade students every two years in reading and math.

Overall, 49% of DODEA fourth grade students performed at or above NAEP reading proficiency standards, up 1% from 2017. Massachusetts, which ranked highest in 2017, dropped to 45% proficiency.

In math, 54% of fourth graders in DODEA schools were proficient, compared with 41% nationally.

DODEA’s proficiency level for eighth grade reading was 52%, compared with 34% nationally. In the math assessment, 41% of eighth graders were at least proficient in math, compared with 34% nationally.



# Winds drive new fires around Los Angeles

Associated Press

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. — Strong winds fanned new Southern California wildfires on Thursday, burning homes and forcing residents to flee their homes in a repeat of the frightening scenario already faced by tens of thousands across the state.

The latest blazes erupted in the heavily populated inland region east of Los Angeles as strong, seasonal Santa Ana winds continued to blow with gusts of up to 60 mph predicted to last until the evening before they fade away.

A fast-moving fire spread into the northern neighborhoods of the city of San Bernardino, forcing the evacuation of 490 homes — about 1,300 people, the San Bernardino County Fire Department said.

Fire Chief Don Trapp said an initial assessment showed that six homes and two outbuildings were destroyed or damaged in the 200-acre fire. The cause was under investigation.

In the nearby city of Jurupa Valley, a fire started shortly after midnight when suspects in a stolen car chased by police drove the damaged vehicle into a field that ignited.

The blaze spread to 300 acres and prompted evacuation orders. Three homes and two outbuildings were confirmed destroyed, the Riverside County Fire Department said. Authorities plan to charge the suspects with arson, Riverside Police Officer Ryan Railsback said.

That fire came after another blaze Wednesday in Jurupa Valley forced the

evacuation of two mobile home parks and a psychiatric nursing care facility, where elderly people wearing face masks and wrapped in blankets were taken out in wheelchairs and gurneys as smoke swirled overhead. The blaze grew to 200 acres in size before its spread was stopped.

The Santa Anas winds that help create California's most destructive wildfires prompted a brushfire to quickly explode in size after it broke out before dawn Wednesday near the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library between the cities of Simi Valley and Moorpark northwest of Los Angeles.

Officials ordered about 30,000 people to evacuate, although some were being allowed back home Wednesday night as fire crews began to get a handle on the blaze.

# Wall funding battle impedes budget progress

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A bitter fight over funding for border fencing is imperiling Capitol Hill efforts to forge progress on more than \$1.4 trillion worth of overdue spending bills, one of the few areas in which divided government in Washington has been able to deliver results in the Trump era.

Poisonous political fallout from the ongoing impeachment battle isn't helping matters. While it appears likely that lawmakers will prevent a government shutdown next month with a government-wide stopgap spending bill, there has been little progress, if any, on the tricky trade-offs needed to balance Democratic demands for social programs with President Donald

Trump's ballooning border wall demands.

Even an expected Senate vote on Thursday to pass a \$209 billion bundle of four bipartisan spending bills isn't regarded as much progress, especially since it will be followed by a Democratic filibuster of a massive Pentagon spending bill.

At issue are the agency appropriations bills that Congress passes each year to keep the government running. A hard-won budget and debt deal this past summer produced a top-line framework for the 12 yearly spending bills, but filling in the details is proving difficult.

Democrats say White House demands for \$5 billion for Trump's long-sought U.S.-Mexico border wall have led the GOP-controlled Senate to shortchange Democratic

domestic priorities.

They say negotiations can't begin in earnest until spending increases permitted under the July budget deal are allocated among the 12 appropriations subcommittees more to their liking. Trump is demanding a huge border funding increase that comes mostly at the expense of a major health and education spending bill.

"I am not optimistic," said House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y. "I don't see the Senate taking action that would enable us to have an active negotiation with them. They haven't set the groundwork. And until they figure out the (subcommittee allocations) — although we are having very nice conversations — I don't see progress."

# Democrats laud Twitter for political advertising ban

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democratic presidential candidates largely praised Twitter's decision Wednesday to ban all political advertising, while President Donald Trump's reelection campaign decried the move as attempting to muzzle conservatives on social media.

