

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Trump's doctors optimistic about condition

Associated Press

BETHESDA, Md. — President Donald Trump's blood oxygen level dropped twice suddenly in recent days, but he "has continued to improve" since then, the White House physician said Sunday, adding a new layer of confusion to the president's fight with COVID-19 even while suggesting he could be discharged from the hospital as early as Monday.

Trump's doctors, speaking on the steps of the military hospital where he was being treated for a third consecutive day, again refused to answer key questions about his condition, including the timing of the president's second dip in oxygen, which they neglected to mention in multiple statements the day before, or whether lung scans showed any damage.

Pressed about the conflicting information he and the

White House released the previous day, Navy Cmdr. Dr. Sean Conley acknowledged that he had tried to present a somewhat rosy description of the president's condition.

"I was trying to reflect the upbeat attitude of the team, that the president, that his course of illness has had. Didn't want to give any information that might steer the course of illness in another direction," Conley said. "And in doing so, came off like we're trying to hide something, which wasn't necessarily true. The fact of the matter is that he's doing really well."

The briefing lasted just 10 minutes.

Before walking away, Conley said the president had a "high fever" and a blood oxygen level below 94% on Friday and during "another episode" on Saturday. He was evasive when asked whether Trump's level had dropped below 90%: "We

don't have any recordings here on that."

The level currently stands at 98%, Trump's medical team said.

Blood oxygen saturation is a key health marker for COVID-19 patients. A normal reading is between 95 and 100. A drop below 90 is concerning. People with the virus sometimes do not realize their oxygen levels are low.

Trump offered his own assessment of his status the night before in a video from his hospital suite, saying he was beginning to feel better and hoped to "be back soon." And he was back on social media early Sunday morning, sharing a video of flag-waving supporters, most not wearing masks, gathered outside Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

The changing, and at times contradictory, accounts from the Trump administration

highlighted a credibility crisis for the White House at a crucial moment, with the president's health and the nation's leadership on the line. Moreover, the president's health represents a national security issue of paramount importance not only to the functions of the U.S. government, but also to countries around the world, friendly and otherwise.

The doctors revealed that Trump was given a dose of the steroid dexamethasone after the drop in oxygen levels on Saturday.

That was in addition to the single dose he was given Friday of an experimental drug from Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. that supplies antibodies to help the immune system fight the virus. Trump on Friday also began a five-day course of remdesivir, a Gilead Sciences drug currently used for moderately and severely ill patients.

Study touts USS Roosevelt isolation decision

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

An urgent appeal to superiors by the former commander of the USS Theodore Roosevelt to transfer sailors infected by a coronavirus outbreak aboard the carrier in March was well founded, according to a study published Thursday by an American Medical Association journal.

The virus tore through the ship's crew of approximately 4,800 sailors in the weeks after leaving port from Danang, Vietnam, early that month. After docking in Guam on March 25, Capt. Brett Crozier urged his superiors to clear the ship to prevent the spread of

disease because it was not possible to adequately quarantine and maintain physical distance while aboard.

Crozier was fired after a letter he sent to Navy higher-ups asking for help surfaced in the San Francisco Chronicle soon after.

The authors of the JAMA Network Open study, who are also members of the U.S. Army Public Health COVID-19 Task Force, came to the conclusion that the act of isolating and quarantining hundreds of sailors on the island dramatically interrupted the acceleration of the outbreak.

"[T]he rapid increase in case [numbers] as incubating cases disembarked, followed by the

precipitous decrease in cases, suggests that the shore-based nonpharmaceutical interventions interrupted a probable acceleration in case incidence that would have likely resulted in a substantial disease burden," the study concluded.

Roosevelt's outbreak peaked March 30 with 30 new infections. Infected sailors began being moved off the ship the next day for isolation at Naval Base Guam. Roughly a quarter of the ship's crew were ultimately infected during the outbreak.

The carrier departed Guam on June 4, although some sailors were left behind to complete their recovery.

In the study, researchers

analyzed data from all 736 Roosevelt sailors who were diagnosed with the coronavirus and placed in isolation between March 31 and April 15.

Roughly 80% of those sailors exhibited symptoms, while the remaining 146 had no symptoms during the study period.

Six sailors were hospitalized, and one died.

The number of new infections plummeted within a few days of the sailors disembarking, with only one to three daily new cases being reported after April 4.

That quick short-circuiting of the outbreak seems to affirm Crozier's conclusion that the ship should be cleared immediately.

Naps given official stamp of approval

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army on Thursday released its new field manual and has officially embraced an afternoon snooze for tired soldiers unable to maintain full nights of sleep during training exercises or other operations.

Entitled Holistic Health and Fitness, FM-22 outlines coming changes to how the Army intends to use more holistic health approaches to help improve a soldier's performance.

The update is the first revamp of the service's health and fitness approach since 2012, and it intends to build more resilient, healthy soldiers by concentrating on their individual wellness instead of the service's decades-old focus on the health of whole units.

The decision to revamp how the Army approaches soldier wellness was driven by troubling statistics that show high rates of injuries and other health issues that have limited tens of thousands of soldiers from fully performing their jobs. Army statistics show more than 58,000 soldiers as of April were characterized as

nondeployable.

