

STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, October 9, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Army meets retention, recruitment goals

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army reached its key recruiting and retention goals for fiscal year 2020 despite challenges created by the coronavirus pandemic, top service officials announced Friday.

Lt. Gen. Gary Brito, the Army's personnel chief, credited stronger-than-anticipated retention numbers and an adaptable recruiting force amid the pandemic with ensuring the service reached its Congress-mandated target of 485,383 active-duty soldiers by Sept. 30, the end of the fiscal year. Brito anticipated the active force would grow by another 1,000 to 1,500 soldiers in fiscal year 2021, but he and other top Army officials also said they hoped those increases would include more women and minorities next year.

"The uniformed and civilian leadership of our Army are taking these issues very seriously," Brito told reporters Friday in a telephone news briefing. "We're looking at all aspects of the [diversity] problem ... toward making it bet-

ter for future soldiers and the leaders who will represent [the Army] in the near-term and the out years."

The drive for more diversity within the Army's recruits comes as the service — and the military overall — has taken steps in recent months to address issues that top officials have said contributed to minorities and women rarely reaching the service's highest ranks.

In fiscal year 2020, the service saw some incremental improvements in the diversity among new enlistees. Non-whites made up about 47% of the 62,150 recruits the Army shipped to basic training that year, up from about 45% in 2018 and 2019, said Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, the chief of Army Recruiting Command. About 18% of new recruits were female, also a slight improvement, he said.

"We're continuing to focus on assessing a diverse force that is representative of our nation — the nation that we serve," Vereen said, adding one of his goals toward increasing female enlistments is to bring more women into the Army's recruiting force.

The Army saw a slight increase in the numbers of new minority officers, as well. Maj. Gen. John Evans, leader of Army Cadet Command, did not have a precise percentage of the non-white portion of the 6,090 new lieutenants commissioned into the Army in fiscal year 2020. But he anticipated that percentage was somewhat higher than the 33% of non-white officers commissioned into the service in fiscal year 2019.

About 19% of new Army officers in 2020 were female, roughly the same percentage as in 2019, he said.

Evans said he is especially focused on bringing new minority and female officers into front-line combat arms roles, which have been long dominated by white men. Officers who begin their careers in those fields— such as infantry, armor and field artillery — have long produced the bulk of the Army's three- and four-star generals.

"We're encouraging much more diversity in those traditional combat arms branches," Evans said. "That really is [about] the desire to ensure that

we have people ... 25, 30 years down the road who are going to be our senior leaders — making sure we have got great diversity there, as well."

The ongoing pandemic forced the Army to alter its approaches to recruiting and retention. Brito said the economic downturn as the coronavirus spread across the country in the spring along with new, short-term reenlistment options likely contributed to more soldiers choosing to stay in the Army than in recent years.

More than 1,600 soldiers signed three- to 11-month contract extensions allowing them to stay in the service. Among those, 139 then chose to reenlist for longer and another 1,000 extended at least into fiscal year 2021, the Army said.

The overall increase in retention allowed the Army to lower its recruiting goal for the coronavirus-impacted year, once about 68,000, to about 62,000. That came as the Army in March shut its 1,400 recruiting stations across the nation to the public and moved its efforts solely online.

Soldiers in Democratic video won't be punished

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

Two Army Reserve soldiers who appeared in uniform in a broadcast segment of the Democratic National Convention in August will not be disciplined for the breach in rules, but their supervisor will be, according to a news report.

The soldiers, who have not been identified, are from the 9th Mission Support Command

in Hawaii and appeared during a presentation by delegates from American Samoa during the convention's roll call of states.

American Samoa Democratic Party leaders Patti Matila and Aliitama Sotoa expressed their support for former Vice President Joe Biden, who became the party's presidential nominee during the convention. The uniformed soldiers, wearing black protective face

masks, stood beside and slightly behind Matila and Sotoa.

While service members are allowed to participate in political activities, the Defense Department prohibits appearing in uniform at political events.

The Army began investigating the incident a day later, but the probe, completed Thursday, laid the blame for the incident on their boss, according to a report in Military Times.

"The investigation found

their supervisor violated a Department of Defense directive and an Army regulation that governs soldier political activities," Lt. Col. Simon Flake, chief of media relations for Army Reserve Strategic Communications, told the newspaper Thursday.

"The supervisor at fault will receive the appropriate level of disciplinary action for violating the governing standards," Flake said.

Marines investigating use of slurs in video

BY STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Marine who posted a video online in which he uses slurs against Chinese people and threatens to shoot them when he deploys with the fleet is now under investigation, the Marine Corps said Thursday.

Capt. Joseph Butterfield, a Marine Corps spokesman, identified the Marine in the video as Pfc. Jarrett Morford, 20, and said Morford's command is taking "appropriate action."

Morford, who is from Windsor, Colo., is now training for a communications job at Twentynine Palms, Calif. He gradu-

ated boot camp in August.

"There is no place for racism in the Marine Corps. Those who can't value the contributions of others, regardless of background, are destructive to our culture and do not represent our core values," Butterfield said.

"As the honorable Trump said today on Twitter, it was China's fault," Morford said in the video. "China is going to pay for what they have done to this country and the world."