"We believe political message reach should be earned, not bought," announced Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey.

That followed Facebook taking fire since reaffirming that it will not fact-check ads by politicians or their campaigns — which could allow them to lie freely. That compa-

ny's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, told Congress last week that politicians have the right to free speech on Facebook.

The issue came to the forefront in September when Twitter, along with Facebook and Google, refused to remove a misleading video ad from Trump's campaign that targeted former Vice President Joe Biden, who along with Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren leads the 2020 Democratic Party field. In response, Warren ran an ad on Facebook claiming that Zuckerberg endorsed Trump for reelection, acknowledging the deliberate falsehood as necessary to make a point.

"We appreciate that Twitter recogniz-

es that they should not permit disproven smears, like those from the Trump campaign, to appear in advertisements on their platform," Biden campaign spokesman Bill Russo said in a statement. "It would be unfortunate to suggest that the only option available to social media companies to do so is the full withdrawal of political advertising, but when faced with a choice between ad dollars and the integrity of our democracy, it is encouraging that, for once, revenue did not win out."

Montana Gov. Steve Bullock suggested Facebook should follow Twitter's lead, tweeting simply: "Good. Your turn, Facebook."

# Iraq calls for new voting law amid protests

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's president on Thursday called for the drafting of a new election law and said he would approve early elections once it is enacted, bowing to anti-government protesters while insisting that the sweeping changes they are demanding be carried out in a constitutional way.

Iraq has seen two waves of mass protests this month, with at least 250 protesters killed in clashes with security forces in

Baghdad and across the Shiite-majority south. The protesters have demanded the resignation of the government and the overhaul of the political system put in place after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

Earlier Thursday, protesters clashed with security forces on a second bridge leading to Baghdad's heavily-fortified Green Zone, with at least one person killed and more than 60 wounded.

Demonstrators have gath-

ered in the Iraqi capital's Tahrir Square since protests resumed nearly a week ago, and have repeatedly clashed with security forces on the Jomhuriya Bridge.

The clashes spread on Thursday to the nearby Sanak Bridge, which also leads to the Green Zone that is home to government offices and embassies.

In a prime-time address, President Barham Salih expressed support for the protesters and their demands. He said

Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi is prepared to resign once political leaders agree on a replacement.

The process he laid out could take weeks or months, and it was unclear whether it would meet the demands of the protesters.

Security and medical officials confirmed the latest casualties. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to talk to reporters.

## Fire ravages symbolic Shuri Castle on Okinawa

BY AYA ICHIHASHI

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A fire on Thursday destroyed significant portions of Shuri Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Naha, the Okinawa prefectural capital.

The castle, rebuilt in 1992 following its destruction in World War II, was reported on fire at 2:21 a.m. and burned for 11 hours before firefighters called it extinguished, according to the city of Naha Fire Department.

The blaze started in the Seiden, or main building, then spread to the Hokuden, or northern wing, and Nanden, the southern wing, a city of Naha Fire Department spokesman told Stars and Stripes. All three buildings were destroyed, according to NHK, the Japanese public broadcast agency.

At 11 a.m. firefighters were working the blaze at the Hoshinmon, or Hoshin Gate, near the ticketing counter, the department spokesman said.

An unnamed firefighter in his late 40s was treated for dehydration, but his condition is not life-threatening, the spokesman said. It is customary in Japan for some government officials to speak on condition of anonymity.

Eight city fire engines and

31 firefighters responded after a security guard reported the fire, the spokesman said. Three more trucks were dispatched 45 minutes later, followed by more calls until 53 firetrucks and 171 firefighters in all from Naha and surrounding cities and towns were on scene at 9:40 a.m., he said.

The cause of the fire was not immediately known. A joint investigation team is scheduled to arrive at the site at 10 a.m. Friday to look for the cause and gauge the extent of damage, according to spokesmen from the Naha Police Station and the fire department.

Seven buildings were destroyed: Seiden, Hokuden, Nanden, Shoin, Kugani-Udun, Nike-Udun and Hoshinmon, the fire department spokesman said.