Holistic Health and Fitness, dubbed H2F by the Army, aims to fix some of those longstanding challenges by encouraging soldiers to adopt physical fitness routines tailored to improving their strength and their ability to recover quickly. Hibbard said the system will go hand-in-hand with the Army's new fitness assessment, the six-event Army Combat Fitness Test that Thursday replaced the decades-old Army Physical Fitness Test as the service's official fitness evaluation.

The new field manual also makes clear to soldiers that other health aspects, such as nutrition, mental wellness and sleep are equally as important as physical fitness to their ability to perform their duties. Without sleep, the field manual reads, soldiers steadily lose cognitive clarity, which could lead to poor decision-making or hampered reaction times in the field.

The field manual calls for soldiers to get between seven and nine hours of sleep in every 24 hours, but it does not postulate on the minimum amount of sleep soldiers can rely on and maintain "military effectiveness."

USS Reagan changes its command while on patrol

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

Capt. Fred Goldhammer took the helm of the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan from Capt. Pat Hannifin on Thursday during a scaled-down change-of-command ceremony in the Philippine Sea, according to a Navy statement.

Due to coronavirus precautions, the ceremony took place in the ship's pilot house, broadcast over the public address system, in lieu of a traditional in-person event, according to the Thursday statement. Photos of the event show Hannifin, Goldhammer and others wearing masks. Pre-pandemic change-of-command ceremonies were often all-hands events, gathering large groups of sailors to see a departing commander off and welcome a new one.

The aircraft carrier, homeported at Yokosuka, has been patrolling the Indo-Pacific region since June. Command changes while a warship is underway are not unusual.

"Reagan is and will always remain poised to fight and win in combat," Hannifin said during the ceremony, according to the statement. "Every year and every age has challenges — we have certainly had ours here — but this team wins."

Since taking command in September 2018, Hannifin has

led the ship through numerous multinational exercises, including Talisman Saber and Keen Sword, in the Indo-Pacific region.

The carrier in July also took part in two dual-carrier exercises with the USS Nimitz in the South China Sea, the first time in eight years that two U.S. aircraft carriers had worked together in the contentious region.

"To the crew and the full team that's onboard Reagan: I appreciate your service. It is the honor of my life to have served among you," Hannifin said, according to the statement.

Goldhammer, of New York City, comes to the Reagan after commanding the amphibious transport dock USS Mesa Verde, home-ported in Norfolk, Va., according to the statement.

After graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1993, Goldhammer began his career as a naval aviator flying E-2C Hawkeyes, according to his biography on the Reagan's website. He later worked in the Pentagon in several assignments, including as executive assistant to the director of Navy staff.

Hannifin's next assignment will be at the Navy's Air Warfare Division in Washington, D.C., according to the statement, which did not say in what role he would serve.

Greece to host USS Hershel 'Woody' Williams

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. Navy muscled up in the eastern Mediterranean Sea this week, announcing that it will homeport a major vessel at Souda Bay in Greece for the first time in at least 40 years.

The USS Hershel "Woody" Williams "provides a new capability in the theater," U.S. 6th Fleet commander, Vice Adm. Gene Black, said in a statement Friday.

The ship, an expeditionary sea base de-

signed to carry Marines and special operations troops to hot spots or train with partners, is assigned to U.S. Africa Command but will also be available to support other commands.

The move, which took effect Thursday, comes at a time when U.S. defense officials are worried about a Russian military buildup in the Mediterranean. Moscow has a base in Syria and an expanding influence in Libya, where Russia has deployed hundreds of state-backed mercenaries, fighter planes and other weaponry.

Recently retired Adm. James Foggo, who

commanded U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa for three years, said in June that Russia was turning the eastern Mediterranean into "one of the most kinetic areas in the world."

The decision to base the ship in the country was announced Tuesday by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a visit to Greece, where the U.S. has deepened military ties during the past year with an updated security cooperation agreement that calls for more troop rotations at various bases.

Biden's campaign to release all test results

The Washington Post

Joe Biden's campaign said Saturday it will now disclose the results of every coronavirus test the candidate takes, following increased pressure for more transparency after President Donald Trump recently tested positive for the virus and Vice President Mike Pence has released results for two consecutive days.

"We have adhered to strict and extensive safety practices recommended by public health experts and doctors in all of our campaigning — including social distancing, mask wearing, and additional safeguards,"

campaign spokesman Andrew Bates said in a statement. "Vice President Biden is being tested regularly, and we will be releasing the results of each test."

Bates did not say how often Biden would be undergoing such tests, beyond saying they would happen on a regular basis. Biden, who tested negative on Friday, told reporters that he had not undergone a test on Saturday but would on Sunday.

Biden's approach has come under increased scrutiny now that Trump has been hospitalized. Unlike Trump, Biden has made a point of abiding by the

recommendations of public health officials, although he has continued his travel despite his proximity to Trump on the debate stage last Tuesday.

Biden's campaign has scrapped a partially indoor event and suspended negative ads since Trump's diagnosis, while the candidate himself took the unusual step of wearing a mask throughout an entire speech and, on Saturday, declined to criticize the president during a town hall event with transit workers.

