

## Taiwan confirms US troop presence

By SETH ROBSON

*Stars and Stripes*

Taiwan's president confirmed the presence of a small contingent of U.S. troops on the island in an interview aired Thursday by CNN that said the "threat from China is increasing every day."

President Tsai Ing-wen told the broadcaster she's confident the United States would come to the island's defense if China tried to invade.

"I do have faith given the long-term relationship that we have with the U.S. and also the support of the people of the U.S. as well as the Congress," she said. "The administration has been very helpful."

Taiwan has been the focus of increased tension in recent weeks with Chinese troops practicing for an invasion and flying warplanes near the island democracy that is home to 23.5 million people.

President Joe Biden last week said the U.S. would defend Taiwan if China attacked, although his comments were walk-

ed back by the White House. The comment prompted a warning from China to the U.S. to "speak prudently" on Taiwan.

Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping are preparing to hold their first summit via video since the U.S. president took office in January, with Taiwan likely high on the agenda.

Tsai confirmed that U.S. troops are on the island, but added that there are "not as many as people thought."

The presence on Taiwan of a U.S. special operations unit and a contingent of Marines to train local military forces was revealed by U.S. officials quoted in a Wall Street Journal report on Oct. 7.

About two dozen members of U.S. special-operations and support troops are training small units of Taiwan's ground forces. And Marines are working with local maritime forces on small-boat training, the officials said, according to the newspaper.

American military forces have been operating on Taiwan for at least a year, the

newspaper reported.

There is also a small detachment of Marines deployed for security at the American Institute in Taiwan, the de facto U.S. embassy, according to Ian Chong, an associate professor of political science at the National University of Singapore.

"Even if the numbers increase, I doubt they will by much," he said in an email Thursday. "The point of U.S. troops being in Taiwan is to assist with training rather than to get involved in any actual operations or preparing for operations."

Taiwanese troops also train in the U.S., Chong said.

For example, Taiwan News reported April 26 that four Taiwanese F-16As had deployed to the U.S. the previous day for training missions.

It's unclear what a small contingent of Marines can offer the Taiwanese that they don't already know, New Zealand-based U.S. security expert Paul Buchanan said in an email Thursday.

## Taiwan war games find few options for US to deter China

*The Washington Post*

The United States has "few credible options" to respond if China were to seize a set of islands administered by Taiwan in the South China Sea, underscoring the need for Washington and Taipei to build deterrence "against limited Chinese aggression," according to the results of a war game conducted recently by foreign policy experts in Washington and the Asia-Pacific region.

The scenario was examined by the Center for a New American Security, a Washington-based think tank, and detailed in a report published Tuesday. It supposes that Chinese forces invade the Pratas islands, capturing the 500 Taiwanese troops who are based there and estab-

lishing a military outpost.

It's a theoretical dilemma for the Pentagon that "many China-watchers view as increasingly plausible"—and one that "reinforces the need for regular planning exercises between Taiwanese and U.S. personnel," the report says.

The report comes at a moment of heightened tension between Washington and Beijing, with the U.S. opposing China's military expansion in the region and China calling on the Pentagon to cut ties with Taiwan. The standoff has spotlighted the challenge U.S. commanders would face in responding to an incursion of the islands without provoking a full-blown war.

President Joe Biden, speaking during a town hall event last

week broadcast by CNN, said that "we have a commitment" to defend Taiwan, prompting the White House to issue a statement clarifying that "the U.S. defense relationship with Taiwan is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act."

Signed into law in 1979, it details an ambiguous policy in which the U.S. said it would be a matter of "grave concern" if Taiwan's future was to be determined by "other than peaceful means." Additionally, it promises to provide the island with defensive weapons, and states that it will maintain the capacity to "resist any resort to force or forms of coercion" which would jeopardize security on Taiwan.

China has been building bases on contested islands in the

South China Sea for years, and has more recently been boosting military flights into Taiwan's air defense identification zone. The move, analysts have said, is meant to burn out Taiwan's military, which has been forced to scramble jets in response.

The rift between China and Taiwan dates back decades. Communists won a civil war in China in 1949, forcing their opponents to flee to Taiwan. Beijing has claimed the island as its own territory ever since.

The war game found that the best option was warning the Chinese ahead of time of consequences they would face for moving on the islands, with Japan also playing a significant role, the report says.