The ancient castle is a symbol of Okinawa's cultural heritage from the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom that spanned about 450 years from 1429 until 1879 when the island was annexed by Japan.

The castle is also a symbol of Okinawa's struggle and effort to recover from WWII.

Shuri Castle burned down in 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa near the war's end in which about 200,000 lives were lost on the island, many of them civilians.

## Study: Posting calories altered fast-food ordering

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Soon after calories were posted on fast-food menus, people cut back a little bit on what they ordered. But it didn't last.

Customers at fast-food chains in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas ordered an average of 60 fewer calories per transaction in the weeks after the figures were displayed, according to a study published Wednesday in the medical journal BMJ. That amounted to a 4% drop, and declines came largely from extras such as fries and desserts.

After about a year, the drop was down to 23 calories.

Since orders likely included food for multiple people, the impact per person might be even smaller. But the decreases are averages and some people may have made bigger cuts while others didn't make any, said study co-author Joshua Petimar of Harvard's School of Public Health.

"The strongest impact might be felt in the short term, whereas the long-term effects are still a little bit up in the air," he said.

It's the latest effort at sizing up how calorie counts influence what people order. A national law that went into effect last year requires chains with 20 or more locations to post cal-

ories. Some places, including New York City and California, imposed similar rules years ago to combat obesity. The idea is to give people information to make better choices.

Past research has suggested calorie counts lead to modest or no changes, and Wednesday's study suggests that also seems to be the case in the South, where obesity rates tend to be higher. Still, the authors say more research is needed to understand the effects of the practice, especially over the long run and in other settings, like sit-down restaurants.

It could be that people don't notice the numbers on crowded fast-food menus, or know what they mean, said Bonnie Liebman of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, which has pushed for calorie counts on menus.

"Like, is 600 a lot? Is 800 a lot?" she said.

Calorie needs vary, but a 40-year-old moderately active man is estimated to need around 2,600. Liebman said requiring restaurants to post calories is also a way to pressure them to make dishes less fattening.

The findings were based on sales data from 104 fast-food locations over three years. The owner provided the information but did not allow researchers to identify the chains.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Halloween postponed because of weather

**NH** SALEM — At least a dozen New Hampshire communities postponed Halloween trick-or-treating because of wet, windy weather.

WMUR-TV reported Hudson, Nashua, Pelham, Salem and Windham were among the cities and towns moving Thursday's festivities to Saturday.

In Manchester, police announced festivities would be delayed until Sunday.

Pelham Police Lt. Anne Perriello said police don't want tree limbs coming down where children are going to be trick-or-treating and they don't want visibility issues when the children will be walking through neighborhoods.

## Man tries to open account with \$1M bill

**NE** LINCOLN — Police are searching for a man who walked into a bank in Nebraska and tried to open a checking account with a fake \$1 million bill.

Staff at the Pinnacle Bank branch in Lincoln reported the incident to police. The Lincoln Journal Star reported that bank employees said the man was adamant that the bill was real despite tellers' attempts to convince him otherwise.

The man eventually left with the bill, but without a new account.

## Couple making war cries asked to leave

**ID** LEWISTON — A couple dressed up as Native Americans and making loud war cries were kicked out of a restaurant in Lewiston.

The Spokesman-Review of Spokane, Wash., said the two

were kicked out of a Shari's restaurant because of their offensive conduct and comments to staff members.

Shari's spokeswoman Lisa Amore said the two people were dressed up as Native Americans and were "disruptive and loud" and made "war cries" in the restaurant.

Amore said a restaurant employee asked the couple to stop but they made "offensive comments" to employees, some of whom were Native Americans.

## Man pleads guilty in false tax returns case

**AZ** TUCSON — A Tucson tax preparer pleaded guilty to preparing more than 40 false federal tax returns over a three-year span.

Internal Revenue Service investigators said Adan Ramirez, 36, pleaded guilty to two counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation and presentation of a false tax return.

Authorities said Ramirez agreed to pay more than \$100,000 in restitution to the IRS.