With Election Day now a month away, the campaign is trying to figure out how to

approach an unprecedented situation with the 74-year-old incumbent hospitalized and the 77-year-old challenger himself at risk.

"I really don't think that anybody knows how it changes the dynamics yet," said Rep. Cedric Richmond, D-La., Biden's campaign co-chairman.

Richmond did predict that Biden's message will shift to focus less on Trump and more on Biden's plans should he win. "I think you stick more to policy," he said, noting that Biden has already put the need for better management of the pandemic at the center of his pitch.

A look at the big issues on high court's agenda

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court will begin hearing arguments Monday after a summer break. Here are some of the issues either already on the court's docket or likely to be before the justices soon:

■ **Health care.** A week after the presidential election, the court will hear arguments in a bid by the Trump administration and Republican-led states to overturn the Obama-era health care law. Coverage for more than 20 million people is at stake, along with the law's ban on insurance

discrimination against Americans with pre-existing medical conditions.

The high court could invalidate the law's now toothless requirement that most Americans carry health insurance but leave in place core provisions such as subsidized health insurance, Medicaid expansion and protection for people with medical problems.

■ **Religious rights.** The day after the election in November, the high court will hear a dispute involving a Philadelphia Catholic agency that won't place foster children with same-sex couples.

The justices will review an appeals court ruling that upheld the city's decision to stop placing children with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's agency because it would not permit same-sex couples to serve as foster parents.

■ **Technology.** The most high-profile, big-dollar case the justices will hear arguments in this month is a copyright dispute between technology giants Oracle and Google.

The dispute has to do with Google's development of its Android operating system for smartphones. Oracle says that in developing the popular

Android, Google copied approximately 11,500 lines of its copyrighted code. Google says it didn't do anything improper.

■ **Mueller investigation.** In December, the justices will hear arguments over whether Congress can have access to secret grand jury testimony from special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation.

The court already handed Trump a victory when it agreed in July to deny the Democrats who control the House access to the material before the election.

NC Senate race upended by sexting, virus diagnosis

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina's intensely competitive and expensive U.S. Senate race has been upended by personal and health disruptions that sent sharp tremors and uncertainty through the campaigns and an electorate already casting ballots.

Democratic nominee Cal Cunningham acknowledged and apologized for exchanging sexually suggestive text messages with a woman who's not his wife, but he said he won't drop out of the race. And just a few hours earlier Friday evening, his opponent,

Republican Sen. Thom Tillis, announced he has tested positive for COVID-19. The first-term senator has "mild symptoms," and the positive test forced Tillis to cancel in-person events as several members of his campaign staff headed into quarantine, less than five weeks until Election Day.

"It's chaos — it's really what I see it is," David McLennan, a political science professor at Meredith College in Raleigh, said in a Saturday interview.

The race is the nation's most expensive Senate campaign and considered key to de-

termining the power balance in the chamber. Democrats need to gain four seats in November to take control. The developments come as voting already has gone on for four weeks in North Carolina, as 341,000 completed mail-in absentee ballots already have been accepted and will be counted. Early in-person voting begins Oct. 15.

As for Tillis, a spokesman for the Republican said Tillis has "mild symptoms" and will be staying at home for 10 days. Cunningham tweeted that he wished Tillis a "quick recovery."

Ky. reports its highest number of new cases

From wire reports

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Kentucky reported its highest number of new coronavirus cases Saturday.

“We now have 1,275 new cases announced today, meaning 1,275 Kentuckians have just tested positive,” Gov. Andy Beshear said in a news release. “This is our highest number of cases. This is the highest number of cases per week and we have one more day that will add to the count, and it shows that we have to do better.”

As of 3 p.m. Saturday, there were at least 72,001 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, Beshear said. Of the newly reported cases, 166 were in children age 18 or younger. Twenty-seven of the cases were in children age 5 or younger, with the youngest child just two months old, according to the news release.

Alaska

ANCHORAGE — The Municipality of Anchorage reported 70 new cases of the coronavirus each day last week compared to a daily average of 48 new confirmed cases the previous week.

Anchorage officials on Friday expressed concern regarding the spread of the virus in the fall and winter. Their concerns include intensive care unit staffing, cases linked with an assisted living facility and a spike in new cases over the past week, the Anchorage Daily News reported.

The city could run out of ICU beds as early as this month or November, said Janet Johnston, epidemiologist at the Anchorage Health Department.

Johnston said she thought that as restrictions throughout the state relax, people have become less mindful of the risks of the pandemic.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Numerous inmates said Arizona’s prison system has failed to provide necessary testing, supplies and treatment during the coronavirus pandemic, with one saying that effectively meant the state’s

prisoners were sentenced to get infected with COVID-19.

Dozens of letters from inmates in recent months said the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry wasn’t protecting staff and inmates during the outbreak, the Arizona Republic reported.

A department spokesperson denied many allegations by inmates, including that sick inmates weren’t tested. The spokesperson, Judy Keane, also cited health and safety protocols announced during the pandemic.

In the letters, the inmates described fears and frustrations and asked for help, while some provided graphic details of surviving the virus, the Republic reported. The newspaper reported that it received nearly 90 inmate letters from late March to September and that it withheld the inmates’ identities due to their concerns about possible retaliation.