It was not clear Thursday which tweet Morford was referencing. President Donald Trump frequently tweets about China, blaming them for the coronavirus pandemic,

which he has called "the China virus."

It was also unclear Thursday when or where the video originally was posted. But it went viral Thursday on Twitter and Instagram.

The video also included profanity and referenced the caliber of bullet used for the M4 and the M16, the standard rifles issued to Marines.

In recent months, the military has taken steps to encourage troops to speak openly about diversity and discrimination within the ranks amid a national conversation on race.

Leaders have taken small, but important, steps to reckon with racism within the ranks, includ-

ing when Defense Secretary Mark Esper banned the Confederate battle flag from bases.

In September, the Army suspended 2nd Lt. Nathan Freihofer from his duties at Fort Stewart, Ga., and launched an investigation into a post he made on TikTok.

In the short video, Freihofer said he would never become a "verified" user because of the content that he shares, before telling his so-called joke about the Holocaust and Jewish people.

Maj. Gen. Tony Aguto, commander of Fort Stewart's 3rd Infantry Division, called the soldier's remarks shared in the video "vile."

Former Gitmo chief is sentenced for probe meddling

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — A former commander of the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay was sentenced Thursday to two years in prison for interfering with an investigation into the death of a civilian with whom the commander had fought and argued over his affair with the man's wife.

A federal judge in Jacksonville sentenced Navy Capt. John R. Nettleton, news outlets reported. He was convicted in January of obstruction of justice, concealing material facts, falsifying records and making false statements.

Nettleton, 54, was removed from command shortly after civilian Christopher Tur was found floating in waters off the base on the southeastern coast of Cuba in

January 2015. Nettleton had commanded the base since June 2012, but not the detention center where suspected terrorists are held.

Nettleton wasn't charged with Tur's death.

Nettleton denied to his superior officer and others that he had an affair, but investigators later determined that it had happened, according to federal prosecutors in Jacksonville, where Nettleton had been on temporary duty. Tur's wife confirmed the affair during her testimony, authorities said.

Defense attorneys argued that Nettleton couldn't be found guilty of any of the charges merely for violating provisions of the Uniform Code of Military Justice or for violating any Navy regulations.

An autopsy found that Tur, 42, died from drowning but that his ribs had been fractured before he went into the water, and he had a cut to his head. Authorities said the investigation also turned up Tur's blood inside the entryway of Nettleton's residence on the base and on a paper towel in the backyard.

Tur came to Guantanamo in May 2011 with his wife, Lara, and two children and worked as the loss prevention safety manager at the Navy Exchange, the main shopping complex on the base.

On the night of his disappearance, Tur confronted the commander and Tur's wife in front of witnesses at a party at the on-base nightclub. Each man had "consumed several alcoholic drinks," according to the indictment.

Naval Academy extends winter holiday, cuts spring break

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — The U.S. Naval Academy is dropping spring break, but extending the winter holiday as part of its plan to keep staff and midshipmen safe during the coronavirus pandemic, officials announced Thursday.

A news release from the academy says spring semester classes will begin Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2021, after taking Monday off

for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, The Capital Gazette reported. Fall semester classes will end on Dec. 3, with the last final exam on Dec. 11.

The academy has not yet announced when students will be sent home for winter break. While the academy won't give its midshipmen a spring break, it is providing an additional three-day weekend, with April 5 now off.

Midshipmen's return will be phased, beginning in early January, to help accommodate for travel and restriction of movement requirements, according to the release. More details will be provided later.

Spring classes will end on May 5, with commissioning week planned to immediately follow final exams instead of having a customary break for upperclassmen. Commissioning and graduation will be May 28.

Trump says he's ready to resume his rallies

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump insisted Thursday that he is ready to resume campaign rallies and feels “perfect” one week after his diagnosis with the coronavirus that has killed more than 210,000 Americans, as his doctor said the president had “completed his course of therapy” for the disease.

The president has not been seen in public since his Monday return from the military hospital where he received experimental treatments for the virus. On Thursday, his physician, Navy Cmdr. Sean Conley, said in a memo that Trump would be able to safely “return to public engagements” on Saturday, as the president tries to shift his focus to the election that’s less than four weeks away, with millions of Americans already casting ballots.

While Trump said he believes he’s no longer contagious, concerns about infection appeared to scuttle plans for next week’s presidential debate.

“I’m feeling good. Really good. I think perfect,” Trump said during a telephone interview with Fox Business.

In a Fox News interview Thursday night, Trump said he wanted to hold a rally in Florida on Saturday “if we have enough time to put it together.” He said he might also hold a rally the following night in Pennsylvania. “I feel so good,” he told Fox’s Sean Hannity.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says individuals can discontinue isolation 10 days after the onset of symptoms, which for Trump was Oct. 1, according to his doctors. Conley said that meant Trump, who has been surrounded by minimal staffing as he works out of the White House residence and the Oval Office, could return to holding events on Saturday.

Six charged in plot to kidnap Michigan Governor Whitmer

Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and her family were at times moved around by authorities as law enforcement tracked the men who allegedly plotted for months to kidnap her, the state’s attorney general said Friday.