From April 2012 through March 2015, Ramirez is accused of preparing and filing 44 false individual federal income tax returns with the IRS for clients.

## Lobster catch off by 40% from last year

**ME** PORTLAND — Maine's lobster catch is well behind last year's pace with only weeks left in the season.

The Portland Press Herald reported fishermen had brought less than 50 million pounds of lobster to the docks of Maine by the end of September. That's 40% less than the total for 2018 for the same time period.

Maine Department of Marine

Resources Commissioner Pat Keliher said some of the drop-off could be attributed to lobsters shedding their shells late in the year.

## Man gets prison for taking lemur from zoo

**CA** SANTA ANA — A man who admitted stealing a ring-tailed lemur from a Southern California zoo was sentenced to three months in federal prison.

Aquinas Kasbar, of Newport Beach, was also ordered to pay more than \$8,000 in restitution to the Santa Ana Zoo. The 19-year-old pleaded guilty in July to one misdemeanor count of unlawfully taking an endangered species.

In a plea agreement, Kasbar acknowledged that he broke into the zoo, cut a hole in an enclosure and took 32-year-old Isaac, the oldest captive ring-tailed lemur in North America.

The animal was placed in a container with no ventilation and later abandoned at a hotel with notes identifying it as having been taken from the zoo.

It was returned unharmed.

## 2 men charged in mail theft scheme

**CT** GREENWICH — Two men who police in Connecticut say stole hundreds of personal checks from the mail of more than 200 victims in two states were arrested.

Capt. Robert Berry said officers arrested Mark Anthony Claudio, 23, and Dondre Waugh, 27, in Greenwich after a resident reported them removing mail containing checks from her mailbox.

Greenwich police said the suspects, both of New York City, had checks from people living in New York and Connecticut.

The Greenwich Time report-

ed Waugh and Claudio were each charged with 358 counts of criminal attempt at identity theft, conspiracy at identity theft and larceny.

## Reward offered in cattle shooting cases

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — The Humane Society of Utah has offered a \$2,500 reward for information leading to those responsible for fatally shooting cattle in multiple counties.

Box Elder, Iron and Utah county authorities are seeking information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the shootings.

Department officials said intentional killing of cattle is an act of animal cruelty.

## Police: Man robbed bank in front of cop

**MD** ANNAPOLIS — Authorities in Maryland said a man suspected of several bank robberies was arrested after he robbed a bank in front of an off-duty police officer.

News outlets reported Fletcher Dorsett, 51, was charged with armed robbery, assault and theft. Baltimore County police spokeswoman Jennifer Peach said Dorsett is accused of robbing a teller by passing her a note demanding money.

Peach said an off-duty Baltimore County officer ran after Dorsett. Peach said the officer tackled Dorsett and held him at gunpoint until officers arrived.

Annapolis police were searching for Dorsett in connection with a Wells Fargo robbery on Oct. 16 and several other robberies nearby. He was imprisoned for robbing a bank in 2007 and released last month.

From wire reports

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Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Nationals win first World Series crown

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Stephen Strasburg paraded the MVP trophy for delirious fans packed behind the dugout. Max Scherzer tearfully hugged his teammates. Gerardo Parra did the Baby Shark chop, Sean Doolittle flapped snow angels next to the mound.

Almost out of contention in May, champs in October.

Howie Kendrick, Anthony Rendon and the Washington Nationals completed their amazing comeback journey — fittingly with one last late rally on the road.

In Game 7 of the World Series, no less.

Kendrick and Rendon homered in the seventh inning as the Nationals overcame a two-run deficit, rocking the Houston Astros 6-2 Wednesday night to win the first title in franchise history.

With all eyes on Scherzer and his remarkable recovery after a painkilling injection, these Nationals truly embraced their shot in the only Series when the road team won every game.

Even more against the odds:

Juan Soto and Washington came from behind to win five elimination games this postseason, an unprecedented feat.

“What a story,” said Ryan Zimmerman, the only player who’s been a part of every Nationals team.

“The way this game went is the way our whole season went.”

