

Navy gives plan for vaccine refusers

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy has established a special command to process separations for sailors who refuse the coronavirus vaccine after the upcoming deadline for inoculations, the service said in a statement Thursday.

Active-duty sailors who are not fully vaccinated against the coronavirus after Nov. 28 without a pending or approved exemption request will be forced out of the Navy for failing to obey a lawful order, according to the statement. For Navy Reserve sailors, the deadline is Dec. 28.

The Pentagon does not consider a person fully vaccinated until two weeks after the last shot in the series, meaning the final day to meet the deadline is Nov. 14. Two available vaccines — by Moderna and Pfizer — require two shots. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is administered in a single dose.

Sailors who continue refusing the shot after the deadline will have their case sent to the Navy's newly established COVID Consolidate Disposition Authority, which Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. John B. Nowell Jr. established to "ensure a fair and consistent process for separation determinations," according to the Navy.

"Those separated only for vaccine refusal

will receive no lower than a general discharge under honorable conditions," the service said in its statement. "This type of discharge could result in the loss of some veterans' benefits."

About 94% of active-duty sailors have been fully immunized and 99% have received at least one dose, according to the Navy's weekly coronavirus update on Wednesday.

The service said the vaccine helps sailors "execute their mission at all times, in places throughout the world, including where vaccination rates are low and disease transmission is high."

The CCDA has the authority to remove a refusing sailor's warfare qualifications, additional qualification designations and Navy enlisted classifications or sub-specialties, according to the statement.

"The CCDA may also seek recoupment of applicable bonuses, special and incentive pays, and the cost of training and education for service members refusing the vaccine," the service said in the statement.

In August the Pentagon mandated the vaccine for all troops. The service branches were each given authority to establish their own deadlines and processes for removal, and the Navy is the first of the five to release its detailed separation process.

The Navy's separation process will not wait for the vaccination deadline. Administrative actions may begin as soon as a sailor meets the service's definition of "refusing the vaccine," which is one who "received a lawful order to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, is not or will not be fully vaccinated on the date required by the order and does not have a pending or approved exemption request," according to the Navy.

"Effective immediately ... commands shall not allow sailors refusing the vaccine to promote or advance, reenlist or execute orders, with the exception of separation orders, until the CCDA has completed disposition of their case," the Navy said in the statement. "Transfer orders may be canceled by Navy Personnel Command."

Further, beginning Thursday, officers and enlisted sailors in senior leadership who refuse the vaccine will be "notified immediately in writing that they have five days to either begin a vaccination series or request an exemption before being relieved and have detachment for cause initiated," according to the Navy.

Senior leadership roles are those that are "members of command triads and those key staff positions, including any flag officer or flag officer select," according to the statement.

Russia says it drove US destroyer from near its waters

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia's Defense Ministry said a Russian warship on Friday prevented a U.S. Navy destroyer from what it described as an attempt to intrude into Russia's territorial waters in the Sea of Japan.

The incident came as Russia and China conducted joint naval drills in the area, and follows other close encounters involving Russian and Western warships.

It appears to reflect Moscow's intention to raise the stakes in deterring the U.S. and its allies from sending their ships on missions near Russian waters, as relations between Russia and the West are at a post Cold War low.

There was no immediate response from Washington.

The ministry said that the Russian navy's Admiral Tributs destroyer closely approached the U.S. destroyer USS Chafee to chase it out of the area near Russian waters that was declared off limits to shipping due to the gunnery drills there as part of the Russia-China maneuvers.

It said the Russian vessel came close to the U.S. warship after it had ignored repeated warnings to leave the area in the Peter the Great Gulf. The ministry charged that after making "an attempt to cross the Russian sea border," the U.S. warship changed course when the two ships were about 60 yards away from each other and sped away.

It denounced the U.S. destroyer's maneuvers as a "crude violation" of the international

rules on averting ships' collision and a 1972 agreement between Moscow and Washington on preventing air and naval incidents and summoned the U.S. military attaché to protest what it described as its crew's "unprofessional action."

Russia, the U.S. and its NATO allies have frequently accused each other of dangerous and provocative maneuvers at sea and in the air as Russia-West ties have been hit by Moscow's annexation of Crimea, accusations of Russian interference with elections, hacking attacks and other tensions.

The Russian maneuver during Friday's incident appeared to indicate Moscow's readiness to raise the stakes to prevent similar intrusions in the future.

Marine critical of officials pleads guilty

The Washington Post

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — A Marine officer pleaded guilty on Thursday to several criminal charges in connection with viral videos he posted criticizing senior officials during the messy U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, saying that he knew he was being disrespectful and wanted to call out what he perceived as “incompetence.”

Lt. Col. Stuart Scheller, a combat veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, testified that he knew he was defying orders and that his life began “spiraling” after he posted his first video in August. He said his wife

left him, fellow Marine officers turned their backs on him and the Marine Corps opened an investigation into his actions.