Dana Nessel disclosed the detail to “CBS This Morning.” She said the Democratic governor was consistently updated about the investigation over the past couple months.

“She was aware of things that were happening,” Nessel said. “At times, she and her family had been moved around as a result of activities that law enforcement was aware of.”

Authorities announced Thursday that they foiled a stunning plot to kidnap Whitmer in a scheme that involved months of planning and even

rehearsals to snatch her from her vacation home before the Nov. 3 elections. Whitmer’s first term as governor does not end until 2022.

Six men were charged in federal court with conspiring to kidnap the governor in reaction to what they viewed as her “uncontrolled power,” according to a federal complaint. Separately, seven others linked to a paramilitary group called the Wolverine Watchmen were charged in state court for allegedly seeking to storm the Michigan Capitol and seek a “civil war,” including four who allegedly helped to surveil Whitmer’s house.

The two groups trained together and planned “various acts of violence,” according to the state police.

Surveillance for the kidnapping plot took place in August and September, according to an FBI affidavit, and four of

the men had planned to meet Wednesday to “make a payment on explosives and exchange tactical gear.”

“We thought it was time to move in before anybody lost their lives,” Nessel said.

Whitmer, who was considered as Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden’s running mate, has been widely praised for her response to the coronavirus but also sharply criticized by Republican lawmakers and people in conservative areas of the state. The Capitol has been the site of many rallies, including ones with gun-toting protesters calling for her ouster.

“All of us in Michigan can disagree about politics, but those disagreements should never, ever amount to violence. Violence has been prevented today,” Detroit U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider said Thursday.

Hurricane Delta bears down on Louisiana

Associated Press

LAKE CHARLES, La. — Residents in south Louisiana braced to relive a nightmare Friday as rain bands from an approaching Hurricane Delta began soaking the same area that was badly battered by a deadly Hurricane Laura six weeks ago.

The city of Lake Charles was already a landscape of towering debris piles still uncollected after Laura. Blue-tarped roofs still stretched as far as the eye could see Friday. Streets were lined with sawed-up trees, moldy mattresses and box springs and duct work and other wreckage of destroyed or badly damaged buildings. Officials feared Delta could turn the small mountains of trash lining the streets into deadly projectiles.

Then there was the emotional toll.

“We just got lights back on like two weeks ago and then evacuating again? It’s extremely hard,” said Roslyn Kennedy. She was among a handful of evacuees at the Burton Coliseum in Lake Charles, waiting to be transported, again, to safer destinations.

“I am worried about the debris that hasn’t been picked up,” said Carla Ardoin of nearby Sulphur. “I think that’s what is going to do a lot

of the damage.”

Delta appeared destined to set records at landfall — the 10th named storm to hit the continental United States this year, surpassing the number that hit in 1916, according to Colorado State University researcher Phil Klotzbach. Delta would also be the first Greek-alphabet-named hurricane to hit the continental U.S. And as the fourth hurricane or tropical storm to hit Louisiana in a year, it would tie a 2002 record, Klotzbach said.

Forecasters said the 25th named storm of an unprecedented Atlantic hurricane season would likely crash ashore Friday evening somewhere on southwest Louisiana’s coast.

Delta is such a large hurricane that the storm surge risk remained high even if it became less intense just before striking land, the National Hurricane Center said.

As Delta churned north at 13 mph on Friday morning, the National Hurricane Center had a hurricane warning in place for the Gulf Coast extending from High Island, Texas, to Morgan City. Shortly after dawn, the first tropical storm-force winds were reaching the coast, even as the eye of the hurricane was about 130 miles south-southwest of Cameron, La. Its maximum sustained winds were clocked at 115 mph.

Businesses shut in effort to contain NYC hot spots

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Hundreds of businesses and schools in New York City neighborhoods where coronavirus cases have spiked were closed Thursday by order of the governor, but questions swirled about how effectively officials could enforce the shutdown in areas where it has been met with resentment.

The new rules were also met with legal resistance, as the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn and Agudath Israel of America, an Orthodox Jewish umbrella organization, filed lawsuits over a provision limiting attendance at indoor religious services to no more than 10 people.

Confusion and dismay reigned as the restrictions began to take effect.

In Brooklyn's Borough Park section, the scene of two nights of protests against the clamp-down by Orthodox Jews, some merchants subject to the shutdown order appeared to be operating as usual at midday.

Mayor Bill de Blasio said 1,200 city workers would be out on the streets doing enforcement, though some of those efforts involved trying to educate businesses about rules imposed with little warning in hastily drawn zones with confusing borders.

All nonessential businesses in areas designated "red zones" in parts of Queens and Brooklyn by Gov. Andrew Cuomo were supposed to shut. Public and private schools were supposed to close, as well, within both the red zones and surrounding "orange zones" designated by the Democratic governor.

The new restrictions involve parts of Brooklyn and Queens in New York City, sections of Orange and Rockland counties in the Hudson Valley and an area within Binghamton, near the Pennsylvania border.

Many of the neighborhoods where restrictions have been imposed are home to large Orthodox Jewish communities, and leaders of those communities have complained of being singled out for enforcement.

Agudath's lawsuit challenging the attendance limits said they would be especially dis-

ruptive on Jewish holidays this coming weekend.