# NATO official cites Afghan ‘mission creep’

*Associated Press*

BRUSSELS — NATO’s security operation in Afghanistan became a victim of “mission creep” as the military organization allowed itself to be dragged into helping rebuild the impoverished, conflict-torn country, the official leading a process of drawing lessons from the mission said Wednesday.

Assistant Secretary-General for Operations John Manza and NATO’s 30 deputy national envoys are compiling a report on almost two decades of work in Afghanistan. They were tasked with the job after the Afghan president fled and the NATO-trained Afghan army collapsed when President Joe Biden announced that he was pulling U.S. troops out, paving the way for

the Taliban to seize power.

Manza told European Union lawmakers that of the big lessons being discussed by his team — which also includes input from military and political experts, including from Afghanistan — “the most obvious one is mission creep.”

NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan in 2003, almost two years after a U.S.-led coalition invaded the country to oust the Taliban for harboring Osama bin Laden, the deceased al-Qaida leader.

Manza explained that NATO initially had around 5,000 troops based mostly in and around the capital, Kabul, but that within three years its focus shifted to “tackling the root causes of ter-

rorism” by helping to rebuild a landlocked country riven by ethnic and tribal divisions and with a poorly educated population.

NATO troop numbers increased to around 60,000 by 2006, with military-civilian teams spread around the largely lawless country trying to foster economic growth and better governance in almost every province.

“This really substantial increase did not have the desired effects,” Manza said. “The insurgency was still gaining strength. The nation was still suffering greatly from corruption and governmental performance was not improving.”

Manza said: “You have to ask, and we’ve been asking this a lot in the committee I chair, were

these goals realistic that we had at the time?” He said that even though the international community did not appear to be achieving its goals, “our response to the poor progress ... was to do more.”

Under a “surge” ordered in 2009 by then-U.S. President Barack Obama, NATO troops numbers climbed even more, to over 100,000 while international aid to Afghanistan was substantially increased. The excess aid money began fueling already rampant corruption.

Manza shared initial findings of his committee’s work with NATO defense ministers last week. He is due to submit his final report to the alliance’s foreign ministers when they meet on Nov. 30-Dec. 1.

## Exchanges open online shopping site to DOD and Coast Guard civilians

By JONATHAN SNYDER  
*Stars and Stripes*

Navy and Marine Corps exchanges have opened their shared online shopping site to new clientele: active and retired Defense Department and Coast Guard civilian employees.

Access for those customers started Wednesday, according to a news release that day from Navy Exchange Service Command. Civilians actively working for the DOD and Coast Guard were granted access to brick-and-mortar exchanges on May 1.

“We are excited to welcome these new customers to our NEX online store,” retired Rear Adm. Robert Bianchi, CEO at the Navy Exchange Service Command, said in the release. “Expanding online shopping to a new group of authorized customers will allow us to increase our contribution to

Navy quality of life programs which will greatly benefit our military community.”

In September 2020, the Navy and Marine Corps exchanges unified their online e-commerce portal into one site, mynavyexchange.com. To create an online account, DOD and Coast Guard civilians will need either their DOD ID or the last four digits of their Social Security number and their birthdate. Active and retired DOD and Coast Guard civilian employees must have a U.S. mailing address, including territories and possessions, or an APO or FPO address. The exchange cannot ship merchandise to local addresses in foreign countries.

In 2017, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service opened its online shopping to 22 million honorably discharged veterans and their family members.

## White House skeptical Iran ready to restart nuke talks

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The White House on Wednesday responded skeptically after Iran’s chief negotiator announced that Tehran was ready to return to nuclear negotiations in Vienna by the end of next month.

Ali Bagheri, Iran’s deputy foreign minister and chief negotiator for the talks, in a Twitter posting said Iran has agreed to restart negotiations by the end of November and a date for a resumption of talks “would be announced in the course of the next week.”

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said administration officials were aware of Bagheri’s comments but were waiting for European officials to confirm that Iran is indeed ready to resume talks.

“I would leave to the negotiators to determine when the next round of discussions will be,” Psaki said. “Our framing continues to

be compliance for compliance, and we’ll leave it up to the Europeans and our negotiators to determine when the next step would be.”

Former President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear deal and the U.S. has participated indirectly in the Vienna talks, which were aimed at bringing both Washington and Tehran back into compliance. The talks have been on hiatus since June when Iran’s President Ebrahim Raisi took power.

