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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Final debate more substantive than first

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden fought over how to tame the raging coronavirus during the campaign's closing debate, largely shelving the rancor that overshadowed their previous faceoff in favor of a more substantive exchange that highlighted their vastly different approaches to the major domestic and foreign challenges facing the nation.

The Republican president declared the virus, which killed more than 1,000 Americans on Thursday alone, will "go away." Biden countered that the nation was heading toward "a dark winter."

With less than two weeks until the election, Trump portrayed himself as the same outsider he first pitched to voters four years ago, repeatedly saying he wasn't a politician. Biden, meanwhile, argued that Trump was an incompetent leader of a country facing multiple crises and tried to connect what he saw as the president's failures to the everyday lives of Americans, especially when it comes to the pandemic.

The president, who promised a vaccine within weeks, said the worst problems are in states with Democratic governors,

a contention at odds with rising cases in states that voted for Trump in 2016. Biden, meanwhile, vowed that his administration would defer to scientists on battling the pandemic and said that Trump's divisive approach on suffering states hindered the nation's response.

"I don't look at this in terms of the way he does — blue states and red states," Biden said. "They're all the United States. And look at all the states that are having such a spike in the coronavirus — they're the red states."

After a first debate defined by angry interruptions, the Thursday event featured a mostly milder tone. And in a campaign defined by ugly personal attacks, the night featured a surprising amount of substantive policy debate as the two broke sharply on the environment, foreign policy, immigration and racial justice.

Questions swirled before the debate, moderated by NBC's Kristen Welker, as to how Trump, whose hectoring performance at the first debate was viewed by aides as a mistake that turned off viewers, would perform amid a stretch of the campaign in which he has taken angry aim at the news media and unleashed deeply personal attacks on Biden and his adult son.

When he feels cornered, Trump has often lashed out, going as negative as possible. In one stunning moment during the 2016 campaign, in an effort to deflect from the release of the "Access Hollywood" tape in which he is heard boasting about groping women, Trump held a press conference just before a debate with Hillary Clinton during which he appeared with women who had accused Bill Clinton of sexual assault.

In a similar move, Trump's campaign held another surprise pre-debate news conference, this time featuring Tony Bobulinski, a man who said he was Hunter Biden's former business partner and made unproven allegations that the vice president's son consulted with his father on China-related business dealings.

Trump made similar, if vague, accusations from the debate stage, but exchanges about Hunter Biden did not dominate the night as aides on both campaigns thought might happen. Biden declared the discussion about family entanglements "malarkey": Turning to the camera and the millions of people watching at home, Biden said, "It's not about his family and my family. It's about your family, and your family is hurting badly."

US: Hackers in Russia hit state, local networks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials said that Russian hackers have targeted the networks of dozens of state and local governments in the United States in recent days, stealing data from at least two servers. The warning, less than two weeks before the election, amplified fears of the potential for tampering with the vote and undermining confidence in the results.

The advisory from the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security's cybersecurity agency describes an onslaught of recent activity by a Russian state-sponsored hacking group against a broad range of networks, some of which were successfully compromised. The alert released Thursday functions as a reminder of Russia's potent capabilities and ongoing interference in the election even as U.S. of-

ficials publicly called out Iran on Wednesday night.

The advisory does not identify by name or location those who were targeted, but officials say they have no information that any election or government operations have been affected or that the integrity of elections data has been compromised.

"However, the actor may be seeking access to obtain future disruption options, to influence U.S. policies and actions, or to delegitimize (state and local) government entities," the advisory said.

U.S. officials have repeatedly said it would be extremely difficult for hackers to alter vote tallies in a meaningful way, but they have warned about other methods of interference that could disrupt the election, including cyberattacks on networks meant to impede the voting process. The interference could continue during or after

the tallying of ballots if Russians produce spoofed websites or fake content meant to confuse voters about election results and lead them to doubt the legitimacy of the outcome.

A broad concern, particularly at the local government level, has been that hackers could infiltrate a county network and then work their way over to election-related systems unless certain defenses, such as firewalls, are in place. This is especially true for smaller counties that don't have as much money and IT support as their bigger counterparts to fund security upgrades.

Officials have nonetheless sought to stress the integrity of the vote, with FBI Director Christopher Wray saying Wednesday, "You should be confident that your vote counts. Early, unverified claims to the contrary should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism."

Judge OK's assault case against general

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A federal judge on Thursday refused to dismiss a lawsuit alleging the vice chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff sexually assaulted a former top aide during a Southern California trip.

Air Force Gen. John Hyten has denied the allegations brought by former Army Col. Kathryn Spletstoser that he attacked her during a December 2017 trip to attend the Reagan National Defense Forum at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, northwest of Los Angeles.

At the time, Hyten commanded the United States Strategic Command, known as STRATCOM.

The Associated Press generally does not identify victims of alleged sexual assault. But Spletstoser has allowed her name to be used.

Judge Michael W. Fitzgerald in Los Angeles rejected defense motions to dismiss the case for lack of jurisdiction or to move the case to Nebraska, where STRATCOM is based.