"By depriving plaintiffs and their congregants of the critical religious worship and practices associated with these upcoming holidays, defendant has trampled on their constitutional right to the free exercise of religion," the lawsuit said.

Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas reported its biggest one-day increase in new coronavirus cases on Thursday and the number of people hospitalized because of the illness caused by the virus climbed to a new high.

The Department of Health said the state's confirmed and probable cases rose by 1,265 to 90,145. This was the state's biggest one-day increase since it reported 1,180 new probable and confirmed cases on Sept. 11. The number of people hospitalized due to COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, rose by nine to a new record high of 547. Twenty-one more people in the state died from COVID-19, bringing its total fatalities to 1,503.

Idaho

BOISE — Idaho's economic rebound following a shutdown because of the coronavirus pandemic is third-best in the nation based on the unemployment rate. But the tradeoff has come with the worst positive COVID-19 test rate in the country and a grim milestone: 500 dead.

And modeling by mathematicians at the University of Idaho says the approaching peak of infections and likely deaths is weeks away.

The Idaho Department of Labor said Thursday that the number of residents collecting unemployment dropped for the 22nd consecutive week, falling 8% from the previous week to 9,144. That's down from more than 70,000 continuing claims in late April when Republican Gov. Brad Little began reopening the state in stages following his monthlong stay-at-home order after COVID-19 entered the state.

Idaho's unemployment rate soared to more than 11% during the stay-at-home order, but with the reopening has since come down to 4.2%, third-lowest in the nation behind Utah and Nebraska.

Illinois

CHICAGO — A northern Illinois businessman was charged Thursday with price gouging customers seeking to purchase protective masks at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. attorney's office in Chicago announced Thursday.

Krikor Topouzian, of Winnetka, was charged Thursday in a criminal information with violating anti-price gouging laws. The misdemeanor charge carries a maximum of one year in prison.

Topouzian, 60, the owner of a Skokie-based medical supply company, is accused of accumulating in March and April about 80,000 respirator masks for roughly just over \$5 each. He later sold nearly 40,000 of the masks to customers for prices as high as \$19.95 per mask. Prosecutors say he continued selling the masks at inflated prices despite being repeatedly warned of its illegality.

Nevada

CARSON CITY — A state coronavirus task force voted Thursday to relax criteria for testing and positivity rates that counties must achieve to avoid being flagged as "elevated risk."

Officials acknowledged that progress in containing the coronavirus pandemic has reversed course in recent weeks, but they stressed the importance of balancing the need to gradually reopen business to avert economic disaster while preventing further spread of the virus.

"As we open things up, we do expect numbers to go up a little bit. We do expect there to be a little bit more spread than what we were saying when there were more restrictions. So it's not entirely surprising that we're seeing a small increase," state biostatistician Kyra Morgan said.

Since Nevada replaced its phased reopening plan with a strategy that allows local officials to submit reopening plans for approval by the task force, the state has used three criteria to flag counties for additional scrutiny. Counties with high positivity rates, many active cases or not enough testing must present mitigation plans for approval.

New Mexico

SANTA FE — High school students won't be able to compete in any sports this fall or winter after state officials clarified Thursday that they won't amend a state health order banning school sports this year.

"We didn't update the public health order to ever permit us or K-12 games or competitions, this fall. We were very clear about that. We didn't amend the order to do that, and that includes club sports," Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said.

Coaches of non-contact sports like volleyball, golf and cross-country were so upbeat about returning to competition that a season's worth of matches was scheduled and teams were holding practices earlier in the week. High school athletes are still allowed to practice under restrictions in groups of 10 or less, including a coach. Scrimmages are prohibited. Masks are required.

Washington

TACOMA — State investigators have fined 11 Washington businesses for allegedly failing to enforce portions of the state's face mask mandate, according to a release Wednesday from the Department of Labor & Industries.

Mail Express Business Center in Enumclaw got the largest fine, \$7,500. Investigators determined customers and employees there were not wearing masks and no signs were posted about the mandate, officials said.

According to L&I, the owner told investigators she did not enforce masking because, "she did not want to be an unpaid agent of the government," KING-TV reported.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Governor to be honored with bobblehead doll

MA BOSTON — Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker is getting the bobblehead treatment for his response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum in Milwaukee on Thursday unveiled plans for a Baker bobblehead doll and said \$5 from the \$25 cost of each one will be donated to the Protect The Heroes fund's 100 Million Mask Challenge that pays for protective equipment for health care workers nationwide.

Sales of bobbleheads featuring Dr. Anthony Fauci, Dr. Deborah Birx, several other governors and others have raised \$275,000 for the challenge.

Nearly 200 boats are damaged in marina fire

MO ST. CHARLES — A massive fire at an eastern Missouri marina destroyed or damaged nearly 200 boats and left at least one person injured, authorities there said.

The fire broke out Wednesday at the Woodland Marina along the Mississippi River in St. Charles County. Firefighters were called to the marina just before 3 p.m. and believe the blaze started in a storage area for boats.

Fire chief Jeremy Hollrah said 140 boats were destroyed in the fire, and dozens more were damaged. A marina mechanic suffered burns, was taken to a hospital with burns and released Wednesday night, officials said.