Scheller said he continued posting after receiving positive feedback from backers, including elected officials.

“Many Gold Star families, junior enlisted Marines and members of Congress reached out to support my statements,” Scheller said, referring in part to the families of service members who died in the line of duty.

Scheller pleaded guilty to charges that include disrespect toward superior commissioned officers, willfully disobeying a supe-

rior commissioned officer, and dereliction in the performance of duties. An agreement reached between Scheller and the Marine Corps holds that a military judge, Col. Glen Hines, can sentence him to no more than a letter of reprimand and a seizure of two-thirds of his pay for up to 12 months, which would cost Scheller tens of thousands of dollars. Scheller agreed as part of his guilty plea that service members do not have the same freedom of speech to criticize senior U.S. officials as civilians, and he acknowledged that he disobeyed a direct order to stop posting his criticisms on social media.

Suspect in Capitol attack later able to enlist

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — A man who was arrested last week for allegedly spraying chemical agents at police during the Jan. 6 Capitol riot was able to enlist in the Army months later, officials said, highlighting questions over the military’s efforts to weed out recruits with extremist ties and behavior.

Spec. James Phillip Mault, 29, was taken into custody at Fort Bragg in North Carolina last week, said Col. Joe Buccino, a spokesman for the installation.

Mault had enlisted in May, Buccino said, months after videos of his involvement in the riot were shared with the FBI, which interviewed Mault and his family.

It was Mault’s second time joining the active-duty Army. Currently a combat engineer, he also served from 2012 to 2016, including a deployment to Kuwait, and then served in the Army National Guard before leaving last year, Army officials said.

Mault’s charges include assaulting, resisting or impeding

certain officers using a dangerous weapon or inflicting bodily injury, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building and civil disorder, according to court documents.

Interviewed by the FBI in January, according to court papers, Mault admitted being outside when a violent mob breached the U.S. Capitol in an effort to overturn the election certification for President Joe Biden but denied entering the building.

After Mault enlisted and passed various screening checks, he was assigned to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division. At some point, while undergoing further security checks, his alleged involvement in the riot “was flagged by our investigators,” said Lt. Col. Uriah Orland, a Pentagon spokesman. Orland said he did not yet have information about when the Defense Department became aware of that information.

Suicide bombers assault Shiite mosque in Afghanistan

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Suicide bombers attacked a Shiite mosque packed with worshippers attending Friday prayers in southern Afghanistan, killing at least 47 people and wounding 70, a Taliban official said. It was the deadliest day since the U.S. military withdrawal.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the carnage at the Fatimiya mosque in Kandahar province. The attack came a week after a bombing claimed by the local Islamic State affiliate killed 46 people at a Shiite

mosque in northern Afghanistan.

The sectarian bloodletting has raised fears that ISIS — an enemy of both the Taliban and the West — is expanding its foothold in Afghanistan.

Hafiz Sayeed, the Taliban’s chief for Kandahar’s department of culture and information, said 47 people had been killed and at least 70 wounded in the attack.

The Islamic State, which like Afghanistan’s ruling Taliban is made up of Sunni Muslims, views Shiite Muslims as apostates deserving of death. ISIS has claimed a number of deadly bombings

across the country since the Taliban seized power in August amid the withdrawal of U.S. forces. The group has also targeted Taliban fighters in smaller attacks.

If the attack was carried out by ISIS, it would be the first major assault by the extremist group in southern Afghanistan since the U.S. departure enabled the Taliban to consolidate control of the country.

Recent attacks in the north, the east and the Afghan capital have cast doubt on the Taliban’s ability to counter the threat posed by ISIS.

The Taliban have pledged to restore peace and security after decades of war and have also given the U.S. assurances that they will not allow the country to be used as a base for launching extremist attacks on other countries. The Taliban have pledged, too, to protect Afghanistan’s Shiite minority, which was persecuted during the last period of Taliban rule, in the 1990s.

Both the Taliban and ISIS adhere to a rigid interpretation of Islamic law, but ISIS is far more radical. It has better-known branches in Iraq and Syria.

Court again allows Texas abortion ban to continue

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas can continue banning most abortions after a federal appeals court on Thursday rejected the Biden administration's latest attempt to stop a novel law that has become the nation's biggest curb to abortion in nearly 50 years.

The decision could push the law closer to returning to the U.S. Supreme Court, which has already once allowed the restrictions to take effect without ruling on its constitutionality. The Texas law bans abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks and before some women know they are pregnant.

Since the law took effect in early September, Texas women have sought out abortion clinics in neighboring states, some driving hours through the middle of the night and including patients as young as 12 years old. The law makes no exception in cases of rape or incest.

"We hope the Department of Justice urgently appeals this order to the Supreme Court to restore Texans' ability to obtain abortion care after six weeks in pregnancy," said Brigitte Amiri, deputy director of the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project.

The Justice Department did not immediately react to the decision and a spokesperson had no comment late Thursday.