Florida

ORLANDO — Thousands of prospective Florida attorneys have been left in limbo by delays to the bar exam — first the traditional in-person version, due to the coronavirus pandemic, and then an online version, due to software concerns — despite a supervised practice program launched in August after Chief Justice Charles Canady apologized for failures that led to the bar exam being postponed. The program allows applicants to work under the supervision of licensed Florida lawyers who’ve been practicing at least five years.

But the program excludes people who failed the exam before 2020 and signed up to re-take it, as well as those who are already licensed to practice law outside of Florida. Out of about 3,400 who signed up to take the exam, only a fraction — 308 applicants — were certified to participate in the program as of Sept. 17, according to the Florida Board of Bar Examiners.

Critics have called the program’s requirements overly restrictive, but FBBE executive

director Michele Gavagni said the “overarching goal is to make sure the public is protected.” The program also places strict supervision requirements on law firms, which some say creates a disincentive to taking on program participants.

Kansas

TOPEKA — Kansas state education commissioner Randy Watson said schools will need to rethink the way they deliver education amid the coronavirus pandemic, because what is happening now is “not sustainable.”

The Topeka Capital-Journal reported that Watson told members of the Kansas Association of School Boards on Friday that one of the best solutions is to return students for five-day-a-week learning, while keeping class sizes to fewer than 15 students while requiring masks and social distancing.

Watson said schools may need to partner with other organizations in the community, like churches or businesses that are closed anyway because of the pandemic to get enough room to space out students.

Watson also suggested that schools look internally for back-up and use non-teaching school staff — like librarians, para-educators, substitute teachers, central office staff and reading specialists — to fill the ranks.

Michigan

LANSING — The health department in Michigan’s second-largest county issued an order requiring residents to wear masks when they leave their homes, a day after the state Supreme Court struck down a law used by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to mandate face coverings and issue restrictions to curb the coronavirus.

Oakland County officials acted late Saturday, following a Republican legislative leader’s declaration that he opposes continuing the Democratic governor’s statewide mask requirement. The court ruling, which will not take effect for at least 19 days, gives lawmakers a role because their approval

will be needed to extend a state of emergency that underpins Whitmer’s orders.

Health Officer Leigh-Anne Stafford cited her authority to take emergency steps to control an epidemic under a 1978 state law, calling it her “solemn responsibility.”

Other counties could follow suit with similar restrictions.

Nevada

LAS VEGAS — Hundreds of Nevada university students will be trained and employed as contact tracers to help identify and inform people who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

A \$3.4 million grant from the state will pay for the 200-student program, a partnership between the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the Southern Nevada Health District, officials said Friday.

UNLV’s contact tracing team was formed in March with a core group of volunteers who have been supporting SNHD throughout the pandemic.

So far, 60 students have been trained through the grant. A team of experienced graduate students is training additional contact tracers.

Wisconsin

MILWAUKEE — Wisconsin health officials on Saturday said the state set a single-day record for COVID-19 cases with nearly 2,900 positive tests.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services reported a 20.5% positivity rate from 14,084 tests that were processed in the last day. The previous record for new cases in a single day came Thursday, with 2,887.

Health officials also announced 19 deaths in the last day, raising the number of fatalities due to complications from the virus to 1,372.

More than 24,000 people in Wisconsin have tested positive for COVID-19. There have been nearly 527 new cases per 100,000 people over the past two weeks, which ranks third in the country for new cases per capita, according to The COVID Tracking Project.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Soldier's military tag returned to his widow

ND BISMARCK — The long-lost U.S. Army identification tag of a North Dakota soldier was returned to his widow, Ruth Hepper, after it resurfaced in Russia.

According to Gov. Doug Burgum's office, Ronald Hepper had kept a set of his dog tags in his boots, and had been in Vietnam just a few months when a blast from a hand grenade blew his boots off his body in June 1969.

The military ID was found by an American citizen traveling in Russia. The American bought the ID from a street vendor in Moscow and brought it to the American Embassy.

Lottery winner out of luck; ticket lost in mail

FL RIDGE MANOR — A woman who won \$1,000 in a second chance drawing July 29 isn't getting her prize because the certified letter she sent to the Florida Lottery's headquarters never arrived.

Sue Burgess told WFLA that officials in Tallahassee told her "no ticket, no prize."

The second chance lottery prize gives winners limited time to turn in a ticket to claim the prize. Their options are to either put the ticket in a drop box at a local lottery office, which were not then open to the public due to the pandemic, or mail them to the headquarters.

Tracking information showed the ticket arrived at a Tallahassee post office at 7:12 a.m. on Aug. 12. But the online tracking showed the ticket was never delivered to the lottery office.

If the package arrives, lottery officials said they would bend the rules and pay Burgess the \$1,000 if it was postmarked by the original deadline.

Man tries to escape court after sentenced

LA THIBODAUX — A Louisiana man who had just been told that he'd be jailed ran from a courtroom and through a first-floor window, falling into the outdoor service stairwell below it, authorities said.

Gerrell Talbert, 26, of Labadieville was treated for injuries from the 12-foot fall, then arrested on the earlier charges plus escape and felony damage to property, Lafourche Parish Sheriff Craig Webre said.