However, Hyten, who was confirmed last September as the nation's second-highest-ranking military officer, flatly

denied Spletstoser's claims during his confirmation hearing.

Spletstoser served in the Army for 28 years and carried out four combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Her assault and sexual battery lawsuit alleged that while staying at a hotel during the Simi Valley trip, Hyten grabbed her, kissed her, fondled her buttocks and rubbed himself against her.

The lawsuit was amended from an original complaint that alleged Hyten sexually assaulted her at least nine times in 2017, including during trips to California, London, South

Korea and elsewhere and that he retaliated against for refusing his advances by harming her career and eventually forcing her retirement.

Spletstoser reported the allegations after Hyten's nomination. She told the AP last year that she decided she couldn't live with the idea that Hyten might assault someone else if he was confirmed for the job.

The Air Force investigated the woman's allegations and found there was insufficient evidence to charge the general or recommend any administrative punishment.

VA has more than 70,000 cases since March

BY STEVE BEYNON

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs has topped 70,000 coronavirus cases and 3,780 deaths since the start of the pandemic in March, according to data released this week from the agency.

As of Thursday, the VA is treating 4,749 active cases of the virus, 372 of which are its own employees, an increase from the 2,700 cases that the agency was treating in early September.

The VA numbers come amid a spike

in cases across the country. More than 8,378,700 people in the United States have been infected with the coronavirus and at least 222,100 have died, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

The VA, which is the second largest federal agency, oversees the health care of more than 9 million veterans and 5.3% of VA patients who have been sickened by the virus have died, a higher rate than the 2.7% fatality rate of Americans overall, according to Johns Hopkins.

The cause of a higher fatality rate among

veterans could be a mix of factors, including that the bulk of VA patients skew older with an average age of 58, according to the department. However, the majority of deaths were people 85 years old or older.

The VA also has said about 78% of veterans are overweight or obese, a difference compared to about 71% of the general U.S. population, according to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Obesity and being overweight are key risk factors of severe illness from the coronavirus, according to the CDC.

US Navy in Japan reports 2 new COVID-19 cases

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The U.S. Navy in Japan reported a pair of new coronavirus cases Friday.

Two recent arrivals to Yokosuka Naval Base, south of Tokyo, from outside Japan tested positive while in isolation, according to a post on the installation's Facebook page. They tested positive sometime since Monday, according to the post.

The base has five active cases, the post said.

Also Friday, Yokosuka expanded the permitted off-duty travel area to include Nara,

Wakayama, Aichi, Gunma, Mie and Yamagata prefectures, and now permits visits to public beaches, according to the Facebook post.

At Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, the principal at the base high school in a letter to students and families Friday said the school had been thoroughly cleaned and will be safe for classes on Monday. Someone at the school tested positive for the coronavirus, Principal Marian Leverette wrote Thursday in a similar letter.

Neither the school nor the

base specified whether the patient was a student or staff member.

First Lt. Stuart Thrift, a spokesman for the 374th Airlift Wing at Yokota, said the wing would not say how many people have been quarantined as a result of coronavirus safety requirements.

In the wake of an uptick in new coronavirus cases on two islands popular with tourists near Okinawa, two more U.S. commands on Friday restricted travel there.

Marine Corps Air Station

Iwakuni declared Okinawa and nearby islands, including Miyako and Ishigaki, off-limits, along with several other metro areas in Japan.

The III Marine Expeditionary Force also put the two islands off-limits.

"Okinawa is still experiencing the highest per capita rate of new COVID-19 infections in Japan," said a III MEF post on Facebook.

The U.S. Navy garrison on Okinawa declared the islands off-limits Thursday following a spike in new cases there.

1 charge against ex-cop in Floyd death dismissed

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A Minnesota judge has dismissed a third-degree murder charge filed against the former Minneapolis police officer who pressed his knee against George Floyd's neck, saying there was not enough probable cause for that count to proceed to trial. The more serious second-degree murder charge against Derek Chauvin remains.

Hennepin County District Judge Peter Cahill's ruling, dated Wednesday and made public Thursday, found probable cause for Chauvin to be tried on one count of unintentional second-degree murder and one count of second-degree manslaughter. Cahill also found probable cause to move for-

ward with the aiding and abetting counts against three other former officers, Thomas Lane, J. Kueng and Tou Thao.

"In this court's view, with one exception, the State has met its burden of showing probable cause that warrants proceeding to trial against each of these Defendants on each of the criminal charges the State has filed against them," Cahill wrote. He said a jury will decide whether they are guilty.

Floyd, a Black man in handcuffs, died May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck as he said he couldn't breathe. Floyd's death sparked protests in Minneapolis and beyond, and led to a nationwide reckoning on race. All four officers were fired. They are scheduled to stand trial in March.

After Cahill's ruling, Gov. Tim Walz activated the Minnesota National Guard in anticipation of protests. Protesters demonstrated in the streets after Chauvin was released on bail earlier this month, resulting in dozens of arrests. A truck driver who drove into a large crowd of protesters on a bridge in Minneapolis following the killing of Floyd was charged Thursday with two criminal counts.