In a 2-1 decision, a three-judge panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals grant-

ed Texas' request to keep the law in place as the court case proceeds. It marks the third time the conservative-leaning appeals court has sided with Texas and let the restrictions stand.

The panel said it would expedite the appeal and schedule oral arguments, but did not say when.

The Texas Attorney General's Office called the decision a "testament that we are on the right side of the law and life."

It marks another setback for the Justice Department and Texas abortion providers in their efforts to derail the law, which has thus far prevailed because of a unique structure that leaves enforcement up to private citizens. Anyone who brings a successful lawsuit against an abortion provider for violating the law is entitled to claim at least \$10,000 in damages, which the Biden administration says amounts to a bounty.

Despite numerous legal challenges both before and after the law took effect Sept. 1, only once has a court moved to put the restriction on hold — and that order only stood for 48 hours.

During that brief window, some Texas clinics rushed to perform abortions on patients past six weeks, but many more appointments were canceled after the 5th Circuit moved to swiftly reinstate the law last week.

US to reinstate its 'Remain in Mexico' policy next month

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Biden administration said it plans to reinstate a Trump-era border policy next month to make asylum-seekers wait in Mexico for hearings in U.S. immigration court, complying with a judge's order.

It hinges on approval of the Mexican government, which has raised concerns that U.S. officials are working to address, the Justice Department said in a court filing late Thursday. Mexico wants cases to generally conclude within six months and ensure that asylum-seekers have timely and accurate information about hearing dates and times and better access to legal counsel.

Mexico also wants exemptions for "particularly vulnerable populations" and better coordination on locations and times of day that asylum-seekers are returned to Mexico.

About 70,000 asylum-seekers have been subject to the "Remain in Mexico" policy, known officially as "Migrant Protection Protocols," which President Donald Trump introduced in January 2019 and Biden suspended on his first day in office. A federal judge sided with the states of Texas and Missouri by ordering the Biden administration in August to reinstate the policy "in good faith." The court filing says it should be in effect around mid-November.

U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in Amarillo, Texas, a Trump appointee, left open the possibility that the administration could try again to end the policy, and officials say they will release a plan soon that they hope will survive legal scrutiny.

U.S. Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas ended the policy in June after an internal review, saying it achieved "mixed effectiveness."

Illegal border crossings fell sharply after Mexico, facing Trump's threat of higher tariffs, acquiesced in 2019 to the policy's rapid expansion. Asylum-seekers were victims of major violence while waiting in Mexico and faced a slew of legal obstacles, such as access to attorneys and case information.

The administration will rebuild tent courts in Texas border cities of Laredo and Brownsville at a monthly cost of \$24.6 million to operate, according to the court filing, and is working to ensure there is capacity in a system that is backlogged with 1.4 million cases.

Nikolas Cruz to plead guilty to Parkland high school massacre

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The gunman who killed 14 students and three staff members at a Parkland, Fla., high school will plead guilty to their murders, his attorneys said Friday, bringing some closure to a community more than three years after an attack that sparked a nationwide movement for gun control.

The guilty plea would set up a penalty phase where Nikolas Cruz, 23, would be fighting against the death penalty and hoping for life without parole.

Attorneys for Cruz told Circuit Judge Elizabeth Scherer that he will plead guilty Wednesday to 17 counts of first-degree

murder in the February 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The pleas will come with no conditions and prosecutors still plan to seek the death penalty. That will be decided by a jury, with the judge hoping to start the trial in January.

Cruz will also plead guilty to 17 counts of attempted first-degree murder. He was not initially present during the hearing, but later entered the Broward County courtroom to plead guilty to attacking a jail guard nine months after the shooting.

The trial has been delayed by the pandemic and arguments between the prosecution and defense over what evidence and testimony could be presented to the jury.

Biden signs bill raising US debt limit

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on Thursday signed into law a bill raising the nation's debt limit until early December, delaying the prospect of an unprecedented federal default that would cause economic disaster.

The House passed the \$480 billion increase in the country's borrowing ceiling on Tuesday, after the Senate approved it on a party-line vote last week.

The eventual approval came after a protracted standoff with Senate Republicans, who derailed initial Democratic efforts

with filibusters, delays that require 60 votes to halt.

Ultimately, a handful of Senate Republicans agreed to join Democrats and voted to end GOP delays and move to a final vote on the legislation, but Minority Leader Mitch McConnell has said Republicans will offer no support for another increase in December.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen had warned that the U.S. would hit its borrowing limit Monday, an unprecedented situation that she and others cautioned could lead to economic catastrophe for a nation

still reeling from a global pandemic. Routine government payments to Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans and active-duty military personnel would potentially be delayed, and the economic fallout in the U.S. could ripple through global markets.

The passage of the short-term debt ceiling increase ensures that, for now, the U.S. will continue to meet its obligations. But it sets up another potential cliff at the end of the year — at a time when lawmakers will also be working to pass a federal funding bill to avert a government shutdown.