Talbert ran after Judge Steven Miller told him that he'd be jailed for contempt of court, Lt. Brennan Matherne, Webre's spokesman, said in an email.

Cop on leave after K-9 escapes twice in week

IN CROWN POINT — A northwestern Indiana police officer was placed on leave after the police dog she oversees escaped from her twice in the past week, leading to extensive searches for the canine.

Lake County Sheriff Oscar Martinez said that after reviewing the recent escapes by the dog, named Dax, Officer Angelika Ventrice was put on paid administrative leave. He said the matter remains under investigation.

'Lady Ninja' takes down man who attacked friend

CA LOS ANGELES — Her martial arts skills may not be quite what they once were, but still, you don't mess with Lady Ninja.

Authorities said that's a lesson a California man learned painfully after he began shoving around Elizabeth McCray,

82, at a Fontana apartment building.

The woman's 67-year-old friend, Lorenza Marrujo, jumped into the fray and with a swift kick here, a finger-bending maneuver there and a couple of solid elbow smashes to the sternum it was all over. Police arrived to find him on the floor with one of Marrujo's knees on his neck and the other on his chest.

Marrujo, who likes to be called "Lady Ninja" has a black belt in jiu-jitsu.

Authorities use pear to capture escaped emu

MA BOSTON — Authorities in Massachusetts corralled an emu after the large flightless bird was spotted roaming the streets of a city north of Boston.

The Eagle-Tribune reported that the emu named Kermit, escaped from the property of a local resident who cares for unwanted animals. The resident had been preparing to transport Kermit to a farm in Maine when it fled.

Authorities said the bird was captured safely after it was given a pear from a nearby tree.

Man sentenced for using IDs of dead people

TN MEMPHIS — A Tennessee man was sentenced to more than 17 years in federal prison for using the identities of dead people to take over credit card, savings and stock accounts and steal hundreds of thousands of dollars, prosecutors said.

James Jackson, 58, was sentenced after he was convicted in September 2019 of charges including mail fraud, aggravated identity theft and theft of mail, the U.S. attorney's office said in a news release.

Jackson would impersonate dead women and men to convince customer service representatives at banks, credit card companies and financial firms to mail new bank and credit cards to vacant homes and hotels in the Memphis area.

Man in gorilla suit with machete arrested

ND FARGO — A man who was dressed in a gorilla suit and was armed with a machete was arrested for threatening neighbors at a Fargo apartment building, according to police.

Officers were called to the apartment building on a report of possible gunshots.

Authorities said the man was threatening to blow up the building and everyone inside, KFGO reported. Police determined he had been setting off artillery-shell size fireworks.

Officers negotiated with the man, who they said was heavily intoxicated, for about two hours and eventually convinced him to surrender.

Family threatened for flying Mexican flag

NC WILMINGTON — A North Carolina family was told in a threatening letter to take down a Mexican flag in front of their home or "feel my wrath," but neighbors rallied around them and raised their own Mexican flags in solidarity.

Jessica Zambrano called the New Hanover County Sheriff's Office after she received the anonymous letter several weeks ago, news outlets reported.

The letter said flying a Mexican flag "means war" and that Zambrano should take the flag down "or feel my wrath."

From wire reports

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Astros in hostile LA for showdown with A's

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Houston Astros are returning to the scene of the crime. The Los Angeles Dodgers won't be there, but their fans surely won't let the visitors forget.

While the Dodgers head to Texas for the NL Division Series, their ballpark is hosting the AL Division Series in a postseason relocated due to the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The Oakland Athletics and pitcher Mike Fiers will be in Los Angeles, too. Fiers last year revealed the Astros' sign-stealing plot during the 2017 World Series, which they won in seven games over the Dodgers and celebrated on their rival's field.

Now, Fiers will be facing his old team in the best-of-five series that begins Monday.

"Nobody's mentioned his name," first-year Astros manager Dusty Baker said Friday. "I haven't heard Mike Fiers'

name all year until you just mentioned it."

Three years has done little to stem the tide of scorn that has crashed over the Astros. They've been tarred and feathered as cheaters by other teams and fans, even though the current mix of rookies and second-year players hardly resembles Houston's powerhouse rosters of recent years.

"We're doing it with an odd-ball group," Astros reliever Brooks Raley said.

After winning 101, 103 and 107 games in the last three regular seasons, capturing the 2017 World Series and losing the championship in seven games to the Washington Nationals last year, the Astros stumbled through this shortened season at 29-31.

They swept the Minnesota Twins in two games in the AL wild-card series with a group of many first- and second-year players filling the gaps cre-

ated by injuries, slumps and departures.

"I felt like there was big relief after that first game," Raley said. "We're finding guys to step up and finding offense to come through."

The Astros worked out Friday at Target Field in chilly Minneapolis before flying to Los Angeles.

"Goin' back to Cali," said Baker, the ex-San Francisco Giants manager and former Dodgers player.

Baker has yet to announce his rotation against the A's. West champion Oakland advanced to the Division Series by beating the Chicago White Sox in three games, ending 14 years of post-season futility.