Strasburg, new lefty Patrick Corbin and the Nats brought the first World Series championship to the nation’s capital since ol’ Walter Johnson delivered the crown for the Senators in 1924.

This franchise started out as the Montreal Expos in 1969 when the major leagues expanded beyond the border, putting a team with tricolor caps at jaunty Jarry Park. They moved to D.C. in 2005, ending Washington’s three-decade-plus wait for big league baseball after the Senators skipped town to become the Texas Rangers.

But the incredible path these wild-card Nationals with the curly W logo took, well, no one could have imagined.

Because in one topsy-turvy week, they put aside the pain

of past playoff failures and upended heavily favored Houston. Quite an ending to a season that began back in February with the Nationals and Astros working out side-by-side at the spring training complex they share in Florida.

“Resilient, relentless bunch of guys,” manager Dave Martinez said. “They fought all year long.”

Having lost star slugger Bryce Harper in free agency and beset by bullpen woes, Washington plummeted to 19-31 in late May. It got so bad there was talk the Nationals might fire Martinez and trade away Scherzer.

Instead, they stuck with the mantra that sprung up on T-shirts — Stay In The Fight.

“That was our motto,” Scherzer said.

And months later they finished it, indeed.

Shut out on one hit by Zack Greinke going into the seventh, they still found a way to win.

“Guess what? We stayed in the fight. We won the fight!” Martinez shouted during the trophy celebration on the field.

“We were down and out. We

were 19-31. We didn’t quit then, we weren’t going to quit now,” he said.

Strasburg earned the World Series MVP award with a pair of wins, including Game 6.

“It’s almost like we’ve done it so many times that we have to get punched in the face to kind of wake up,” he said.

As pitcher Anibal Sanchez told Scherzer while hugging him in the middle of the diamond: “We won one. We finally won one.”

For the 43,326 revved-up fans at Minute Maid Park, it was a combination of shock and disappointment. So close to seeing Jose Altuve, Alex Bregman, George Springer and their Astros add to the title they won in Game 7 at Dodger Stadium two years ago, they watched this chance suddenly vanish.

“I’ve got a group of heartbroken men in there that did everything they could to try to bring a World Series championship to this city. And we fell one win shy,” Astros manager AJ Hinch said.

“Let’s be honest, there’s 28 other teams that would love to have our misery today.”

## Seven years after missing playoffs, Strasburg is MVP

Associated Press

HOUSTON — The shutdown that shook baseball paid off for Stephen Strasburg and the Washington Nationals.

It just took seven seasons.

Strasburg was voted MVP of the World Series following the Nationals’ 6-2 win over the Houston Astros in Game 7 on Wednesday night, the first title in the 51 seasons of the Washington/Montreal Expos franchise.

Ending the most prolific of 10 big league seasons for the 31-year-old right-hander, Strasburg went 5-0 with a 1.98 ERA in five postseason starts and one relief appearance, including victories in Games 2 and 6 of the Series.

Long after Strasburg missed the 2012 National League Di-

vision Series against St. Louis because of an innings limit following Tommy John surgery, he helped lead the Nationals to the championship.

“I slept like a baby when we made the decision,” Washington general manager Mike Rizzo said Wednesday. “I knew more information than the people criticizing. I’ve got a pretty thick skin being in the game this long.”

Selected by Washington with the first pick in the 2009 amateur draft, Strasburg made his first Nationals start a year later and grabbed attention with 14 strikeouts, the most in a big league debut since Houston’s J.R. Richard in 1971. But after Strasburg’s 12th start came the shocking news, three of the most dreaded words in base-

ball: Tommy John surgery.

Strasburg was 15-6 with a 3.16 ERA and 197 strikeouts in 159<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings when the Nationals cut short his 2012 season on Sept. 8, citing the need to protect his arm.

“I think you try not to look in the past and you try not to look in the future,” he said during a break in the post-game celebration. “I think it’s much more of a challenge to not kind of see how it’s going to all play out, especially over this last month. But, again, it just comes back to trying to be in the moment and giving everything you have.”