Seattle police fear staffing woes amid vaccine order

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Seattle's police department is sending detectives and non-patrol officers to respond to emergency calls because of a shortage of patrol officers.

The department Wednesday moved to the emergency dispatching scenario because of the staffing crunch. The police union leader said he fears things will get worse because of COVID-19 vaccine mandates but the city's mayor urged the small percentage of holdouts to get the shot, noting

officers are already required to show proof of other vaccines.

KOMO reports the department has lost more than 300 officers over the past year. Nearly 300 more could face termination if they do not comply with an Oct. 18 deadline to be vaccinated against the coronavirus.

"We can't afford to lose one, that's how desperate we are to hold onto to people," said police union president Mike Solan. "If we lose more officers, the public safety situation will

become that much more untenable here."

According to figures from the Seattle mayor's office, 782 officers have submitted proof of COVID-19 vaccination, while 98 officers are seeking exemptions and 186 have not turned in paperwork.

Officials hope more will submit the required paperwork as the deadline approaches.

Mayor Jenny Durkan's office said Seattle Police, first responders and health care workers across the state are

required by Gov. Jay Inslee to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

"The definition of a police officer's job is to maintain public safety and protect the communities they serve — 88% of our Seattle Police Department staff have been vaccinated, so they can continue to do their heroic work to save lives," Durkan's spokesman, Anthony Derrick, said in a statement.

The statement said COVID-19 was the number one cause of death for the first responders during the pandemic.

Norwegian town absorbs horror of bow-and-arrow attack

Associated Press

KONGSBERG, Norway — Residents of a Norwegian town with a proud legacy of producing coins, weapons and silver grappled Friday with the horrible knowledge that someone living in their community used a bow and arrow to attack people doing their grocery shopping or other evening activities — and succeeded in killing five of them.

On a central square in Kongsberg, a former mining town of 26,000 people surrounded by mountains and located southwest of Norway's capital, people laid flowers and lit candles in honor of the four women and a man who died in Wednesday's attack. The victims ranged in age from 50 to 70, police have said.

"This a small community so almost every-

body knows each other, so it's a very strange and very sad experience for us," Ingeborg Spangelo, a teacher who brought her students to the impromptu memorial, said. "It is almost surreal or unreal."

Officers arrested a Kongsberg resident identified as Espen Andersen Braathen, a 37-year-old Danish citizen. He was detained about a half-hour after he allegedly began firing arrows in a supermarket where police tried to confront him but lost sight of him when he fired at them and they had to take cover, law enforcement authorities have said.

Andersen Braathen proceeded from the supermarket into a quiet downtown neighborhood of wooden houses and birch trees, where he fired at people on the street and in-

side some apartments, police said. Along with the five people killed, three were injured.

Senior police officer Per Thomas Omholt said Friday that three weapons in all were used in the attack, but declined to identify the types or to reveal how the five victims were killed, saying investigators need to interview more witnesses and don't want their accounts tainted by what they read in the news.

The regional prosecutor leading the investigation has said that Andersen Braathen confessed to the killings after his arrest, and police said they think he acted alone. Norway's domestic intelligence agency said Thursday that the case appeared to be "an act of terrorism" but cautioned that the investigation was ongoing.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

African cat escapes owner, prowls suburb

MI ROYAL OAK — A large cat native to Africa that escaped from its suburban Detroit home was captured after spending several hours on the lam, according to an animal recovery group.

"He was located in a partially fenced back yard where we were able to drop the trap," said a post by the South Lyon Murphy Lost Animal Recovery posted a video online of the animal, The Detroit News reported.

Caracals are classified in a category of animal that isn't regulated by the state. They prey on rodents, other small mammals and birds. They also are native to the Middle East, Central Asia, and India.

Closed photo business working with customers

ND BISMARCK — An attorney for a North Dakota photography business that abruptly went out of business and left many wedding couples in limbo said the company is working to release photos and images. It's unclear whether customers who paid in advance for uncompleted work will be refunded.

Two state agencies are investigating the shutdown of Glasser Images and the business owner is facing several lawsuits. The attorney general has received more than 450 complaints from customers and photographers who worked as contractors for the company. The Department of Labor and Human Rights has received claims from Glasser employees seeking unpaid wages.

Fargo attorney Tim O'Keeffe said the photos and videos are being secured and "kept safely" on hard drives, but it's a "logistical challenge" to get them to customers and it could take weeks. He declined to comment on the status of any potential refunds.

Woman charged with leaving girl at hospital

FL MIAMI — A woman who told authorities she left her toddler with a stranger at a Miami hospital to keep her off the streets has been arrested on a child abandonment charge, police said.

The 33-year-old woman asked a man to watch the girl while she went to a restroom, and never came back. The man — who happened to be an off-duty Miami police officer — called for help, police said.

"She hands off the child to this unknown man," police spokeswoman Kaina Fallat told news outlets. "Luckily he was a police officer and what was going through his mind was he went into police mode."