On the second-degree murder charge, prosecutors presented probable cause to show Chauvin's actions were a "substantial causal factor" in Floyd's death, and that he was committing or attempting to commit another felony at the time, in this case, assault, Cahill wrote.

Tesla 'full self-driving' vehicles are not autonomous

Associated Press

DETROIT — Earlier this week, Tesla sent out its "full self-driving" software to a small group of owners who will test it on public roads. But buried on its website is a disclaimer that the \$8,000 system doesn't make the vehicles autonomous and drivers still have to supervise it.

The conflicting messages have experts in the field accusing Tesla of deceptive, irresponsible marketing that could make the roads more dangerous as the system is rolled out to as many as 1 million electric vehicle drivers by the end of the year.

"This is actively misleading people about the capabilities of the system, based on the information I've seen about it," said Steven Shladover, a research engineer at the University of California, Berkeley, who has studied autonomous driving for 40 years.

"It is a very limited functionality that still requires constant driver supervision."

On a conference call Wednesday, Musk told industry analysts that the company is starting full self-driving slowly and cautiously "because the world is a complex and messy place." It plans to add drivers this weekend and hopes to have a wider release by the end of the year. He referred to having a million vehicles "providing feedback" on situations that can't be anticipated.

The company hasn't identified the drivers or said where they are located. Messages were left Thursday seeking comment from Tesla.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which regulates automakers, says it will monitor the Teslas closely "and will not hesitate to take action to protect the public against unreasonable risks

to safety."

The agency says in a statement that it has been briefed on Tesla's system, which it considers to be an expansion of driver assistance software, which requires human supervision.

"No vehicle available for purchase today is capable of driving itself," the statement said.

On its website, Tesla touts in large font its full self-driving capability. In smaller font, it warns: "The currently enabled features require active driver supervision and do not make the vehicle autonomous. The activation and use of these features are dependent on achieving reliability far in excess of human drivers as demonstrated by billions of miles of experience, as well as regulatory approval, which may take longer in some jurisdictions."

US urged to help find parents deported without kids

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — A federal judge on Thursday urged the Trump administration to do more to help court-appointed researchers find hundreds of parents who were separated from their children after they crossed the U.S.-Mexico border beginning in 2017.

A court filing revealed this week that researchers have been unable to track down the parents of 545 children — a number much larger than previously known and that drew outcry. Most of the parents were deported to their Central American homelands, and their children were placed with sponsors in the U.S., often relatives.

U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw refrained from issuing an order during a hearing in San Diego and instead asked Justice Department attorneys to explore ways the administration can make it easier to find the parents.

Attempts to find families separated from their children have been underway since Sabraw ordered the government in 2018 to end the much-criticized practice under its "zero tolerance" policy for people who cross the border illegally.

Sabraw initially ordered the government to reunite more than 2,700 children with their families, believing that to be the total number who were separated. But it was

later discovered an additional 1,556 children were taken from their parents going back to summer 2017, including the 545 kids who are still separated.

Attorney Lee Gelernt of the American Civil Liberties Union, which sued over the practice, said the government could provide funding for the search, which now is being conducted by a handful of human rights defenders in Central America.

When the issue was originally brought to their attention, U.S. officials were not interested in looking for the parents, he said, but that changed when outcry spread about the number of parents deported without their children.

FDA approves first COVID-19 treatment

Associated Press

U.S. regulators on Thursday approved the first drug to treat COVID-19: remdesivir, an antiviral medicine given to hospitalized patients through an IV.

The drug, which California-based Gilead Sciences Inc. is calling Veklury, cut the time to recovery by five days — from 15 days to 10 on average — in a large study led by the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

It had been authorized for use on an emergency basis since spring, and now becomes the first drug to win full Food and Drug Administration approval for treating COVID-19. President Donald Trump received it when he was sickened earlier this month.

Veklury is approved for people at least 12 years old and weighing at least 88 pounds who are hospitalized for a coronavirus infection. For patients younger than 12, the FDA will still allow the drug's use in certain cases under its previous emergency authorization.

The drug works by inhibiting a substance the virus uses to make copies of itself. Certain kidney and liver tests are required before starting patients on it to ensure it's safe for them and to monitor for any possible side effects. And the label warns against using it with the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine, because that can curb its effectiveness.

"We now have enough knowledge and a growing set of tools to help fight COVID-19," Gilead's chief medical officer, Dr. Merdad Parsey, said in a statement.

Illinois

SPRINGFIELD — Gov. J.B. Pritzker said Thursday that Illinois State Police will start patrolling bars and restaurants in regions of the state where coronavirus numbers are surging, and establishments that disregard his new restrictions could face sanctions including the loss of their liquor or gambling licenses.

On another record-setting day for new COVID-19 infec-

tions, Pritzker announced the police patrols in four areas of the state. The officers will be authorized to disperse crowds and issue citations for violators.

Pritzker previously downplayed enforcement while begging for compliance, but he said times have changed.