Smoke from the fire was visible from miles away. About 100 firefighters were on scene to help fight the fire, which was brought under control about

three hours after firefighters arrived.

Park proposes improved cellphone coverage

MT BOZEMAN — The National Park Service has asked for the public's feedback on a proposal that would improve cellphone coverage in developed areas of Yellowstone National Park, without having to install cell towers.

The project would install fiber-optic cables on about 200 miles of roads and remove five microwave radio telecommunication reflectors from the backcountry that were originally installed in 1980, the Bozeman Daily Chronicle reported.

Park officials have said the older system is no longer adequate as all computer networks and telecommunications, including emergency calls, rely on connectivity that is inconsistent.

Killing of grizzly bear is under investigation

ID ASHTON — Wildlife officials are investigating the killing of a federally protected grizzly bear in eastern Idaho near Yellowstone National Park that had been part of a research study.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game says the 20-year-old, adult male grizzly weighing 500 pounds was shot Sept. 29 in Fremont County.

Officials say a tracking collar put on the bear earlier this year as part of the study sent out a mortality signal. Biologists went to retrieve the collar on Oct. 1 and discovered the grizzly had died after being shot in the side. Biologists recovered a rifle bullet.

Biologists followed a blood

trail to a clearing called Coyote Meadows where the bear had been shot. The area is near the southwestern corner of Yellowstone National Park.

The National Park Service estimates there were about 725 grizzly bears in the park and surrounding areas in 2019.

Raid nets \$36 million worth of illegal pot

CA ANZA — An operation targeting illegal marijuana cultivation in Southern California led to eradication of more than 4,500 plants and seizure of 11,000 pounds of processed pot this week, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department said.

The combined street value was estimated at \$36 million.

The raid was conducted Monday by the department's marijuana enforcement team and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife on 140 acres of land in the Anza area, about 95 miles southeast of Los Angeles.

Elderly man calls 911 to report he killed his wife

WA BELLEVUE — An elderly woman was found dead inside her Bellevue home Thursday morning and her husband surrendered to police after calling to report killing her.

KOMO-TV reported that a man called 911 just after 4:30 a.m. and told dispatchers "I shot her," according to Bellevue Police.

Officers and medics rushed to the home to find the elderly man waiting to meet them on the front porch. He was taken into custody.

The body of the man's wife was found inside the home, police said.

Detectives are still looking into what led up to the murder but haven't given any further details yet on a potential motive, only calling it an investigation into a "domestic violence homicide."

Man uses CPR to revive boy pulled from pond

FL FORTLAUDERDALE — A man who was walking down a South Florida street jumped into action on Wednesday evening when he heard screams and saw a lifeless toddler lying on the grass.

David Bain began performing CPR, a technique he'd learned in high school, on the 2-year-old boy who had just been pulled from a neighborhood pond.

"I just gave him CPR, he was spitting up water, whatever he was eating and then he opened his eyes and then that is when the police came," Bain told Miami television station WPLG.

The boy was rushed to a hospital, where he was listed in stable condition, the station reported.

The boy had been outside and relatives and neighbors thought he'd gone back inside his house near Fort Lauderdale, the station reported.

Broward Sheriff's Office investigators were at the scene late into Wednesday night trying to figure out how the child ended up face-down in the pond.

Relatives couldn't find the boy and neighbors began searching for him. Neighbor Terryann Buchanan told WPLG that her father saw a slipper in the water. He pulled the child from the pond and began CPR. That's when Bain happened by and took over CPR on the boy.

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No. 7 Miami looks to make statement

Associated Press

Miami head coach Manny Diaz wants big games like the Hurricanes-Clemson matchup to be much more commonplace.

The seventh-ranked Hurricanes (3-0, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) can take a step in bringing back the dominance of “The U” when they play the No. 1 Tigers (3-0, 2-0) on Saturday night.

The game is the 17th top-10 matchup in ACC history — and Clemson’s been in four of the past five. Miami’s only appearance the previous six years was in a 38-3 loss to the Tigers in the 2017 ACC championship game.

Diaz believes Miami needs more and more big-game, prime-time matchups that all college football is talking about to return the program to national prominence. Clemson’s consistency the past few years (five straight ACC titles and five consecutive trips to the College Football Playoffs)

comes from playing and winning such games, a history Diaz knows the Tigers will draw on this week.

“This is not a big game to Clemson,” Diaz said. “This is what they do. We’ve got to get our program the same way.”

It also doesn’t hurt to have dynamic playmakers on offense.

Miami quarterback D’Eriq King leads the ACC’s highest-scoring offense so far. He’s got 736 yards passing and six TDs.

Hurricanes tailback Cam’Ron Harris is third in conference rushing with 311 yards and leads the ACC with five rushing touchdowns.

The Hurricanes will need both at the top of their games to keep up with Clemson’s Heisman Trophy candidate duo of quarterback Trevor Lawrence and running back Travis Etienne.

Lawrence has hit almost 74% of his passes for 848 yards and seven touchdowns. Etienne, the two-time defending ACC player of the year, has rushed for 243 yards and two touch-

downs. He’s also been critical as a pass catcher — he had five receptions for a career-best 114 yards — and the return game.