Bagheri’s signaling that Iran was ready to resume talks comes after U.S. special envoy for Iran Robert Malley said this week there is a “deep and growing” concern in the Biden administration about Iran’s refusal to commit to a date to resume negotiations in Vienna.

The United Nations’ atomic watchdog has said Iran is increasingly in violation of the deal.

# Biden reveals 'historic' domestic policy deal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden declared Thursday that he had reached a “historic economic framework” with Democrats in Congress on his sweeping domestic policy package, a hard-fought yet dramatically scaled-back deal announced hours before he was set to depart for overseas summits.

Biden’s remarks at the White House came after he traveled to Capitol Hill to make the case to House Democrats for the still robust domestic package — \$1.75 trillion of social services and climate change programs the White House believes can pass the 50-50 Senate.

“It will fundamentally change the lives of millions of people for the better,” Biden said at the

White House.

Together with a nearly \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill heading for final votes as soon as Thursday, Biden told lawmakers it would be a domestic achievement greater than those from Franklin Roosevelt or Lyndon Johnson.

“I need your votes,” Biden told the lawmakers earlier, according to a person who requested anonymity to discuss the private remarks.

Biden was eager to have a deal in hand before departing later in the day for global summits. But the revised package has lost some of the Democrats’ top priorities as the president’s ambitions make way for the political realities of the narrowly divided Congress.

Paid family leave and efforts to

lower prescription drug pricing are now gone entirely from the package, according to senior administration officials who requested anonymity to brief reporters about the emerging details.

Still in the mix: free prekindergarten for all youngsters, expanded health care programs — including the launch of a \$35 billion new hearing aid benefit for people with Medicare — and \$555 billion to tackle climate change.

Additionally, there’s a one-year extension of a child care tax credit that was put in place during the COVID-19 rescue and new child care subsidies. An additional \$100 billion to bolster the immigration and border processing system could boost the overall package to \$1.85 trillion if it clears

Senate rules.

With support for even the narrowed package still an issue, Biden said as he left the Capitol, “I think we’re going to be in good shape.”

At least one pivotal holdout, Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., struck a similar tone: “I look forward to getting this done.”

Another holdout, however, Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., was less committal: “This is all in the hands of the House right now.”

In his meeting with lawmakers at the Capitol, Biden said he wanted progress in hand when he arrives in Rome for a global summit to show world leaders, including those in Russia and China, that democracies still work, according to those attending the private meeting.

## US issues 1st passport with ‘X’ gender marker

Associated Press

DENVER — The United States has issued its first passport with an “X” gender designation, marking a milestone in the recognition of the rights of people who do not identify as male or female, and expects to be able to offer the option more broadly next year, the State Department said Wednesday.

The department did not identify the passport recipient, but Dana Zzyym, an intersex activist from Fort Collins, Colo., told The Associated Press in a telephone interview that they received it. Since 2015, Zzyym, who prefers a gender-neutral pronoun, has been in a legal battle with the State Department to obtain a passport that did not require Zzyym to lie about gender by picking either male or female.

Zzyym (pronounced Zimm) picked up the UPS package with the passport after getting

an early morning text and phone call from their lawyer, Paul Castillo of Lambda Legal, saying that it had arrived. Zzyym had stayed up late celebrating Intersex Awareness Day with two visiting activists.

While Zzyym, 63, said it was thrilling to finally get the passport, the goal was to help the next generation of intersex people win recognition as full citizens with rights, rather than travel the globe, Zzyym said.

“I’m not a problem. I’m a human being. That’s the point,” said Zzyym, who has an arm tattoo that reads, “Never give up,” a reminder of goals to accomplish in life.

Zzyym was born with ambiguous physical sexual characteristics but was raised as a boy and had several surgeries that failed to make Zzyym appear fully male, according to court filings. Zzyym served in the Navy as a male but later came to identify as in-

tersex while working and studying at Colorado State University.

The State Department’s denial of Zzyym’s passport prevented Zzyym from being able to go to two Organization Intersex International meetings.

Advocates, who praised the work of Zzyym, said the U.S.’ decision to join over a dozen countries that allow a third-gender option would allow people to travel as their authentic selves and possibly keep them safer doing it.

“Intersex, nonbinary and transgender people need identity documents that accurately reflect who we are, and having mismatched documents can create problems with safety and visibility,” said Mary Emily O’Hara of GLAAD, the world’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) media advocacy organization.