"It is very serious right now, folks, and if we need to close down restaurants or bars or take away their liquor licenses, take away their gaming licenses, we will do that because we are now headed into a peak that is beyond, potentially, where we were in March and April," Pritzker said during a visit to the St. Clair County Health Department in Belleville.

Kentucky

FRANKFORT — Kentucky's Republican state treasurer urged lawmakers on Thursday to put restrictions on the Democratic governor's ability to take executive action in an emergency.

Treasurer Allison Ball's recommendation came at a time when the number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths from the coronavirus outbreak continue to surge in the Bluegrass State.

Ball offered a report criticizing Gov. Andy Beshear's use of taxpayer funds to enforce his springtime restrictions on public gatherings such as religious services.

The leader of the GOP-controlled Senate said later that legislators are likely to review those broad gubernatorial powers when they convene next year.

Beshear spokeswoman Crystal Staley accused the state treasurer of "playing politics" in the midst of the public health crisis.

Montana

HELENA — Montana Gov. Steve Bullock said Thursday that the state health department is pursuing legal action against several businesses in northwestern Montana after they failed to follow restrictions meant to prevent the spread of

the coronavirus.

Bullock said the state is pursuing temporary restraining orders against five businesses in Flathead County, after the local health department decided not to take action to limit the spread of the virus, despite a sharp rise in cases this month.

He declined to identify the businesses until the cases are filed.

New Mexico

ALBUQUERQUE — One of the oldest Roman Catholic dioceses in the United States will again be forgoing Sunday Mass indefinitely as New Mexico marks its latest surge of COVID-19 cases.

Archbishop John C. Wester is directing churches within the northern New Mexico diocese to cease regular Mass schedules after Sunday. He's encouraging Masses to be streamed online or recorded so that they can be accessed by people at home. He's also calling for funeral services and weddings to be delayed.

"Combined with the perennial influenza season which is fast approaching and persons being in closer quarters during the winter, this portends a 'perfect storm' to form an extremely hazardous situation," Wester said in a message to parishioners.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania plans to offer \$20 million in relief to the state's beleaguered hospitality industry, the governor announced Thursday, an amount trade groups called woefully inadequate for helping bars and restaurants survive the pandemic.

The state intends to waive liquor license fees in 2021 for more than 16,000 restaurants and bars, clubs, caterers and hotels, said Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf, who recently vetoed Republican legislation that would have loosened pandemic restrictions on the food and beverage sector.

"COVID continues to hurt

this industry in a particularly awful way. They need our help now," Wolf said.

Texas

AUSTIN — Texas is sending more medical reinforcements to the El Paso area in response to the region's surge of coronavirus cases and the illness the virus causes, Gov. Greg Abbott announced Thursday.

The Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Division of Emergency Management will send more medical personnel and equipment this week to address the surge of COVID-19 cases.

The health department will send more than 460 medical personnel to the region. The agencies will also send a Texas Emergency Medical Task Force ambulance bus, medical incident support team, five ambulances and mobile medical unit to assist first responders. Additionally, the health department plans to send 48 patient monitors, 25 medical beds and 30 oxygen concentrators to support area hospitals.

Wisconsin

MADISON — A new study from the University of Wisconsin-Madison suggests that the state's high school sports have not caused an increase in COVID-19 infections among athletes.

The UW School of Medicine and Public Health released the study Thursday. Researchers led by Dr. Andrew Watson surveyed 207 schools that restarted fall sports in September, representing more than 30,000 athletes, more than 16,000 practices and more than 4,000 games.

The survey found 271 athletes contracted the virus overall compared with 2,318 Wisconsin children aged 14-17 over the month of September. No sports were found to have a higher incidence rate of COVID-19 overall than 14-17 year-olds. None of the cases among the athletes resulted in hospitalization or death.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Obit: In lieu of flowers 'do not vote for Trump'

MN ST. PAUL — An obituary for a Minneapolis-area woman who died at age 93 included one specific request for her mourners: Do not vote for Donald Trump.

Georgia May Adkins, of Inver Grove Heights, died of a stroke on Sept. 28 at United Hospital in St. Paul.

A pair of obituaries published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press included details of how she wanted to be cremated and then honored with an Oct. 16 church service under COVID-19 protocols. And she preferred that her friends and family not patronize a florist.

"In lieu of flowers, Georgia preferred that you do not vote for Trump," her Oct. 11 obituary read.

The request made the rounds on social media, attracting admiration from some and condemnation from others, the Pioneer Press reported.

Infants in stolen car OK after car is abandoned

MO FLORISSANT — Two infants are back with their family after a carjacker stole their father's SUV with the children in the back seat.

The incident happened early Wednesday in the St. Louis County town of Florissant. Police say the father went into a 7-Eleven and left the SUV running. When he came out, the vehicle with both infants inside had been stolen.

Police issued an Amber Alert for the children, a 10-month-old girl and a 16-day-old boy.

Authorities believe the thief was working with another motorist because after the SUV sped off, it was followed by another vehicle.

Hours later, police found the

SUV about five miles from the 7-Eleven.

Police spokesman Steve Michael said the children were safe and unharmed and were reunited with their parents.