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said his team’s sustained success is treating each week as a big-time, prime-time showdown so his team will prepare as it has no matter who the opponent is.

Some other things to watch when No. 7 Miami plays No. 1 Clemson:

Streaking Lawrence: Clemson quarterback Trevor Lawrence has not thrown an interception in his last 314 passes dating back 11 games. Lawrence made it a priority in the offseason to better protect the ball after throwing a career-high eight interceptions last season. Lawrence is chasing ACC leader Russell Wilson, who went 379 passes between picks while at North Carolina State in 2008-09.

Turnover Chain: Miami has gotten to flash its latest “Turnover Chain” several times this year and hopes it can do some

more at Death Valley. The 2020 version of the chain features the school logo inside an outline of the state of Florida. Since first unveiling the chain in 2017, the Hurricanes are tied with Wisconsin with 76 takeaways in the previous three seasons. Miami has four interceptions and two fumble recoveries this season.

Recent history: Clemson has certain had its way — and had an impact on the program — with Miami the last two meetings. Clemson had a 58-0 win at Miami in 2015 and shortly after, the Hurricanes parted ways with then-coach Al Golden. Miami’s new coach Mark Richt led the team to its first ACC title game two years later where the Tigers won a 38-3 rout.

Quiet Valley?: Clemson has become known in recent years for its raucous atmosphere at Death Valley, especially in showdown games at night. But due to coronavirus restrictions, Clemson cannot have more than 19,000 people inside its 81,500-seat stadium.

Foles beats Brady again as Bears down Buccaneers

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Tom Brady held up four fingers as if he had one more play remaining, one more opportunity to pull out the win. If that’s what he was thinking, the three-time MVP would not say.

Brady fell to Nick Foles again, appeared to lose count of downs on his final play with seconds remaining, and the Chicago Bears beat the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 20-19 on Thursday night after Cairo Santos kicked a 38-yard field goal with 1:17 remaining.

DeAndre Houston-Carson broke up Brady’s fourth-down pass with 33 seconds left after Santos kicked the go-ahead field goal. Brady put up four fingers, as if he had one more down. Instead, Chicago took possession and came away with a narrow victory.

“I know we needed a chunk

and I was thinking about more yardage and it was bad execution,” Brady said. “I had a great opportunity there. Just didn’t execute when we needed to.”

Coach Bruce Arians insisted Brady did not lose track of downs. “He knew,” Arians said.

Brady never lost to Chicago in five meetings as a member of the Patriots. But facing Foles for the first time since New England lost to Philadelphia in Super Bowl 52, the six-time champion once again came up short.

Brady threw for 253 yards and one touchdown. But the Buccaneers (3-2) had their three-game winning streak snapped.

“It was a fistfight,” said Foles, acquired from Jacksonville in an offseason trade. “It reminded me of like, a good old fistfight from Philly. Now, I

get to do it in Chicago. I really enjoyed getting in the locker room and celebrating with my teammates. I’m probably a little more tired than I thought I’d be just because of everything, but I’ll sleep well tonight. I think everyone is really excited about the victory.”

Khalil Mack had two sacks, and the Bears (4-1) bounced back from a lackluster loss to Indianapolis.

Foles, the Super Bowl 52 MVP, completed 30 of 42 passes for 243 yards and a touchdown in his second start after replacing Mitchell Trubisky.

“All in all, the offense made plays when they had to and I think that’s one of the special traits that I think Nick has,” coach Matt Nagy said.

Allen Robinson had 90 yards receiving. Jimmy Graham caught a touchdown pass and David Montgomery ran for a

score.

Brady was 25-for-41. The three-time MVP was seen screaming on the sideline late in the third quarter after an ugly drive for Tampa Bay.

“He was just telling the guys we need to wake up,” running back Ronald Jones said. “Again, shooting ourselves in the foot. No way we should’ve lost that game.”

Mike Evans had a touchdown reception.

Ryan Succop kicked four field goals, including a 25-yarder to give Tampa Bay a 19-17 lead with 4:49 remaining. But nose tackle Vita Vea was taken from the field on a cart with less than two minutes remaining after a teammate rolled up on his right leg.

The Buccaneers also committed 11 penalties for 109 yards in losing for the first time since the opener at New Orleans.

Nadal closing in on 20th Grand Slam

Associated Press

PARIS — After so much talk, by Rafael Nadal and others, about so many reasons why this pandemic-postponed French Open could be more difficult for him — cooler autumn weather; slightly heavier tennis balls; lack of match preparation — the King of Clay is right back where he usually is: in the final.

And this time, in addition to closing in on an unfathomable 13th championship at Roland Garros, Nadal gets a chance to tie Roger Federer for the men's record of 20 Grand Slam titles.

Doing to his latest opponent what he's done to so many at the clay-court tournament he's dominated for 1½ decades, Nadal defeated 12th-seeded Diego Schwartzman 6-3, 6-3, 7-6 (0) Friday in a semifinal filled with grueling, grinding points.

On Sunday, No. 2 seed Nadal will go up against No. 1 Novak Djokovic or No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas, who were scheduled to meet in the second semifinal. The women's final is Saturday, with Sofia Kenin, a 21-year-old

from the U.S., taking on Iga Swiatek, a 19-year-old from Poland.