## Outages persist after windstorm batters New England

Associated Press

BOSTON — Utility crews worked Thursday to restore power to hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses in New England after a nor’easter battered the coast with hurricane-

force wind gusts.

More than 300,000 customers lacked service as of Thursday morning, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency reported. Hundreds more outages were reported

across Rhode Island.

It could be a matter of days before power is fully restored in some areas of southeastern Massachusetts, utilities said.

The strongest gust of the storm was recorded at 94 mph

on the island of Martha’s Vineyard, officials said.

Some schools in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island canceled classes Thursday as cleanup continued and residents tallied the damage.



# Kids' vaccines ordered for bases in Europe

By JENNIFER H. SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for 5- to 11-year-olds could be available to U.S. military families in Europe next month, pending emergency use authorization of the shots for younger children.

Army medical facilities in Europe have ordered more than 10,000 doses of the vaccine, but Pfizer won't ship the shots until authorization is granted, said Gino Mattorano, a spokesman for Regional Health Command Europe.

Once that happens, all Army medical treatment facilities in Europe should receive their orders within 7 to 10 business days, he said.

Mattorano said the vaccine supply for the other services in Europe comes from the same source, so he would expect other installations to receive their orders for doses around the same time.

Ramstein Air Base officials said they would work with the Army on administering the vaccine to kids in their community.

Navy medical officials in Italy were not immediately available for comment Thursday.

A panel of independent advisers to the Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday endorsed the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for younger kids.

It concluded that the shot is safe and 90.7% effective in preventing symptomatic coronavirus infections.

The FDA is expected to issue a decision on emergency use authorization soon. If authorized, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would issue its own recommendations and guidelines on administering the vaccine.

The Army plans to coordinate vaccination events for kids with Department of Defense Education Activity schools, Mattorano said. Inoculations will also be available by appointment.

Air Force families in the Kaiserslautern military community will be able to get the shot at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, if need be, he said.

It's possible for children to get the flu and coronavirus vaccine at the same time, Mattorano said. U.S. military bases in Europe are conducting flu vaccination clinics for beneficiaries 4 years old and older.

Younger patients are required to make an appointment for the shot.

Efforts to roll out the vaccine to younger kids come amid an uptick in coronavirus cases at a school on Ramstein Air Base, part of the largest overseas military community. Ramstein Middle School transitioned to remote instruction this week after reporting "a cluster" of new infections on Sunday.

Base officials at Ramstein said this week it was Air Force policy not to disclose case numbers. Despite that, some Air Force bases, particularly in Japan, regularly do so.

On Thursday, the 86th Medical Group announced on its Facebook page that PCR and antigen testing would be available on Friday and Monday "due to a recent increase in COVID-19 cases." The base medical clinic had planned to be closed on those days.

## US unemployment claims drop to new pandemic low

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell to a pandemic low last week as the job market continues to recover from last year's coronavirus recession.

Jobless claims dropped by 10,000 to 281,000, the lowest level since mid-March 2020, the Labor Department said Thursday. Since topping 900,000 in early January, weekly applications have steadily dropped, moving ever closer to pre-pandemic levels just above 200,000.

The four-week average of claims, which smooths out week-to-week gyrations, fell by nearly 21,000 to 299,250, also a pandemic low.

In all, 2.2 million people were collecting unemployment checks the week of Oct. 16, down from 7.7 million a year earlier.

The pandemic slammed the economy in the spring of 2020.

In March and April last year, employers slashed more than 22 million jobs as businesses closed or reduced hours in response to lockdowns and consumers staying home as a health precaution.

The economy recovered with unexpected speed, helped by the rollout of vaccines and generous government relief checks and other spending. By last month, the economy had reclaimed more than 17 million of the lost jobs. But that still remained 5 million short of where the labor market stood in

February 2020.

And hiring slowed sharply last month — to just 194,000 new jobs after averaging 607,000 a month the first eight months of the year.

That is partly because companies can't find enough people to fill their job openings — 10.4 million in August, second-highest in records going back to 2000.

Jobless claims "continue to trend lower, gradually moving closer to levels prevailing prior to the recession," Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, wrote in a research report. "Businesses are holding on to workers amid reports of severe labor shortages.

Many Americans have retired.