Both the Astros and A's have played at the stadium recently. The A's dropped two of three to the Dodgers from Sept. 22-24. The Astros split a two-game series with the NL West champions on Sept. 12-13.

Angry Dodgers fans greeted Houston's buses as the team pulled in, hoisting large garbage cans in the air, chanting and waving signs. The Astros banged on a trash can to let their hitters know which pitch the opposing catcher was calling for in the World Series.

During both days of the series, the Astros were bombarded with messages towed by planes over the field. "Steal This Sign Astros" read one. "Astros Cheated! Never Forget! Go Dodgers" and "Hey Astros Try Stealing This Sign!" read others.

Baker isn't worried about his team being intimidated — inside or outside the ballpark.

"It's more important to welcome the big stage," he said. "We're not playing our best ball yet; we just happened to win. To me, we're in the process. Things are rolling along pretty good."

Yankees', Rays' hard feelings date back awhile

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Stable vs. The Savages.

Just another way to say top-seeded Tampa Bay and the No. 5 Yankees meet in the best-of-five AL Division Series starting Monday at neutral site San Diego.

Rays players wear blue T-shirts with four horses lined up behind a fence, a reference to manager Kevin Cash declaring "I've got a whole damn stable full of guys that throw 98 miles an hour" in response to Aroldis Chapman throwing a 101 mph pitch near Mike Brosseau's head on Sept. 1.

New York sold "Savages in the Box" shirts for \$29.99 each last year, memorializing manager Aaron Boone's infamous comment on his batters during a profane rant at rookie umpire Brennan Miller in a July 18 doubleheader opener against the Rays.

"That's the entertainment business of it. At the end of the day, it's series like this that make the statement, not anything else," Yankees slugger Giancarlo Stanton said Thursday.

Tampa Bay swept two games from Toronto in the first round for its first post-season series win since 2008. New York won two straight at Cleveland, including

a memorable 10-9 victory on Wednesday that took 4 hours, 50 minutes, the longest nine-inning game in major league history.

The Rays made a declaration against the Yankees during the regular season. New York started 9-3 overall, lost three of four at Tropicana Field, won six straight and then got swept three in a row by the Rays in the Bronx at the start of a seven-game skid. Tampa Bay took two of three on its second trip to Yankee Stadium, finishing 8-2 to win the season series for the first time since 2014.

Hitting coach Marcus Thames was ejected by plate umpire Vic Carapazza during the second game of a doubleheader split at Tampa Bay on Aug. 8 for chirping from the dugout, and Boone was tossed after he ran out of the dugout to argue. Then came the Chapman pitch to Brosseau on Sept. 1, which earned the closer a three-game suspension that remains under appeal. Both managers were suspended for one game apiece.

Yankees starter Masahiro Tanaka had hit Joey Wendle with a 95 mph fastball in the first inning. The next day, New York reliever Ben Heller was tossed for hitting Hunter Renfroe.

"I think everything that happened in New York hopefully is in the past," Bros-

seau said. "The way that we pitch, we're going to attack hard in. That's the best way to get their hitters out, and that's what we're going to do. As far as having anything carryover, past experiences, at least from our end, I think we've put it in the past and our focused is pretty much getting past this round and moving on."

Hard feelings date to at least March 2008, when the Rays' Elliot Johnson ran over Francisco Cervelli during a spring training game, breaking the catcher's right wrist. Three days later, Shelley Duncan's hard slide with spikes raised into second baseman Akinori Iwamura sparked a bench-clearing scrum that resulted in two players and two coaches being ejected.

"I don't expect it to be a factor moving forward," Boone said. "Obviously there's been some things that have happened that certainly get played up. I watched highlight shows and people love to talk about it, and understandably."

The Yankees hit .218 with 13 homers against Tampa Bay, averaging 3.4 runs per game. New York pitchers had a 4.84 ERA vs. the Rays, allowing 47 runs and 16 homers. But the Rays' dominance has been greater generally at the Trop. Tampa Bay is 56-41 at home against the Yankees since 2010.

Upsets abound at French Open

Associated Press

PARIS — On a Sunday of upsets among the women at the French Open, revenge was a dish served up in an autumnal chill by a Polish teenager.

And it was only partially business as usual for the men, too. Rafael Nadal advanced, but his opponent in his 14th quarterfinal at Roland Garros will be dangerous debutant Jannik Sinner. By making the men's last eight as a newcomer, the 19-year-old Italian matched a feat last achieved by Nadal himself, in 2005, on his march to the first of his 12 titles in Paris.

So impressive has Sinner been on the clay that his 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 win against U.S. Open finalist Alexander Zverev hardly seemed like an upset, despite the 68-spot gulf separating them in tour rankings. Sinner pulled the sixth-seeded German this way and that with precision groundstrokes and unfurled his wingspan to make 21 winners at the net.

Against fourth-round foe Sebastian Korda, a 20-year-old qualifier who idolizes him so much that he named his cat "Rafa," Nadal was — excuse the pun — practically purr-fect, winning 6-1, 6-1, 6-2.

Korda lapped it up. His long-term sights are set on winning at least two Grand Slam titles, one more than his dad, 1998 Australian Open champion Petr Korda. In the meantime, the spanking from Nadal was "definitely the best moment of my life."