Nadal improved to 99-2 at the French Open, including a combined 25-0 in semifinals and finals, as he seeks a fourth consecutive title in Paris. That would add to the 34-year-old Spaniard's previous streaks of four in a row from 2005-08 and five from 2010-14, to go along with four trophies at the U.S. Open, two at Wimbledon and one at the Australian Open.

He has won all 15 sets he's played over the past two weeks, making a mockery of the supposed explanations for why this year, so different for so many reasons, might be different for Nadal in the City of Lights.

One line of thinking involved the shift in dates from May-June to September-October. Another had to do with Nadal's decision to skip the U.S. Open, leaving him with only three matches since tennis resumed in August from its pandemic-forced hiatus.

Yet another involved Schwartzman, a 28-year-old from Argentina: He upset Nadal

in straight sets on clay at the Italian Open last month. But that still left their head-to-head ledger at 9-1 in Nadal's favor, and he showed why Friday.

Only 1,000 spectators are being allowed on the grounds daily, owing to the rising COVID-19 cases in France, and the sparse crowd on hand was cheering for Schwartzman late in the third, likely not so much because they really were invested in a victory for him but because they wanted to watch more tennis.

A key game came at 5-all in the third, lasting more than 10 minutes and featuring a trio of break points for Schwartzman. Take any of those, and he'd serve for that set.

But Nadal erased them with aggressive play — two quick forehand winners and a volley winner off a delayed serve-and-volley net-rush.

He further asserted himself in the tiebreaker, leaving fans chanting, "Ra-fa! Ra-fa!" as they have so many times in the past.

Yankees' 'Chairman of the Board' Ford dies at 91

Associated Press

LAKE SUCCESS, N.Y. — Whitey Ford, the street-smart New Yorker who had the best winning percentage of any pitcher in the 20th century and helped the Yankees become baseball's perennial champions in the 1950s and '60s, has died. He was 91.

A family member told The Associated Press on Friday that Ford died at his Long Island home Thursday night. The cause was not known.

Nicknamed the "Chairman of the Board," Ford was a wily left-hander who pitched from 1950-67 in the major leagues, all with the Yankees. He was among the most dependable pitchers in baseball history.

He won 236 games and lost just 106, a winning percentage of .690. He would help symbolize the almost machinelike efficiency of the Yankees in the mid-20th century, when only twice between Ford's rookie year and 1964 did they fail to make the postseason.

Ford's death is the latest this year of a number of baseball

greats: Al Kaline, Tom Seaver, Lou Brock and Bob Gibson.

The World Series record book is crowded with Ford's accomplishments. His string of 33 consecutive scoreless innings from 1960-62 broke a record of 29²/₃ innings set by Babe Ruth. Ford still holds records for World Series games and starts (22), innings pitched (146), wins (10) and strikeouts (94).

Ford was in his mid-20s when he became the go-to guy in manager Casey Stengel's rotation, the pitcher Stengel said he would always turn to if he absolutely needed to win one game. Ford was Stengel's choice to pitch World Series openers eight times, another record.

Ford's best seasons came in 1961 and 1963, in the midst of a stretch of five straight AL pennants for the Yankees, when new manager Ralph Houk began using a 4-man rotation instead of 5. Ford led the league in victories with 25 in 1961, won the Cy Young Award and was the World Series MVP after winning two more games

against Cincinnati. In 1963, he went 24-7, again leading the league in wins. Eight of his victories that season came in June.

He also led the AL in earned run average in 1956 (2.47) and 1958 (2.01) and was a six-time All-Star selection.

Ford did have his World Series disappointments. He spoke bitterly of the 1960 championship, when he shut out Pittsburgh twice but was used by Stengel in Game 3 and Game 6 and so was unavailable for the finale, won 10-9 by the Pirates after a Bill Mazeroski home run in the bottom of the ninth. In 1963, Ford was outmatched twice by Sandy Koufax as the Los Angeles Dodgers swept the Yankees.

Unlike Koufax, Ford was not an overpowering pitcher. Instead he depended on guile and guts, rarely giving hitters the same look on consecutive pitches. He'd throw overhand sometimes, three-quarters other times, mixing curves and sliders in with his fastball and changeup. To catcher Elston

Howard, Ford was the "Chairman of the Board," a nickname that fit Ford's role at the top of the Yankees' pitching staff.

Ford would also acknowledge using some special methods to add movement to his pitches, including saliva, mud and dirt and cutting the ball with a ring.

"If there are some pitchers doing it and getting away with it, that's fine by me," Ford told sports writer Phil Pepe, in 1987. "If it were me and I needed to cheat to be able to throw the good stuff that would keep me in the major leagues at a salary of about \$800,000 a year, I'd do whatever I had to do."

After his retirement, Ford briefly worked as a broadcaster and opened a restaurant in Garden City, "Whitey Ford's Cafe," that closed within a year. In 2001, actor Anthony Michael Hall played Ford in the Billy Crystal-directed HBO movie "61*," about the 1961 season and the quest of Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris to break Babe Ruth's single-year home run record.