## Report: At least 59K meat workers caught virus, 269 died

*Associated Press*

OMAHA, Neb. — At least 59,000 meatpacking workers caught COVID-19 and 269 workers died when the virus tore through the industry last year, which is significantly more than previously thought, according to a new U.S. House report released Wednesday.

The meatpacking industry was one of the

early epicenters of the coronavirus pandemic, with workers standing shoulder-to-shoulder along production lines. The U.S. House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis, which used internal documents from five of the biggest meatpacking companies for its report, said companies could have done more to protect their workers.

The new estimate of infections in the industry is nearly three times higher than the 22,400 that the United Food and Commercial Workers Union has said were infected. And the true number could be even higher because the companies' data didn't generally include coronavirus cases confirmed by outside testing or self-reported by employees.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Bar owner arrested in rape probe involving patrons**

**WA** EVERETT — The owner of an Everett bar has been arrested for investigation of rape involving bar customers.

Christian Sayre, 35, was arrested last week and booked into the Snohomish County Jail for investigation of two counts of second-degree rape and one count of indecent liberties, The Daily Herald reported. He has owned The Anchor Pub since 2014.

Everett police said over the past several years, women and men have reported being sexually assaulted by the bar owner. In a news release, police said victims reported that they went to the bar “where they only had a few drinks but had no recollection of what occurred afterward. ... Upon waking up, the victims believed they had been sexually assaulted.”

**Prosecutors allege judge used AR-15 to menace**

**CO** DENVER — A Colorado state judge charged with felony menacing is accused of using an AR-15 style rifle to intimidate the alleged victim in the case, according to a court filing released Wednesday.

In the document charging Judge Mark Thompson with one count of felony menacing, prosecutors allege he used the rifle to place or attempt to place the alleged victim in fear of imminent seriously bodily injury on July 25. The name of the alleged victim was redacted from the document and there were no details included about what allegedly happened.

Thompson had served as the chief judge for the 5th Judicial District until he was charged Saturday following an investigation by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. Another judge was appointed to fill in as chief judge for the district while Thompson's case

is pending.

Thompson was issued a summons to appear in court on Dec. 17 in response to the charge.

**City settles with stroke victim arrested for DUI**

**CA** GARDEN GROVE — A Southern California city will pay \$500,000 to settle a lawsuit by a woman arrested for driving under the influence when she was actually having a stroke.

The settlement ends a long legal battle over the arrest of Robin Winger, who was pulled over Oct. 31, 2011, while driving her teenage daughter to school, the Orange County Register reported Thursday.

Winger had clipped the mirror of a parked vehicle and appeared confused after the traffic stop. Her daughter told police that her mother didn't feel well and there was something wrong with her, said her attorney, Jerry Steering.

What neither Wagner nor the officer knew was that the woman had suffered a stroke on the left side of her brain, Steering said.

Winger was given a field sobriety test and examined by a police drug recognition expert, who determined she was under the influence. She was booked for DUI at the city jail.

The charges were eventually dropped.

**Gator crawls out of drain at apartment complex**

**AL** MOBILE — An Alabama apartment complex was paid a visit by an unusual guest as children were coming home from school Monday afternoon: an alligator that crawled out of a storm drain.

Kenisha Miller and her boyfriend, Anthony Patterson, told WKRG-TV that they were driving home when they stopped to do a double-take in a downtown Mobile neighborhood.

“We saw a gator coming out of the drainage hole, and I was like, ‘Is that really a gator?’” Miller said.

A school bus was dropping off kids not even 50 feet down the street. Miller and Patterson said other people were initially oblivious to the gator.

Wildlife officials safely captured the alligator and took it away.

**State senator indicted on cash scheme charges**

**TN** NASHVILLE — A Tennessee state senator and a Nashville social club owner were indicted on charges that they violated campaign finance laws by illegally concealing the transfer of \$91,000 during the Republican lawmaker's 2016 failed congressional campaign, federal investigators announced Monday.

A federal grand jury in Nashville handed down the five-count indictment against state Sen. Brian Kelsey and Joshua Smith last week, the acting U.S. attorneys for the state's middle and western districts and an assistant attorney general from the federal Justice Department said in a news release.

Kelsey responded defiantly, calling the charges a “political witch hunt.”

Kelsey and Smith “unlawfully and secretly” funneled funds from Kelsey's state Senate campaign committee to his federal congressional campaign committee, according to the indictment released Monday.