Nurse pleads guilty to stealing vets' morphine

MA BOSTON — A former nurse at a veterans' hospital in Massachusetts has pleaded guilty to stealing liquid morphine intended for her dying patients and using it herself, federal prosecutors say.

Kathleen Noftle, 55, of Tewksbury, pleaded guilty on Wednesday to tampering with a consumer product and obtaining a controlled substance by misrepresentation, fraud, deception and subterfuge, according to the U.S. attorney's office in Boston.

Noftle worked in the hospice unit at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Bedford.

Noftle in January 2017 mixed tap water from the sink with a portion of the liquid morphine doses, and then administered the diluted medication to her patients orally, prosecutors said. Noftle then took some of the remaining diluted solution herself, authorities said.

In one case, prosecutors said, a veteran who received a diluted dose of morphine experienced increased difficulty breathing and increased suffering in his final days.

Meat processing plant is destroyed by fire

GA WRIGHTSVILLE — A fire has destroyed a middle Georgia meat processing plant, and its workers may be without jobs.

WMAZ-TV reported at least 60 firefighters responded to the blaze on Wednesday at McAfee Packing Co., which makes sau-

sage and other meat products in Wrightsville.

Firefighters were unable to get to the fire as it spread along the roofline, said Johnson County Emergency Management Agency Director Shawn Wombles.

Ashlyn McAfee Williamson, a member of the family that owns the company, said the owners will start determining the future of the business. She said she feared the 30 to 40 employees of McAfee, in business since 1953, will be unemployed for now. Williamson thanked customers and others for "the outpouring of love and support" they received.

One firefighter was taken to Fairview Park Hospital in Dublin, Wombles said, and five or six other firefighters were treated on the scene for heat exhaustion.

School board votes to retire name, mascot

VT RUTLAND — The Rutland city school board has voted to retire the high school's Rutland Raider nickname and arrowhead mascot and have the school administration and student body come up with a mascot "that would be more inclusive and welcoming."

The vote was 6-4 on Tuesday night during a special online meeting of the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners viewed by more than 40 people, the Rutland Herald reported.

Commissioner Ann Dages expressed sympathy for those opposed to the change, saying she saw how passionate people remain about their high school years, but voted in favor of the motion, noting the damaging effect such images have had on the Indigenous community, according to the newspaper. White people do not get to decide what is and isn't harmful to those groups, she said.

Prosecutors: Man stole 22 firearms from store

KS OVERLAND PARK — A homeless man is accused of making holes in the drywall between two Overland Park businesses in order to steal 22 firearms from a pawn shop.

Darrin Taylor, 54, was indicted Wednesday on one count of theft from a federally licensed firearms dealer, federal prosecutors said in a news release.

Taylor was homeless and living in Overland Park when the weapons were stolen in September from Penguin Pawn and Gun, prosecutors said.

Employees of the pawnshop told investigators the suspect entered a business next door through a shattered window and then made several holes in the drywall between the businesses to get into the pawnshop, The Kansas City (Mo.) Star reported.

No one hurt as jet slides off airport runway

IL WHEELING — No one was hurt when a Lear jet carrying nine people slid off a runway and crashed into a fence at a Chicago-area airport, authorities said.

The jet slid off a runway at Chicago Executive Airport in northwest suburban Wheeling late Wednesday.

The jet skidded on the runway, hit a chain-link fence and knocked down a pole, causing some aviation fuel to leak, the Prospect Heights Fire Protection District said.

"When the plane went through the fence, the wing actually struck one of the poles, cracking it, and that's where the aviation fuel starting leaking out," Scott Olsen of the fire protection district said.

From wire reports

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College teams finding relief after virus

Associated Press

A few days before the long-awaited start of the Big Ten football season, Ohio State coach Ryan Day was not about to celebrate a win over COVID-19.

“To look at it like it’s been a success right now would be premature because we have two more months,” Day said. “This is not a week-to-week thing. It’s all the way until January. We might be good for two weeks, three weeks, four weeks, five weeks. We stub our toe and have an outbreak and lose games. We can’t afford to do that.”

This goes for all college football teams as they try to play through the pandemic. Coronavirus outbreaks at Baylor, Memphis, Arkansas State, Notre Dame, Florida and elsewhere have forced programs to shut down for as much as two weeks. As of Thursday, 34 games involving Bowl Subdivision teams have been postponed or canceled.

On the other side of an out-

break, though, things can be less stressful for teams and their coaches. Before the Southeastern Conference opened its season last month, LSU coach Ed Orgeron awkwardly gave voice to the unexpected upside of having had a large number of players infected.

“Not all of our players, but most of our players have caught it,” Orgeron said. “So I think that hopefully they don’t catch it again and hopefully they are not out for games.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that infected individuals not be tested for COVID-19 for 90 days after recovery unless they show symptoms. Researchers have found reinfection is unlikely for about three months and there have been few documented cases of re-infection for COVID-19 worldwide.

Those who have been infected are also exempt for 90 days from being contact traced into a 14-day quarantine for being exposed to an infected

individual.