Carolina Vizcarra was booked into jail after telling investigators "It's not like I just left her," according to an arrest report. "It's a hospital and I was worried for her. I was thinking about sleeping on the streets, but not her."

Zoo's eagle owl dies of injuries after escaping

MN APPLE VALLEY — A Eurasian owl that escaped from the Minnesota Zoo earlier this month is dead.

The Minneapolis Star Tribune reported Thursday that a neighbor found Gladys the owl

injured by the side of the road near the zoo. She died by the time the zoo's medical team reached her.

The cause of death has yet to be determined.

Gladys escaped during a flying exercise in the zoo's amphitheater, where she starred in the bird show for the last five years, on Oct. 1.

Police: Driver was going 152 mph on highway

VA LEXINGTON — A drunk driver was going 152 mph when he was pulled over in Rockbridge County, Virginia State Police said.

The 29-year-old man was stopped on Interstate 81 and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol, according to a tweet from state police.

The tweet shows a photo of the officer's ticket, which said the man was driving 152 mph in a 70 mph zone.

"Speeding & DUI = Too many lives at risk = Arrest," the tweet said.

No indictments in two deaths after dispute

MO PARKVILLE — A grand jury has declined to indict a man who shot and killed two other men after a dispute involving about \$200 in firewood, Platte County Prosecuting Attorney Eric Zahnd said.

Kalob Lawson, 34, of Kimberling City, and Jonathan Lutz, 44, of Kansas City, were shot in Parkville.

Lawson and Lutz were paid \$200 to deliver a cord of firewood to a Platte County home. As they and another man were unloading the wood, the home-

owner left. The men then left without delivering the full cord of wood, Zahnd said.

The homeowner's 22-year-old son called his father and then chased Lawson and Lutz in his vehicle. Witnesses said Lawson and Lutz eventually stopped and got out of the vehicle, and Lawson was armed with a 9mm handgun, Zahnd said.

After Lawson threatened the son with the gun, the son retrieved a gun from his car and fired several times, Zahnd said. Lawson died at the scene and Lutz died later at a hospital.

The son returned home, called 911 and voluntarily surrendered.

Zahnd said Missouri's "stand your ground" law allows people to use deadly force if they reasonably believe it is necessary to protect themselves against death or serious physical injury.

2-headed baby turtle thrives at animal refuge

MA BARNSTABLE — A rare two-headed diamondback terrapin turtle is alive and kicking — with all six of its legs — at the Birdsey Cape Wildlife Center in Massachusetts after hatching.

A threatened species in the state, this turtle is feeding well on blood worms and food pellets, staff at the center say. The two heads operate independently, coming up for air at different times, and inside its shell are two gastrointestinal systems to feed both sides of its body.

The turtle originally came from a nest in West Barnstable that researchers determined was in a hazardous location and needed to be moved.

-From Associated Press

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Dodgers win Game 5, advance to NLCS

Associated Press

Cody Bellinger pointed at the dugout and pounded his chest in triumph after delivering the biggest hit this season for the defending World Series champions.

Of course, it took until the ninth inning of the 24th-and-final meeting to finally separate the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Francisco Giants.

They couldn't have been any closer.

Bellinger hit a tiebreaking single in the ninth and prized midseason acquisition Max Scherzer came out of the bullpen for his first career save, sending the Dodgers past the Giants 2-1 in a thrilling winner-take-all Game 5 on Thursday in San Francisco, and into the NL Championship Series.

Bellinger's line drive up the middle decided a scintillating Division Series between the top two teams in baseball with a combined 213 regular-season wins, adding a new chapter to

this storied, century-old rivalry.

"We poured everything we could into this series and it took everything we had to beat these guys," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said.

The dramatic finish came with a disputed call: With a runner aboard, Scherzer fanned Wilmer Flores on a check-swing for the final out. Plate umpire Doug Eddings checked with first base ump Gabe Morales, who ruled Flores swung. But on television replays, it certainly appeared he held up.

"The umpire said it was a swing, so it was a swing," Bellinger said.

The Dodgers rushed out of their dugout to celebrate on the Giants' home field. Fans began throwing beer cans and debris onto the diamond in disgust.

"Super tough. Obviously, you don't want a game to end that way," San Francisco manager Gabe Kapler said. "There's no need to be angry about that. I just think it's a disappointing

way to end. There are other reasons we didn't win today's baseball game, so that was just the last call of the game."

Morales told a pool reporter that check-swings are one of the most difficult calls umpires have.

"I don't have the benefit of multiple camera angles when I'm watching it live," Morales said. "When it happened live I thought he went, so that's why I called it a swing."

Mookie Betts had a postseason career-high four hits and will lead the next step in the Dodgers' title defense at Atlanta for Game 1 of the best-of-seven NLCS on Saturday night. Roberts expects Scherzer to be ready to start, saying, "that's the plan."

Los Angeles came back from a 3-1 series deficit to beat the Braves in last year's NLCS, taking Game 7 by a 4-3 score on the way to its first championship since 1988.