**Citing opioid crisis, city is clearing homeless camp**

**MA** BOSTON — Officials in Boston are beginning to clear a sprawling homeless camp, citing a crisis of opioid addiction there.

Workers with the Boston Public Health Commission's Homeless

Services Bureau on Monday helped people living in the encampment near the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard — an area commonly known as Mass and Cass — pack up their belongings and break down makeshift living spaces.

People's items were placed into large yellow and black plastic storage bins, to be taken away and placed into storage free of charge, The Boston Globe reported.

City officials stressed as the cleanup was underway that “no person will be asked to move their tent as part of this effort without first being offered shelter.”

**Lawmaker won't face charges over texts**

**MI** LANSING — Prosecutors will not charge a Detroit-area lawmaker after an investigation into allegations from a fellow lawmaker who said he sent her threatening text messages following their breakup.

The head of Ingham County's sexual assault/domestic violence unit reviewed an investigative report into Rep. Steve Marino submitted by Michigan State Police to Prosecutor Carol Siemon's office in late September. The official denied prosecution, said Scott Hughes, a spokesman for Siemon's office.

The prosecutor's office did not immediately disclose its reasons for denying prosecution, The Detroit News reported.

Michigan State Police began investigating allegations against Marino earlier this month after Birmingham Democratic Rep. Mari Manoogian, 29, told House leadership that the 31-year-old Harrison Township Republican had sent her threatening texts. Marino was removed from his committee assignments, and the incident was reported to state police.

— From wire reports

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# Rookie Siri helps Astros tie Series

*Associated Press*

HOUSTON — Jose Siri launched himself headfirst into home plate, popped up with arms flexed and screamed with all his might.

Welcome to the World Series, rook.

The career minor leaguer sparked a team whose biggest stars took a while to shine, sending the Houston Astros to a 7-2 victory over the Atlanta Braves on Wednesday night that evened the Fall Classic at one game apiece.

“It’s a long ways from waiver wire and Triple-A to the World Series,” Houston manager Dusty Baker said. “And he’s handled it pretty well.”

Jose Altuve doubled early, homered late and scored twice to break out at the plate. Siri’s speed and aggressive play created havoc on the bases, leading to a four-run second inning that helped the Astros snap a five-game skid at home in the World Series.

It’s the first time they’ve won a Series

game in Houston since a 13-12 victory over the Dodgers in 10 innings in Game 5 on Oct. 29, 2017.

Altuve hit a leadoff double and scored in the first inning before adding a solo homer in the seventh as the October-tested Astros rolled past the suddenly sloppy Braves. It was the 22nd career postseason homer for Altuve, tying Bernie Williams for second-most behind Manny Ramirez (29).

“You can be 0-for-20,” Altuve said. “But what about if you get the big hit? So that’s what playoffs is about.”

Siri and Altuve ignited an offense still waiting on a big swing from Carlos Correa, Alex Bregman and ALCS MVP Yordan Alvarez in this Series.

José Urquidy gave the Astros five solid innings for his second career World Series win and Houston’s bullpen — already so important this postseason — did the rest. Cristian Javier, Phil Maton, Ryan Pressly and Kendall Graveman combined for one-hit

ball over four scoreless innings.

“I was very focused,” said Urquidy, a rookie when he beat Washington in the 2019 Fall Classic. “I love it. I love the feeling.”

The best-of-seven series shifts to Atlanta for the first of three games Friday night, with Ian Anderson scheduled to pitch for the Braves against rookie Luis Garcia.

The Astros jumped on Atlanta starter Max Fried for seven hits and six runs in five-plus innings.

The game was tied at 1 when Kyle Tucker got things going in the second with a one-out single before advancing to third on a single by Yuli Gurriel. The speedy Siri, who made his major league debut Sept. 3, then beat out an infield single to score Tucker and put the Astros on top.

That made Siri the first player to debut in September or later and drive in a run in that year’s World Series.

“Vamos,” Spanish for “let’s go,” he hollered again and again.

## Braves take celebration off the chopping block

*Associated Press*

As the World Series shifts to Atlanta, some TV viewers may be offended to see Braves fans still chopping and chanting in force.

After teams in the NFL and Major League Baseball have dropped names considered racist and offensive to Native Americans, the Braves chop on — with the support of Commissioner Rob Manfred.

What matters most to Manfred is the Braves have the support of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, based in North Carolina about three hours from Atlanta.