Strasburg is the first pitcher to go 5-0 in a single postseason. Stras, as teammates call him, struck out 47 and walked four in 36<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings. He gave up four runs over 14<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings in

an analytic era of quick hooks.

Having finished the third season of a contract guaranteeing \$175 million over seven years — and earning an extra \$250,000 for the World Series MVP honor — Strasburg can opt out of his deal, give up \$100 million and become a free agent. He is coming off his most durable season, going 18-6 with a 3.32 ERA and 251 strikeouts in an NL-high 209 innings, boosting his record to 112-58 in 10 seasons.

In 2015, the New York Mets let Matt Harvey pitch 216 innings in his return from Tommy John surgery, and they reached the World Series before losing to Kansas City in five games. He hasn’t had a winning season since and his career is uncertain going into 2020.



# SEC could have 3 QBs go in first round

Associated Press

SEC quarterbacks finally are on track for their day to shine in the NFL Draft.

The Southeastern Conference, which regularly shows its strength in the draft at other positions, has never had more than one quarterback taken in the first round of the NFL Draft. The league hasn't had a quarterback picked in the first round since Texas A&M's Johnny Manziel in 2014.

That history may soon change.

Alabama's Tua Tagovailoa, Louisiana State's Joe Burrow and Georgia's Jake Fromm could make the 2020 draft one to remember for the league's quarterbacks.

With all the Tagovailoa conversations swirling around the winless Miami Dolphins, he could be the top overall selection.

No Alabama quarterback has been picked in the first round since Richard Todd was the sixth overall selection by the New York Jets in 1976.

Former Vanderbilt quar-

terback Jordan Rodgers, the brother of Aaron Rodgers and an analyst for the SEC Network who has worked with Burrow and Fromm at the Manning Passing Academy, said the three top SEC quarterbacks "have proven to be accurate at a level we haven't seen in a really long time."

Tagovailoa recently confirmed he has heard the "Tank-ing for Tua" talk "here and there" and said he takes it as a compliment.

Burrow, widely projected as a top-15 pick, could move close

to the top of the draft. Fromm's first-round status is far less certain.

Burrow is a senior. Tagovailoa and Fromm are juniors who haven't declared their plans for the draft.

Tagovailoa is recovering from ankle surgery, leaving his status uncertain for the much-anticipated game between No. 1 LSU and No. 2 Alabama on Nov. 9.

Rodgers said Tagovailoa's edge is his ability to "generate velocity" with his passes when his feet aren't set.

## NHL roundup

# Huberdeau's two goals lift Panthers over Avalanche

Associated Press

DENVER — Down two goals late, Jonathan Huberdeau and the Florida Panthers didn't play desperately. They just played determined.

Huberdeau scored 29 seconds into overtime after he tied the game late in regulation, and the Panthers beat the injury-riddled Colorado Avalanche 4-3 on Wednesday night.

"We don't need to panic, even if we're down two goals," Huberdeau said. "We're good. We know we can come back every game."

Huberdeau sent a backhanded shot between the pads of Avalanche goaltender Philipp Grubauer for the win. He tied the game with 1:30 remaining on a wrist shot through traffic.

Florida trailed 3-1 with around eight minutes remaining. That's when Aleksander Barkov picked a good spot for his first goal of the season, a power-play tally that started the Panthers on the comeback trail.

Colton Sceviour scored a first-period goal for the Panthers, who went 2-1-1 on a four-game trip. Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 27 shots, including a glove save near the end of the third period.

Matt Nieto and Joonas Donskoi scored first-period goals, and Nathan MacKinnon added another in the third to make it a two-goal lead with 12:23 remaining. The Avs were without two big offensive pieces in Mikko Rantanen and Gabriel Landeskog due to lower-body injuries.

**Lightning 7, Devils 6 (OT):** Tyler Johnson scored 1:16 into overtime, and Tampa Bay won at New Jersey to avoid its first three-game losing streak since late March 2018.

Ondrej Palat scored twice for the banged-up Lightning, who surrendered a tying goal to Kyle Palmieri in the waning seconds. Alex Killorn, Brayden Point, Anthony Cirelli and Mathieu Joseph also scored, and Curtis McElhinney made 36 saves.