All the major college conferences are following those recommendations for previously infected individuals in their COVID-19 protocols.

That’s a big deal.

Florida, which had to postpone its last two games, has more than two dozen players and coaches who have tested positive for the virus and had to isolate for at least 10 days. Florida has not said how many players were forced to quarantine as close contacts, but coach Dan Mullen did acknowledge he would have had fewer than 50 players available last week.

When Florida gets past this, all those who tested positive will be in the clear for the rest of the season.

The Gators are hardly celebrating. Mullen, who also tested positive, said the team won’t practice again until Monday and even then won’t have all its players available to prepare for Missouri on Oct. 31. Florida’s other postponed game, against LSU, has been moved to Dec.

12.

The timing of Notre Dame’s outbreak was a little better. The Fighting Irish postponed their game at Wake Forest on Sept. 24 and had an open date the following week. Notre Dame had 25 players test positive.

That’s 25 fewer players to worry about the rest of the season, though coach Brian Kelly was concerned about not having much flexibility left on the schedule if Notre Dame has another outbreak.

“There’s no wiggle room for the kind of setback that we’ve had,” Kelly said.

Arkansas State had two games postponed in September because of COVID-19 issues. Athletic director Terry Mohajir said at no point was he thinking it was good to have gotten an outbreak out of the way.

Dr. Greg Stewart, head physician for Tulane athletics, said athletes who have tested positive could be used strategically to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Mountain West ready to start season after delay

Associated Press

College football Saturdays this season have mostly been over by around midnight Eastern. Maybe 12:30 a.m.

West of Texas, the only FBS program that has been up and running is BYU in Provo, Utah.

That comes to an end this weekend with the kickoff of the Mountain West season. The conference postponed fall football Aug. 10, the day before the Big Ten and Pac-12 made similar decisions.

The Mountain West reversed course and decided not long after those Power Five conferences to play an abbreviated season. The Big Ten starting this weekend has drawn the headlines, but the Mountain West will extend the football-watching day into Sunday for

fans East of the Mississippi.

The marquee matchups on opening weekend include Mountain West favorite and defending champion Boise State hosting Utah State. Wyoming visits Nevada in a matchup of teams picked to finish second in their respective divisions. Both of those games kickoff at 7 p.m. ET.

The late show includes UNLV at West Division favorites San Diego State, and Air Force at San Jose State, both kicking off at 10:30 p.m. ET.

Best game

No. 17 Iowa State at No. 6 Oklahoma State: Huge game in the Big 12. The Cowboys (3-0) are the only team in the conference with an overall unbeaten record, but they haven’t played in a while because of a COVID-

19 postponement by Baylor last week.

The Cyclones (3-1) have gotten off to the most impressive start in the Big 12, beating TCU, Oklahoma and Texas Tech — after losing a nonconference game to Louisiana-Lafayette.

The game matches two of the best running backs in the conference in Iowa State’s Breece Hall, who leads the Big 12 in rushing, and Oklahoma State All-American Chuba Hubbard.

Heisman watch

Justin Fields, QB, Ohio State: The fifth-ranked Buckeyes open their season at home against Nebraska. Fields was one of the preseason Heisman front-runners before the season went sideways.

Fields will try to make up for lost time as Clemson’s Trevor

Lawrence, BYU’s Zach Wilson and Alabama’s Mac Jones have had a month’s head start in the Heisman race.

This has a chance to be a grand opening for Fields and the Buckeyes. They are 26-point favorites against the Cornhuskers. Ohio State has won five straight in the series and four of them have been huge blowouts.

Numbers to know

12.3 — Points allowed per game by No. 9 Cincinnati, tops in the American Athletic Conference. The Bearcats play at No. 16 SMU, which is averaging 42.6 points per game, second in the conference.

13 — No. 2 Alabama’s winning streak against Tennessee. The Tide have won the last four by an average of 34 points.

Army returns to relevance after down 2019

Associated Press

Say this about Army coach Jeff Monken — he's a master of improvisation.

Faced with the loss of his top three quarterbacks to injuries as he prepared the Black Knights to face UTSA on the road last Saturday, he decided to rotate two quarterbacks who had just one snap under center combined.

Final score: Army 28-16.

Monken said he had no doubt beforehand that his team would win — even though the road hasn't been kind, even though the Roadrunners had the nation's leading rusher in Sincere McCormick and had given No. 12 BYU a scare the previous week on the road while the Black Knights had barely held off The Citadel at home.

"Everybody on our offensive staff and I were completely confident that we were going to win the game because the game plan essentially took it out of the quarterback's hands," Monken said. "It just put all the responsibility on the other 10 guys to knock people around and knock 'em off the ball and create seams, and that's what they did."

"It made the job of those two young guys a lot easier. They didn't have to go ad-lib and make things happen. They just were able to do their job and settle in," Monken said. "What was so impressive was that neither one was rattled at all. I thought they performed about as well as we could've ex-

pected in their first action, that's for sure."