“The Native American community in that region is wholly supportive of the Braves program, including the chop,” Manfred said Tuesday. “For me, that’s kind of the end of the story. In that market, we’re taking into account the Native American community.”

Richard Sneed, principal chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, would like to see more outrage about what he says are far bigger issues facing Native Americans, including poverty, unemployment, child abuse, sexual assaults and suicide.

“I’m not offended by somebody waving their arm at a sports game,” Sneed told The Associated Press on Tuesday. “I’m just not. If somebody is, that’s their prerogative, it’s their right. They can be offended. ... I don’t know very many, maybe one or two, from

my tribe who say, ‘Yeah, I don’t like that.’ But at the end of the day we’ve got bigger issues to deal with.”

Sneed said the problems with crime and poverty remain largely ignored when the national attention has been on team names and the tomahawk chop.

“There’s just so much happening and the frustrating part for me as a tribal leader is when the only issue that seems to be discussed is ... ‘How offended are you by the chop and should the Braves change their name?’ ... Really, it’s the least of our problems, I guess is what I’m saying.”

There is no indication the Braves plan to change their name or discourage the chop, which has been a tradition for their fans since the early 1990s. Former Braves outfielder Deion Sanders is credited with bringing the chop, which was part of his college football background at Florida State, to Atlanta.

Sanders, now Jackson State’s football coach, declined an interview request from The Associated Press.

The Braves temporarily attempted to deemphasize the chop in the 2019 NL Division Series against St. Louis after Cardinals reliever Ryan Helsley, a member of the Cherokee nation, said he found it insulting.

Following Helsley’s complaint, the Braves stopped distributing the red foam

tomahawks used by fans doing the chop during the series. They also stopped having the accompanying music played to encourage the chant.

The coronavirus pandemic emptied stadiums and took attention away from it.

Now fans have returned and the chop is fully revived, complete with drumbeats, stadium music and the tomahawk images posted on video boards around Truist Park.

Braves fans even brought the chop and chant to Houston. A small number of fans began doing the chop when the Braves took an early lead Tuesday night in Game 1 and remained in the stadium to pick up the chop again following a 6-2 win.

No dissenting opinion on the chop could be found from a line of fans who were waiting to buy World Series tickets Tuesday morning at Truist Park.

“It’s freaking awesome,” said Sarah Oldham. “I think it’s part of our winning strategy, making all that noise at the stadium. It’s like voodoo going on. I’d be afraid.”

Caleb Godfrey, who works near Truist Park, said “I like it. I love it” when asked about the chop. “I understand both sides of the argument for it and against it, but I also don’t feel like it’s a Redskins scenario where it’s offensive.”

The Braves declined to comment on their renewed support of the chop.



# High stakes for 7-0 Wolverines, Spartans

Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Jim Harbaugh has almost seen it all in the Michigan-Michigan State rivalry.

Harbaugh grew up watching the series as the son of an assistant coach under Bo Schembechler in the 1970s. He played in the rivalry as a star quarterback for the Wolverines, breaking his arm in the 1984 game. He is 3-3 as a coach against the Spartans.

The 57-year-old Harbaugh, though, hasn't experienced anything like this week's matchup because both teams haven't met ranked as high as they are in his lifetime.

No. 6 Michigan (7-0, 4-0 Big Ten) will play at No. 8 Michigan State (7-0, 4-0) on Saturday, when both will be on the same field with a 7-0 record or better for the first time. It will be their 114th meeting.

The game is always a big deal in Michigan, where everyone knows someone who hails for the maize and blue or pulls for the

green and white, regardless of the records and the stakes.

With Big Ten and College Football Playoff ramifications, the game has broad national interest, too. The winner will be in position to contend for a conference championship and perhaps a national title.

"Playoff mindset at this point," Harbaugh said. "Win this game, it'll help your chances."

For just the fifth time, both teams are ranked among the top 10 and for the first time since No. 7 Michigan beat No. 9 Michigan State in 1964. The last time the Wolverines and Spartans were ranked as high as they are this week was 1961, two years before Harbaugh was born, when No. 5 Michigan State shut out No. 6 Michigan.

Fox's "Big Noon Kickoff" show will be in East Lansing, Mich., as expected because the network will carry the game, but "College GameDay" will be there, too, even though the game won't be on ESPN or ABC.