"It's going to be another good

one. It's not going to be easy," Bellinger said. "We played each other a few times the last few years. So we kind of know what each other's got, and really looking forward to it."

Camilo Doval plunked Justin Turner with one out in the ninth and Gavin Lux singled before Bellinger came through with his most meaningful hit in a difficult season.

Before that single, he was 5-for-62 (.080) against the Giants in 2021.

"You really do want to be in that moment," Bellinger said.

Scherzer, who lost his Game 3 start 1-0, came over from Washington at the July 30 trade deadline. He pitched a hitless ninth Thursday on two days' rest to close out a best-of-five series certain to go down among the classics these franchises have played — right up there with the three-game tiebreakers won by the Giants to take NL pennants in 1951 and 1962.

Cardinals fire Shildt despite berth in postseason

Associated Press

The Cardinals fired former National League manager of the year Mike Shildt over organizational differences Thursday, just one week after St. Louis lost to the Los Angeles Dodgers on a walk-off homer in the wild-card game.

Cardinals president John Mozeliak said the firing was "something that popped up recently," but he refused to expand on what he called "philosophical differences" between Shildt, the coaching staff and the front office.

"All I can say is where we felt the team was going, we were struggling to get on the same page," Mozeliak said. "With him having one year remaining on his contract, we could have gone into 2022 having that over him and we just decided that

internally it would be best to separate now and take a fresh look as we head into a new season."

It is exceptionally rare for clubs to fire managers the same day as a playoff game — the Dodgers and San Francisco Giants played the decisive game in their divisional series late Thursday. But Mozeliak and Cardinals owner Bill DeWitt Jr. decided that it was important enough to seek permission from Major League Baseball to make the move immediately.

Mozeliak declined to discuss possible replacements, but he did say there are plenty of internal candidates. He said the coaches who remain under contract are expected to return next season.

"As I said before, 2021 was a real success and something

that for all of us that were part of the organization, we take tremendous pride in," Mozeliak said. "Any time you go on a 17-game winning streak and actually create history for your organization, it's something you take enormous pride in. A lot of times these decisions aren't based just on the season, more ... where we want to go."

Mozeliak met with Shildt and the rest of the coaching staff Friday, but the two did not meet again until Mozeliak informed Shildt of his firing. When asked about the manager's response, Mozeliak replied: "He was very shocked."

"I'm not going to get into who I spoke with or the details of how I got to this decision," Mozeliak said.

Mozeliak actually hired Shildt as a scout in 2003, begin-

ning his long rise through the closely knit organization. Shildt soon switched to player development and worked his way through various levels of the minor league system.

He was chosen to replace current Royals manager Mike Matheny on an interim basis in August 2018, then took over the permanent job the following season. The Cardinals won 91 games that season, earning Shildt the NL manager of the year, and advanced to the NL Championship Series before getting swept by the Nationals.

The Cardinals went 30-28 during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season, losing to the Padres in the wild-card game, before riding that franchise-record 17-game streak to reach the wild-card game again this season.

Brady, Buccaneers hold off Eagles

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Tampa Bay Buccaneers keep losing key players and stockpiling victories.

Tom Brady threw two touchdown passes, Leonard Fournette ran for two scores and the Buccaneers beat the Philadelphia Eagles 28-22 on Thursday night.

The defending Super Bowl champion Buccaneers (5-1) lost another cornerback when three-time All-Pro Richard Sherman left in the first quarter with a hamstring injury, but their depleted defense held on after Jalen Hurts rallied the Eagles from a 28-7 deficit.

"It's tough to win on the road," Brady said. "Obviously, we didn't play our best so we have to get back to work ... We got to get better."

Playing with an injured thumb, Brady came out firing. The 44-year-old, seven-time Super Bowl champion tossed TD passes on Tampa Bay's first two drives while going 11-for-12 for 121 yards.

His best play came after Hurts' second TD run and a two-point conversion pulled Philadelphia within six points with 3:05 left in the fourth quarter.

Facing a third-and-7 from Philadelphia's 45, Brady rolled away from pressure and threw a perfect pass to Antonio Brown for a 27-yard gain to extend the drive and the Bucs ran out the clock.

"It was a great route, hell of a throw as Tom got out of the pocket," Buccaneers coach Bruce Arians said. "Couple times this year he slipped out of the pocket to the right and made a big play down the field."

Brady finished 34-for-42 for 297 yards and an interception. He insisted his thumb, which

was taped, is fine.

"I feel great, awesome," he said. "It's football season. I feel good. Really do."

The Eagles (2-4) are winless in three home games under rookie coach Nick Sirianni. They heard boos at halftime but fought back to make it close.

"We were bad in the first half. Put that one on me," Sirianni said. "There's no doubt our offense needs to be better to give ourselves a chance to win."