"Super awesome," he said. "I asked him for a signed shirt when we were tapping rackets and he said, 'Yeah, no problem.' So I have one in my bag right now. So I'm super stoked."

Nadal has yet to drop a set in his pursuit of a 13th French Open crown that would be his 20th major title overall, tying Roger Federer's record.

Although Nadal and Sinner have practiced together, their match will be the first between the 34-year-old and the youngest man in a Grand Slam quarterfinal since Novak Djokovic in 2006.

"A big challenge," Nadal said. "Amazing potential. He move the hand very quick and he's able to produce amazing shots."

That's also true of the new generation making a mark in the women's draw of this French Open where most everything feels unusual because of its coronavirus-enforced shift from May-June. The golden leaves and cold of autumn have added to a sense of cyclical change.

Against the player who humbled her 6-1, 6-0 at the same stage last year, 19-year-old Iga Swiatek turned the tables on top-seeded Simona Halep, sending the 2018 champion packing 6-1, 6-2 with powerful groundstrokes and exquisite net play to advance to her first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

Halep, who also lifted the title at Wimbledon last year, never got into her stride under the roof on Court Philippe Chatrier and was unable to exert any pressure on

the now-confident Polish player who wilted with nerves in their fourth-round meeting last year that was over in just 45 minutes.

Swiatek used that defeat as fuel.

"A huge lesson," she said. "I knew that I can, like, play differently and I can finally show my best tennis."

Halep lasted just 23 minutes longer this time. She never had a break point against her opponent, who racked up 14 against her, breaking her twice in each set and keeping her serve under near-constant stress.

"She was everywhere," said Halep, who had been on a career-best winning streak of 17 matches. "I will have a chocolate and I will be better tomorrow."

That upset was followed by another moments later. Italian qualifier Martina Trevisan ousted fifth-seeded Kiki Bertens, winning 6-4, 6-4. Swiatek and Trevisan will now play each other in what will be a first Grand Slam quarterfinal for them both.

Halep and Bertens had been among just six seeded women in round four. Sixth-seeded Serena Williams' pursuit of a record-tying 24th major title ended with an Achilles injury after her first-round win. Week two's crop of new faces speaks to the depth of women's tennis.

"At this level nobody surprises anybody anymore," said Halep. "Everyone has a big level."

The 159th-ranked Trevisan tossed her racket in delight after sealing her victory with a backhand lob.

2 new Titans cases; Pats-Chiefs delayed

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Another Tennessee Titans player and another staff member have tested positive for the coronavirus, while the rest of the NFL returned no new positives on Sunday, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press.

The Titans' outbreak is now at 20 cases, with 18 positive tests returned since Tuesday.

The results from around the rest of the league come as the NFL postponed the Patriots' game at Kansas City to Monday night. New England starting quarterback Cam Newton and Chiefs practice squad quarterback Jordan Ta'amu were both added to the COVID-19 reserve

list Saturday.

The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity Sunday because neither the NFL nor the Titans had announced the latest results.

The negative test results Sunday include a New Orleans Saints player who tested positive on Saturday, a person familiar with the situation said. The Saints learned of the positive test after leaving New Orleans for Sunday's scheduled game in Detroit and ran another series of tests on players and staff overnight.

The Saints wrote on social media that kickoff with the Lions remained scheduled for noon CDT.

The latest testing results has Minnesota (0-3), which lost to

Tennessee a week ago, ready to play Houston (0-3) on Sunday.

On Monday, the league will hold a conference call with all 32 teams to reinforce the necessity of following protocols — including updates made this week after the outbreak involving the Titans — provide updates on testing and contact tracing and to share best practices.

On Monday night, the Patriots will play at Kansas City in a game airing on CBS at 7:05 p.m. EDT. The Atlanta Falcons-Green Bay Packers game will shift to an 8:50 p.m. EDT start on ESPN.

Sunday marked the sixth straight day that at least one member of the Titans' organization has had a positive test result return. The Titans had

hoped to get back into their building Monday or Tuesday, but they must go consecutive days without a single positive result before that can happen.

Wednesday now is the earliest they can get back in their facility, which is the day Tennessee would start practicing to prepare to host Buffalo on Oct. 11.

Tennessee's outbreak appears to have started Sept. 24 when it placed cornerback Greg Mabin, who was on the practice squad, on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Then outside linebackers coach Shane Bowen's test result came back positive on Sept. 26, and he did not travel with the Titans to Minnesota.

Well rested: Air Force routs Navy

Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — The Air Force Falcons took advantage of their delayed start — to settle on a kicker, to plug holes on a decimated defense, to game plan for rival Navy.

Time very well spent.

Tevye Schuettpelz-Rohl tied a school record with four field goals, Air Force's hastily reconstructed defense stymied Navy's offense and the Falcons opened their season with a 40-7 win over the Midshipmen on Saturday night.

"A good victory," said Air Force senior George Silvanic, who was moved from offensive line to defensive tackle a few weeks ago out of necessity. "We've got to keep moving forward."

Sophomore QB Haaziq Daniels rushed for a score in his first career start as the Falcons (1-0) took a big first step toward capturing the coveted Commander-in-Chief's Trophy between the service academies.