Palmieri scored three goals and Jesper Bratt had two for the Devils. Sami Vatanen scored early in the third period for a 5-3 lead and Cory Schneider had 16 saves.

Johnson's fourth of the season came from the inside of the right circle.

**Blues 2, Wild 1:** Jordan Binnington made 35 saves and Alex Pietrangolo snapped a tie in the third period, sending host St. Louis to the victory.

Sammy Blais also scored for the Blues, who won for the fourth time in five games. It was the first game for the Stanley Cup champions since star forward Vladimir Tarasenko had reconstructive surgery on his left shoulder.

Binnington was busy all night, facing 12 shots in every period. He improved to 6-2-3 this season.

Mats Zuccarello scored for Minnesota, which dropped to 1-8-0 on the road. Devan Dubnyk made 24 stops.

**Canucks 5, Kings 3:** Brock Boeser scored three times, and Vancouver won at Los Angeles to improve to 8-1-1 in its past 10 games.

Elias Pettersson had a goal and three assists for the Canucks. Bo Horvat added a power-play goal, and Jacob Markstrom made 21 saves.

Anze Kopitar had two assists and passed 900 career points, but the Kings lost their fourth straight game. Jeff Carter scored twice and Jonathan Quick made 44 saves.

**Canadiens 4, Coyotes 1:** Carey Price stopped 33 shots for visiting Montreal, and Brendan Gallagher and Shea Weber scored in the opening minute of the first two periods.

The Canadiens arrived in

the desert early for an extra day of practice and acclimation after beating Toronto 5-2 on Saturday.

Montreal had an extra jump early, scoring on its first shift in each of the first two periods. Jonathan Drouin added his third goal in two games, Nick Cousins also scored and Price was superb as usual against Arizona, improving to 12-1 all-time.

Jakob Chychrun scored for Arizona and Antti Raanta made 32 saves, giving up one goal when his skate blade fell off.

**Oilers 4, Blue Jackets 1:** Leon Draisaitl had two goals and an assist, powering Edmonton to a win at Columbus.

James Neal and Jujhar Khaira also scored for the Oilers, who had dropped two in a row. Mike Smith stopped 23 shots.

Draisaitl's second goal, his team-leading 12th of the season, chased Joonas Korpisalo, who had his second lackluster outing in a row. He allowed four goals on Edmonton's first 12 shots before he was replaced by Elvis Merlikins, who finished with 19 saves.

Zach Werenski scored for Columbus in its second consecutive loss.

## NBA roundup

## Harden, Rockets outscore Wizards

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — James Harden scored 59 points and made one of two free throws with 2.4 seconds to play to give the Houston Rockets a 159-158 victory over the Washington Wizards on Wednesday night.

Bradley Beal scored 46 points for Washington, hitting three free throws with 8.1 seconds left to tie it at 158.

Harden was 18-for-32 from the field, 6-for-14 from three-point range, and made 17 of 18 free throws. He also had nine assists in 37 minutes.

Russell Westbrook had just three points in the first three quarters, then scored 14 in the fourth quarter and finished with his second triple-double of the season. He had 12 assists and 10 rebounds.

Clint Capela added 21 points and 12 rebounds to help Houston improved to 3-1.

Rui Hachimura had 23 points in his home debut for the Wizards, Davis Bertans added 21 and Washington shot 62.6% from the field. The Wizards fell to 1-3.

**Suns 121, Warriors 110:** Stephen Curry broke his left hand and became the latest injured Warriors player when he fell hard in the third quarter of another embarrassing defeat by Golden State, 121-110 to the Phoenix Suns on Wednesday night.

The two-time MVP drove to his left defended by Kelly Oubre Jr. and with big

man Aron Baynes standing solidly in the paint. Curry leapt with the ball then came down head first landing awkwardly on his hands to brace himself from the court, with Baynes crashing onto Curry's left hand. Curry grimaced in pain grabbing at his fingers then walked to the locker room with 8:31 left in the third quarter.