Brady's 2-yard TD pass to O.J. Howard gave the Buccaneers a 7-0 lead. The Eagles answered on Hurts' 5-yard scoring pass to Zach Ertz. Brady then hit Brown for a 23-yard TD pass to make it 14-7.

After two straight three-and-out series, Brady led the Bucs on another scoring drive with Fournette running in from the 2 to extend the lead to 21-7. Tampa increased its lead to 28-7 when Fournette walked in from the 1 in the third quarter.

Fournette ran for 81 yards and caught six passes for 46 yards.

"Having that year under my belt makes a big difference understanding it," said Fournette, who signed with Tampa Bay shortly before last season after he was cut by Jacksonville. "The sky's the limit for me."

Brady was 19-for-22 before missing three straight passes late in the second quarter, including a deep ball intercepted by Anthony Harris that ended his streak of 227 passes without a pick.

The Buccaneers were already missing cornerbacks Carlton Davis and Sean Murphy-Bunting and safety Antoine Winfield before Sherman went down on Philadelphia's first drive. Sherman was quickly ruled out. Arians wasn't certain the severity of the injury.

Kraken down Predators for franchise's first win

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Brandon Tanev scored his second goal into an empty net with 1:21 left and the Seattle Kraken beat the Nashville Predators 4-3 on Thursday night for the first victory in the expansion franchise's second game.

The Kraken became the latest expansion franchise to win its first game with the Predators, improving that mark to 3-1-1. They joined Columbus (Nov. 16, 2000) and Vegas (Dec. 8, 2017) in that group.

Alex Wennberg and Jared McCann each had a goal and an assist for Seattle.

Tanev's second goal on Seattle's lone shot in the third period was the winner.

Lightning 7, Red Wings 6 (OT): Ondrej Palat scored at 2:43 of overtime, lifting visiting Tampa Bay past Detroit.

Tyler Bertuzzi scored a career-high four goals, including three in the second period, to help the Red Wings take a three-goal lead three times.

Tampa Bay came back each time, including late in the third period when Ross Colton, Nikita Kucherov and Alex Killorn scored in a four-minute span to make it 6-all.

Stars 3, Rangers 2 (OT): Miro Heiskanen scored 1:38 into overtime and Dallas beat New York to spoil coach Gerard Gallant's home debut.

Heiskanen took a pass from Jamie Benn, swooped in on goalie Igor Shesterkin and buried a high shot to give the Stars a victory in their first game of the season.

Sabres 5, Canadiens 1: Victor Olofsson and Anders Bjork scored 2:01 apart in the second period and host Buffalo beat injury-depleted Montreal.

Forty-year-old Craig Anderson stopped 30 shots in his debut with his sixth NHL team. The Sabres converted three of six power-play opportunities, with Tage Thompson pushing Buffa-

lo's lead to 5-1 early in the third period.

Hurricanes 6, Islanders 3: Andrei Svechnikov had two goals and an assist to help host Carolina beat New York in the opener for both teams.

Teuvo Teravainen added a goal and an assist for Carolina, which featured a new-look roster in a matchup of Eastern Conference playoff contenders. Returnees Jesper Fast, Jordan Martinook and Nino Niederreiter also scored.

Blue Jackets 8, Coyotes 2: Oliver Bjorkstrand had two goals and two assists, Max Domi added a goal and two assists and host Columbus routed Arizona to make Brad Larsen a winner in his coaching debut.

Alexandre Texier, Boone Jenner, Jake Bean, Zach Werenski and Gus Nyquist also scored for Columbus.

Panthers 5, Penguins 4 (OT): Carter Verhaeghe scored his second goal of the night 1:37 into overtime and host Florida overcame a late two-goal deficit to beat Pittsburgh.

Aaron Ekblad scored the two late goals to get Florida into overtime, and Verhaeghe finished it off moments after Sergei Bobrovsky stoned Evan Rodrigues on a breakaway.

Senators 3, Maple Leafs 2: Anton Forsberg made a career-high 46 saves and host Ottawa scored three times in the first period in a season-opening victory over Toronto.

Playing hours after the Senators signed Brady Tkachuk to a seven-year contract extension, Tyler Ennis had a goal and an assist and Chris Tierney and Alex Formenton also scored.

Kings 6, Golden Knights 2: Anze Kopitar had the franchise's third hat trick in an opener and two assists, Drew Doughty added a goal and three assists, and host Los Angeles opened its season with a win over Vegas.

Kopitar set a franchise record with 5 points in an opener.

UGA looks to avoid another upset of No. 1

Associated Press

No. 1 has been a particularly secure position during the College Football Playoff era.

Last week's Alabama loss as the No. 1 team in the country to Texas A&M was just the fourth outside of the playoff for the top-ranked team in the AP poll during the eight-year history (2014-present) of the CFP.

The last time No. 1 was beaten twice in a regular season was 2012, which was also the last time No. 1 went down in consecutive weeks.

That November, Texas A&M and eventual Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Manziel went to top-ranked Alabama and beat the Tide. The next week, Stanford knocked off No. 1 Oregon in overtime.