Army freshman starter Cade Ballard — he had that one snap in the first game of the season — only rushed three times for 5 yards, but after UTSA pulled within 21-16 early in the fourth quarter Ballard responded like a veteran on the ensuing possession, guiding the Black Knights to a touchdown that put the Roadrunners back on their heels. The drive featured Ballard's first college completion and the only one for Army in the game — a 53-yarder to senior wide receiver Cam Harrison that put the ball at the UTSA 5 — and his first career touchdown run on the next play. Ballard's partner, sophomore Tyhier Tyler, gained 95 yards on 19 carries, did not attempt a pass, and scored the lone touchdown of the third quarter on a 37-yard run, the only blemish on his performance a lost fumble in the fourth quarter that gave the Roadrunners a chance.

Nate Woody's defense took care of that. Ranked seventh nationally in scoring defense (13.2 points per game) and eighth in total defense (284 yards per game), Army stopped UTSA twice on fourth down deep in Black Knights territory in the closing minutes. The defense also has forced 10 turnovers (six interceptions and four fumble recoveries), while the triple option under offensive coordinator Brent Davis is averaging 310 yards rushing, third nationally, and special teams have blocked three kicks, tied for first nationally.

"When the offense works well and the defense works well, we win the football game," said Army linebacker Jon Rhattigan, who leads the team with 47 tackles, six behind the line.

It marked the second consecutive game that a Black Knights quarterback made his first career start. The previous week it was sophomore Jemel Jones, and he led the team to a 14-9 victory over The Citadel, one of three Championship Subdivision foes on a schedule that was almost entirely changed because of the pandemic. Jones suffered a leg injury in the game, providing the opening for the two newcomers.

"We were 100 percent confident," senior tri-captain Sandon McCoy said. "You go into every game confident, but two quarterbacks that hadn't played a snap yet, everyone else around them has to be confident to make them feel strong, make them feel confident in themselves."

Army (5-1) has won three straight since a 24-10 loss at then-No. 14 Cincinnati and for only the fourth time since 1970, has won at least five of its first six games, a nice turnaround from last season's 5-8 mark. The 1996 squad under Bob Sutton started 9-0 and the Black Knights opened the 1985 and 1988 seasons with a 5-1 record under Jim Young.

The victory also ended Army's six-game skid in away or neutral games.

Chanticleers crack Top 25, poised to move up

Associated Press

A few things have changed for Coastal Carolina coach Jamey Chadwell since his team's first national ranking.

There have been many well-wishers and increased media obligations this week, so "I went and got a haircut," he joked Wednesday. "So that's a benefit as well."

The Chanticleers (4-0) entered the Top 25 for the first time in program history. They were a Football Championship Subdivision power that routinely made the playoffs before moving to the Sun Belt three seasons ago. The milestone came after defeating their first nationally ranked opponent in then-No. 21 Louisiana-Lafayette, 30-27, on Oct. 14.

Chadwell told his players before kickoff that if they took care of business, they would get ranked.

The only way to stay, he counseled them after the victory, "is to keep winning."

Steady success has long been a trait of the school with an enrollment of about 11,000 students during its relatively short football history. The program began in 2003 and made the FCS playoffs three years later. It received national exposure when it hired former TD Ameritrade CEO Joe Moglia as its head coach in 2012 — and continued winning.

Moglia led the Chants to three Big South Conference titles and four FCS playoff trips, spending much of 2015 at No.

1 in the FCS rankings as they prepared for competition in the Football Bowl Subdivision.

Moglia, who became executive director of football and special adviser to the university president after retiring from coaching in 2018, brought in Chadwell from Big South rival Charleston Southern to inherit the head coach position.

Chadwell said Moglia's principles are still very much a part of Coastal's program and the two chat or text after most games.

The Chanticleers (the nickname comes from Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*) appreciate the increased attention and seemed poised for more in a season that began with a 38-23 defeat of Power

Five school Kansas.

The goal entering the season, said receiver Jaivon Heiligh, was to win the Sun Belt, despite going a combined 6-18 in the first three seasons as a league member. He said players felt they were close to a breakthrough in years past and are determined not to let this opportunity slip away.

"It's great to be ranked," he said. "But our end goal is to win a championship and that's what we're focused on."

That quest continues Saturday when Coastal Carolina (4-0, 2-0 Sun Belt) plays host to Georgia Southern (3-1, 1-1). Chadwell hadn't seen any ranking hangover at practice after a few days of anticipation before the polls came out.

Briefly**Army-Navy game shifts to West Point***Associated Press*

The Army-Navy football game in December has been moved from Philadelphia to West Point because of attendance limits placed on outdoor events in Pennsylvania.

By playing the game on Army's home field in New York, the entire Brigade of Midshipmen and Corps of Cadets will be able to attend.

The game is scheduled for Dec. 12. This will be the first time the Army-Navy game will be played at a home site since Army hosted the event in 1943 during World War II.

Navy athletic director Chet Gladchuk called West Point a "safe haven" for the Brigade and the Corps of Cadets at a time when "medical conditions and protocols dictate the environment in which we live."

"History will repeat itself as we stage this cherished tradition on Academy grounds as was the case dating back to World War II," Gladchuk said Friday.