Golden State is struggling to start the season with Kevin Durant's departure to Brooklyn and Klay Thompson out for perhaps the entire season recovering from July 2 surgery to repair a torn ACL in his left knee.

**76ers 118, Timberwolves 95:** Joel Embiid scored 19 points and got into a brawl with Karl-Anthony Towns that sent both players to the showers early, and host Philadelphia beat Minnesota to improve to 4-0.

The Sixers were leading 75-55 midway through the third quarter when Embiid and Towns went at it. After they got tangled under the basket, Embiid shoved Towns, who answered with a punch that missed as both fell to the floor. Ben Simmons jumped in and forcefully held Towns down as other players and coaches ran onto the court.

**Celtics 116, Bucks 105:** Kemba Walker had 21 of his 32 points in the second half and Boston rallied to beat visiting Milwaukee.

The Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo had

22 points and 14 rebounds, but the reigning MVP lost his composure late, picking up a hard foul on Marcus Smart and then a technical foul in the final minute.

**Jazz 110, Clippers 96:** Mike Conley snapped an early season slump with 29 points and host Utah beat Los Angeles with Kawhi Leonard sitting out for scheduled rest.

**Raptors 125, Pistons 113:** Pascal Siakam scored 30 points, including 19 in the third quarter, and Fred VanVleet had 13 points and 11 assists in host Toronto's victory over Detroit.

**Trail Blazers 102, Thunder 99:** Damian Lillard had 23 points and 13 assists to help visiting Portland hold off Oklahoma City.

**Cavaliers 117, Bulls 111:** Kevin Love had 17 points and 20 rebounds, Tristan Thompson scored 23 points and host Cleveland beat Chicago.

**Pacers 118, Nets 108:** Domantas Sabonis scored 29 points, Jeremy Lamb added 25 and visiting Indiana beat Brooklyn for its first victory in five games this season.

**Magic 95, Knicks 83:** Nikola Vucevic had 21 points and 14 rebounds and host Orlando rallied to beat New York.

**Hornets 118, Kings 111:** P.J. Washington scored 23 points and visiting Charlotte overcame a 14-point deficit to beat winless Sacramento.

## Minshew Mania heads to London

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Minshew Mania stretches coast to coast, from Jacksonville to Pullman, Wash. Gardner Minshew could gain an international following this week, too.

The rookie quarterback will make his London debut when the Jacksonville Jaguars (4-4) face AFC rival Houston (5-3) at Wembley Stadium on Sunday.

"I'm sure it'll be pretty good," Minshew said Wednesday when asked about his anticipated reception. "I hear they are pretty big Jags fans over there. If they're Jags fans, then they're my fans, too."

It could be Minshew's final start this season. Nick Foles

(broken collarbone) is eligible to come off injured reserve in time for Jacksonville's next game, at Indianapolis on Nov. 17, and has a chance to regain his starting role.

"This is too big of a game to really think about anything else," Minshew said. "We're sitting at a pivotal point, playing a divisional opponent and this will be the last time we get to play them, so it's definitely a big one."

It's significant for Jacksonville's season and equally important to the small-market franchise's financial stability.

The Jaguars credit about 11% of their local revenue to playing annually abroad.

Jacksonville's ticket, television, sponsorship and stadium revenue streams are smaller than NFL teams in larger markets. Earning money in London helps offset some of the disparity, and the game remains a critical part of the team's long-term plan.

The Jaguars have played a "home game" at Wembley Stadium every year since 2013 and are under contract to do so through 2020. Jaguars owner Shad Khan and team president Mark Lamping expect the contract to be extended, but they also see the growing desire for other teams to play overseas.

"We are absolutely committed to it," Khan said earlier

this year. "All the stats, everything we have, what it has done with playing in London is stabilizing the Jaguars here in Jacksonville."

Khan tried to strengthen Jacksonville's foothold in London by bidding \$790 million to buy historic Wembley in 2018. He withdrew his offer for the English Football Association's main asset last October after recognizing the extent of opposition to the sale.

Khan and the Jaguars insist the move was never intended to create a potential relocation spot for the NFL team but rather a way to gain more control over American football in the burgeoning overseas market.