ALDS roundup

Yankees down Rays, force a 5th game

Associated Press

SANDIEGO—The New York Yankees didn't flinch under the pressure of an elimination game and got the AL Division Series against Tampa Bay into the hands of ace Gerrit Cole for the decisive Game 5.

Luke Voit and Gleyber Torres hit impressive home runs, Jordan Montgomery and three relievers were brilliant in combining on a three-hitter and the Yankees beat the Rays 5-1 Thursday night to even the best-of-five series at 2-2.

The Yankees bounced back from consecutive losses against their AL East rivals to set up a showdown between Cole and Tyler Glasnow on Friday night.

Asked the Yankees mentality for Game 5, Voit said, "We're going to win it."

And with Cole on the mound, "We're locked and loaded," Voit said.

Cole, backed by four home

runs, won 9-3 in the series opener Monday and will be pitching on short rest for the first time in his big league career. Yankees manager Aaron Boone said the decision was made when Cole walked past his office Thursday and made eye contact.

"I said, 'Hey,'" Boone remembered.

"Just give me the ball," the manager said his ace replied.

Cole said he took inspiration from watching CC Sabathia, Justin Verlander, Zack Greinke and Dallas Keuchel carry teams on short rest.

"When the lights turn on, it doesn't matter if it's three, four, five, six, seven days," Cole said. "It's a special opportunity."

Cole will be pitching about 100 miles south of where he grew up a Yankees fan in Newport Beach.

"I think everybody's feeling like it's going to be a special game," said Cole, who pitched at

UCLA before beginning his big league career with Pittsburgh. "It's not going to take one guy to win it, it's going to have to be a complete team game, much like most of our wins are. Anytime you're in the lineup in a do-or-die game, your manager has faith in you. As a player it's always a good feeling and you always want to be out there in the big moment.

"We're here and it's part of the path to get to where we ultimately want to get to," added Cole, who left the Houston Astros in the offseason and joined the Yankees on a \$324 million, nine-year contract.

Astros 11, Athletics 6: At Los Angeles, three years after a sign-stealing scheme propelled Houston to its first championship, its star-studded lineup did little during the regular season to quiet criticism it could only hit when cheating.

Back in the postseason,

they're banging away as well as ever — no trash cans necessary.

Carlos Correa hit a go-ahead, three-run homer after Michael Brantley's two-run shot in the fourth inning, helping the Astros beat the Oakland Athletics to end their home-run heavy AL Division Series in four games.

"We didn't show this too much during the season, but this lineup can do this every night," left fielder Kyle Tucker said.

Correa drove in five as the Astros — October villains to many a year after their espionage was exposed — advanced to the AL Championship Series for the fourth consecutive season. They improved to 5-1 in the playoffs after struggling to a 29-31 record in the pandemic-shortened season.

"This is a special team that has been here before," Brantley said.

NLDS roundup

Dodgers, Braves close out series, move on to NLCS

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Justin Turner and the Los Angeles Dodgers have completed the first step of what they hope is a long stay in the Lone Star State.

Turner put the Dodgers ahead with a record-breaking hit in a big inning fueled by a nice stop-gone-bad by Fernando Tatis Jr., and they closed out a three-game NL Division Series sweep of the San Diego Padres with a 12-3 win Thursday night.

"Records are cool, championships are better," said Turner, who was part of the 2017 and 2018 National League championship teams that fell short in the World Series. "Until you're the last team standing, that's the ultimate goal."

Will Smith set a Dodgers postseason record with five hits, and Joc Pederson had a two-run single to cap that decisive five-run third as Los Angeles advanced to its fourth NL Championship Series in five years. The Dodgers lost to the Washington Nationals in a five-game division series last season.

After earning a spot in their 14th NLCS, to match the St. Louis Cardinals for the most, the Dodgers gathered for a team picture on the pitcher's mound at the same ballpark where the NLCS and World Series will be played.

"We obviously feel really confident about our club. We've still got a lot to work to do, though," AJ Pollock said. "We did what we wanted to do. We

did what we're supposed to do. We're going to celebrate that, but we expected it."

Braves 7, Marlins 0: At Houston, not since the days of John Smoltz, Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine had Atlanta pitched like this in the playoffs.

And even those future Hall of Famers didn't throw the way these Braves have this postseason.

"What those guys did on the mound is almost mind-blowing," manager Brian Snitker said.

Rookie Kyle Wright dazzled for six innings in his postseason debut, and the Braves rode their superb pitching to beat the Miami Marlins for a three-game sweep and their first trip to the NL Championship Series since 2001.

Wright (1-0) was sharp despite not pitching since Sept. 25, allowing three hits and walking two with a career-high seven strikeouts. A.J. Minter, Jacob Webb and Shane Greene finished the five-hitter.

Atlanta became the second team in history to throw four shutouts in the first five playoff games, joining the 1905 New York Giants behind Hall of Famers Christy Mathewson and Joe McGinnity.

After two rounds the Braves have already pitched the most postseason shutouts in franchise history, besting the 1996 and 1991 teams that threw three each as both lost in the World Series.

They are one shutout shy of tying the MLB record for most in a postseason set by the 2016 Indians over 15 games.