The Aggies have set the stage again with a victory against Alabama. No. 11 Kentucky will try to play the role of Stanford to Georgia's Oregon on Saturday.

Kentucky goes to Georgia on Saturday, one of two games matching ranked teams during Week 7 of the season.

Best game

No. 12 Oklahoma State at No. 25 Texas: Wildcats-Bulldogs has the better ranking in

combined record (12-0), but Georgia is a huge favorite so whether that game will be competitive for four quarters is questionable.

The unbeaten Cowboys are positioned to be the Big 12's surprise contender if they can hand Texas a second straight loss.

The Longhorns are coming off a crushing collapse against No. 4 Oklahoma in the Red River Rivalry and another setback would put them in a deep hole in the Big 12 race.

The Cowboys' calling card has been defense so far, especially against the run. Oklahoma State is 10th in the nation, allowing 2.76 yards per carry.

Can they contain Texas' Bijan Robinson? The Longhorns' sophomore is averaging 132 yards per game and 6.81 per carry.

Heisman watch

Chris Rodriguez, RB, Kentucky: Speaking of good running backs facing stingy defenses, if Rodriguez (fifth in the nation in rushing at 128 yards per game) can penetrate the Bulldogs' great wall of NFL prospects he would vault toward the top of most Heisman hype lists.

Here's another idea. The Heisman contenders are generally the best players on the best teams. So how about Iowa center Tyler Linderbaum, clearly the best player at his position and maybe the best offensive linemen regardless of position?

The second-ranked Hawkeyes host Purdue.

By the numbers

5 — Number of consecutive victories for Auburn over Arkansas, but the 17th-ranked Razorbacks closed the gap last year. The first four victories in the streak were by an average of 39 points. Last season, the Tigers extended the streak in a two-point game that featured a questionable non-called fumble by Auburn.

14 — No. 4 Oklahoma's winning streak, now the longest in the nation after Alabama lost last week. The Sooners host TCU.

47-9 — Total No. 19 Arizona State has outscored opponents this season in the fourth quarter. The Sun Devils visit Utah in a key Pac-12 South matchup.

Under the radar

Iowa State at Kansas State: The Cyclones (3-2) were ex-

pected to be in the middle of the Big 12 and maybe even the College Football Playoff race, but they have been bumped to the side by their in-state rivals from Iowa City.

There is still time for Iowa State to climb back into Big 12 contention. Farmageddon rival Kansas State comes in off an open date and on a two-game losing streak, having dropped games to Oklahoma State and Oklahoma.

Hot seat

Manny Diaz, Miami

The Hurricanes are 2-3 and have been ravaged by injuries, including a likely season-ender to quarterback D'Eriq King.

The injuries don't seem to be buying much empathy for Diaz, who is in his third season at The U.

The good news, if there is any, is Miami heads to North Carolina with only one loss in the ACC and the potential to get right back into the Coastal Division race.

The Tar Heels (3-3, 1-3 ACC) have been equally, if not more, disappointing than the Hurricanes, but nobody is seriously looking to run Mack Brown out of Chapel Hill.

Memphis bolts past Navy to end 3-game losing streak

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Seth Henigan completed eight of 11 passes for 215 yards and two touchdowns as Memphis scored on five of its first six drives to halt a three-game slide and defeat Navy 35-17 on Thursday.

Four of the five touchdown drives included at least one big play to burn the Navy defense. Henigan completed a 49-yard pass to Javon Ivory on the first play of the game, a 74-yard TD pass to Eddie Lewis and a 51-yard gainer to Koby Drake in the third quarter. The Tigers (4-3, 1-2 American Athletic Conference) also scored on a 69-yard reverse.

Calvin Austin III sprinted 69 yards to

score on a reverse, staking Memphis to a 14-7 lead it didn't relinquish, one play after Navy ground 21 plays to tie the game at 7. It was the most plays for any drive by any team at the FBS level this season.

Austin's reverse was all speed, looping out of the backfield and slipping through a knot of three would-be tacklers converging on him just beyond the line of scrimmage.

Navy (1-5, 1-3) took over after Memphis' game-opening touchdown and ground up the rest of the first quarter with a nearly 12-minute, 75-yard monster of a drive taking 21 plays. James Harris II punched the ball over from the 2 — scoring his first career touchdown — as Navy advanced on 17 plays

of 5 yards or less.

The 21-play drive was Navy's longest since a 26-play drive in the 2004 Emerald Bowl.

Tai Lavatai left the game after a sack early in the fourth quarter. He passed for 27 yards and rushed for a net of 28. The Midshipmen had 10 rushers for 198 yards on the ground.

Navy had two apparent scoring plays nullified by penalties just minutes apart in the second quarter and wound up with a Bijan Nichols 39-yard field goal, trailing 14-10.

The Tigers are 9-0 in Thursday night games, 21-1 in regular-season games not played on Saturday.