Schuettpelz-Rohl connected from 48, 35, 32 and 40 yards in front of a crowd that consisted only of Air Force cadets given the COVID-19 restrictions. It's the 11th

time a Falcons kicker has made that many in a game.

To think, he was still trying to win the job about a week ago.

"Hoping I could prove myself and it all turned out for the best," Schuettpelz-Rohl said.

The Falcons weren't even sure if they would be taking the field this fall after the Mountain West postponed the season in August. Then, they learned they would play the two service academy games. Later, the league announced its resumption, with the intent to play eight games.

Top 25 roundup

TCU stuns No. 9 Texas with goal-line fumble recovery

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — TCU quarterback Max Duggan ran for the go-ahead score with 4 minutes left and the Horned Frogs' defense made it stand with a goal-line fumble recovery to stun No. 9 Texas 33-31 on Saturday in a game that had 26 penalties and ended when TCU took a safety as time ran out.

Texas looked primed for its second straight fourth-quarter comeback when Sam Ehlinger connected on a 52-yard pass to Keontay Ingram to put the Longhorns in scoring position. But Ingram fumbled on the TCU 1 with 2:32 to play.

Iowa State 37, No. 18 Oklahoma 30: Breece Hall scored the go-ahead touchdown on an 8-yard run with 4:06 left and Isheem Young intercepted Spencer Rattler's pass in the end zone on the visiting Sooners' final drive.

Oklahoma (1-2, 0-2 Big 12), beaten at home by Kansas State last week, lost back-to-back regular-season games for the first time since 1999. They lost in Ames for the first time since 1960.

No. 1 Clemson 41, Virginia 23: Trevor Lawrence threw for 329 yards and three touchdowns, two to Amari Rodgers, and the host Tigers started 3-0 for the sixth straight season.

Clemson (3-0, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) looked a bit sluggish after a week off, but heated up against the Cavaliers (1-1, 1-1) when their offensive stars in Lawrence, Rodgers and tailback Travis Etienne got rolling.

No. 2 Alabama 52, No. 13 Texas A&M 24: Mac Jones passed for a career-high 435 yards and four touchdowns, including a pair of deep throws to John Metchie III and an even longer one to Jaylen Waddle, and the host Crimson Tide rolled over the Aggies.

No. 3 Florida 38, South Carolina 24: Kyle Trask and Kyle Pitts hooked up for two more touchdowns, leading the host Gators.

Trask completed 21 of 29 passes for 268 yards, with four touchdowns and an interception. His second-quarter fumble kept the Gamecocks (0-2) in the game early.

No. 4 Georgia 27, No. 7 Auburn 6: Stetson Bennett threw for 240 yards and a touchdown in his first college start, Zamir White ran for a pair of scores and the host Bulldogs romped past the Tigers in the first Top 10 matchup of the college football season. The Bulldogs (2-0) buried Auburn with a 24-0 blitz in the first half, extending their domination of the Deep South's oldest rivalry.

Tulsa 34, No. 11 UCF 26: Zach Smith threw three touchdown passes and Tulsa erased an 18-point first-half deficit to beat UCF, snapping the Knights' 21-game home winning streak.

The Golden Hurricane (1-1) made it two straight wins over UCF (2-1), which was plagued by penalties (18 for 124 yards) and turned the ball over three times.

No. 12 North Carolina 26, Boston College 22: Sam Howell threw two touchdown passes and Trey Morrison scored after intercepting the potential tying 2-point conversion with 45 seconds left to lead North Carolina.

With the cancellation of one game because of the virus and a scheduled off week leaving North Carolina idle since Sept. 12, the Tar Heels (2-0, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) sent BC (2-1, 1-1) to its first loss under new coach Jeff Hafley.

No. 15 Cincinnati 28, South Florida 7: Gerrid Doaks ran for 102 yards and a touchdown, Tre Tucker returned a kickoff 97 yards for a score and the host Bearcats had five interceptions.

Tucker returned the kickoff late in the third quarter to put Cincinnati (3-0) ahead 28-7.

Arkansas 21, No. 16 Mississippi State 14: Feleipe

Franks threw two touchdown passes and the visiting Razorbacks intercepted three of K.J. Costello's passes to break a 20-game Southeastern Conference losing streak.

No. 17 Oklahoma State 47, Kansas 7: Shane Illingworth threw for 265 yards and three touchdowns, Chuba Hubbard ran for 145 yards and two more scores, and the visiting Cowboys were able to rest their starters the final 20 minutes in their win over the Jayhawks.

No. 20 LSU 41, Vanderbilt 7: Myles Brennan threw for 337 yards and four touchdowns and the visiting Tigers bounced back to beat the Commodores.

No. 21 Tennessee 35, Missouri 12: Eric Gray ran for 105 yards and a touchdown and caught a scoring pass to help the Volunteers win at home.

North Carolina State 30, No. 24 Pittsburgh 29: Devin Leary hit Emeka Emezie for the go-ahead touchdown with 23 seconds remaining and North Carolina State won on the road.

SMU 30, No. 25 Memphis 27: Chris Naggar kicked a 43-yard field goal with nine seconds left and the host Mustangs won despite blowing an early three-touchdown lead against a team playing its first game in four weeks.