Philadelphia has long been home for the event, with few exceptions.

Army athletic director Mike Buddie thanked the city of Philadelphia, the Eagles and all those involved in the planning.

"Of utmost importance to us throughout this entire process was the health, safety and welfare of the Corps of Cadets and the Brigade of Midshipmen," he said. "We are excited about this historic opportunity."

Source: Raiders latest tests all negative

The Las Vegas Raiders' latest batch of COVID-19 tests all came back negative and their game scheduled for Sunday against Tampa Bay is on for now.

The Raiders placed two players on the COVID-19 list following positive tests earlier in the week and put five more players on the list because of "high risk" close contacts.

Eagles rally, knock off Giants*Associated Press*

PHILADELPHIA — Hurried, harassed and hit repeatedly, Carson Wentz completed the comeback this time.

Wentz threw an 18-yard touchdown pass to Boston Scott with 40 seconds remaining and the Philadelphia Eagles overcame an 11-point deficit in the final seven minutes to beat the New York Giants 22-21 on Thursday night.

Wentz led a depleted offense to 22 fourth-quarter points only to miss a two-point conversion at the end in a 30-28 loss to Baltimore on Sunday.

He wouldn't be denied against the Giants.

"He battled, faced adversity and hung in there," Eagles coach Doug Pederson said. "He's taking a step in the right direction to be one of the top quarterbacks in the league."

Daniel Jones shook off a stumble that prevented him from an 88-yard touchdown run and had the Giants leading 21-10 following a 2-yard pass to

Sterling Shepard with 6:17 left.

But Wentz rallied an offense missing eight starters. His 3-yard pass to Greg Ward cut it to 21-16. After the two-point conversion failed, the Eagles got the ball at their 29 with 2:02 to go.

Wentz completed passes of 11 and 30 yards to Richard Rodgers. On third down from the 5, a defensive holding penalty gave the Eagles a first down at the 3. But three-time All-Pro center Jason Kelce was called for a facemask penalty that pushed it back to the 18.

No big deal.

Wentz threw a perfect strike to Scott and the backup running back made an excellent catch to give Philadelphia the lead. The two-point conversion failed, but Jones was sacked by Brandon Graham and fumbled on the ensuing possession.

"We never faltered. We never panicked. We knew we were gonna win," Scott said. "Carson led us and it was a great team effort."

The Eagles (2-4-1) and Giants (1-6) are right in the mix in the NFC East, led by Dallas (2-4).

"This was huge for us," Wentz said. "The NFC East is wide open."

Wentz threw for 359 yards and two TDs and ran for a score. He was sacked three times and absorbed several hits.

Jones had only the end zone ahead of him away when he took off running from the Giants 12 in the third quarter. He was well ahead of everyone chasing him until he stumbled and got tackled at the 8.

A pass interference penalty against Nickell Robey-Coleman on third down gave the Giants another try, and Wayne Gallman ran in from the 1 to give them a 14-10 lead.

The Giants ended up losing a game they led by 11-plus points in the fourth quarter for the first time since they blew a 31-10 lead and lost 38-31 to the Eagles on DeSean Jackson's punt return TD on Dec. 19, 2010.

World Series notebook**Wood's role may change for Dodgers***Associated Press*

ARLINGTON, Texas — Alex Wood has experience starting in the World Series for the Dodgers. While in a different role now, the left-hander could be an intriguing option if Los Angeles needs another starter in this Fall Classic.

"When you get to this point in the year, all bets are off. When you get your opportunity to go in, throw up a zero or get your team to the next inning to have a chance to win, I'm just trying to contribute," Wood said Thursday, a day off at the World Series. "I think my role is increasing as we've gone forward. And I feel pretty good. So hopefully I'll continue to have some more opportunities."

Wood returned to LA as a free agent last winter after

being traded to Cincinnati the previous offseason, but missed a month of this pandemic-shortened regular season because of a shoulder injury in his first start, and went to the bullpen after returning in September. He was added to the playoff roster for the NL Championship Series, threw 1²/₃ innings against Atlanta, and added two scoreless innings against Tampa Bay in Game 2 of the World Series.

The lefty was the sixth of seven Dodgers pitchers in a planned bullpen game, a 6-4 loss Wednesday night that evened the World Series at a game each. Every pitcher got at least three outs, with Wood's the longest outing.

After going 16-3 as a starter during the 2017 regular season, Wood allowed one run

over 5²/₃ innings in his Game 4 start of the World Series for the Dodgers. He threw the final two innings of Game 7 won by Houston, then made three relief appearances in the 2018 World Series soon before getting traded. He made only seven starts for the Reds while dealing with back issues in 2019.

Walker Buehler starts Game 3 for the Dodgers on Friday night, and could go on regular rest in a Game 7, if the Series goes the full distance. Julio Urias, 4-0 over a start and three relief appearances this postseason, is scheduled for Game 4, a night before Game 1 winner Clayton Kershaw on regular rest Sunday night. That could leave Game 6 open, unless Buehler was brought back on short rest.