"People outside of the state want to see

what happens because they get caught up in the number before the school's name and it is significant anytime there's a matchup with top-10 teams," ESPN analyst and former Michigan star receiver Desmond Howard said Monday. "It's going to be interesting because we'll learn a lot more about both teams after they play."

Neither team has beaten a team that is currently ranked, but that changes starting this week. Matchups with No. 5 Ohio State and No. 20 Penn State are coming for both over the next month.

Michigan and Michigan State, two of nine undefeated teams in FBS, started the season unranked and one of them will keep climbing with an unblemished record.

"We understand that this is not just another game. We get that," Spartans coach Mel Tucker said. "We know there's a lot of excitement, leading up to this game and surrounding this game. The most important voices will be the voices inside of our building. We need to eliminate distractions."

# Adebayo, Butler pace Heat to win over Nets

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Bam Adebayo had 24 points and nine rebounds to lead the Miami Heat to a 106-93 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday night.

Jimmy Butler added 17 points for Miami (3-1). P.J. Tucker finished with 15, and Tyler Herro and Dewayne Dedmon each had 14.

"We have a bunch of like-minded guys," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "(That's) the way those guys are hard-wired."

A preseason favorite to win the NBA championship, Brooklyn has alternated losses and wins through the first five games of the season and dropped to 2-3. Kevin Durant finished with 25 points and 11 rebounds.

Joe Harris contributed 15 points on 5-for-15 shooting, including 5-for-11 from three-point range. With his third three-pointer of the game, Harris passed Jason Kidd as the franchise's career leader in made three-pointers.

James Harden had 14 points and Bruce Brown chipped in with 12.

**Timberwolves 113, Bucks 108:** D'Angelo Russell scored 29 points, Karl-Anthony Towns and Anthony Edwards each added 25 and Minnesota held on to win at short-handed Milwaukee.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 40 points and 16 rebounds for the Bucks. They were without point guard Jrue Holiday and center Brook Lopez.

Jarred Vanderbilt, making his first start of the season, had 10 points and 13 rebounds for the Timberwolves. Khris Middleton scored 16 points.

**Kings 110, Suns 107:** Harrison Barnes hit a three-pointer over Devin Booker at the buzzer to lift visiting Sacramento to a win over Phoenix.

The Kings led by 13 points in the fourth quarter before the Suns rallied. Booker found Mikal Bridges for an alley-oop dunk with 34 seconds remaining to tie it at 107.

**Raptors 118, Pacers 100:**

Fred VanVleet had a season-high 26 points and a career-high 10 rebounds, OG Anunoby scored a season-high 25 points and Toronto won at home for the first time in 20 months, beating Indiana.

Scottie Barnes had 18 points and seven assists, and fellow rookie Dalano Banton came off the bench to score 10 points to help the Raptors win in Toronto for the first time in four tries this season. VanVleet shot 6-for-7 from three-point range and had six assists.

**Wizards 116, Celtics 107:** Montrezl Harrell scored 25 points on 10-for-13 shooting and had 11 rebounds in Washington's victory at Boston.

Spencer Dinwiddie added 22 points, and Bradley Beal had 17 for the Wizards. They have opened the season 3-1.

**Hornets 120, Magic 111:** Miles Bridges scored 31 points, Gordon Hayward added 24 and Charlotte won at Orlando for its fourth victory in five games.

Bridges, who scored 30 or more points for the third time in four games, hit a three-pointer with 1:02 remaining to put the game away. The Hornets' only loss came in overtime against Boston on Monday night.

**Cavaliers 92, Clippers 79:** Collin Sexton scored 26 points, Darius Garland added 16 and Cleveland led all the way to win for the first time in Los Angeles since March 13, 2016.

Evan Mobley had 12 points and 10 rebounds in his homecoming game. The former Southern California star taken third overall in the draft has scored in double figures in all five games this season.

**Hawks 102, Pelicans 99:** Trae Young scored 31 points and visiting Atlanta had 21 offensive rebounds to hold off New Orleans.

**Trail Blazers 116, Grizzlies 96:** CJ McCollum scored 25 points, Damian Lillard added 20 and host Portland beat Memphis, holding Ja Morant to a season-low 17 points.

# Panthers beat Bruins; 14th to start 7-0-0

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — The Florida Panthers became the 14th team in NHL history to start 7-0-0 by beating the Boston Bruins 4-1 on Wednesday night.

Sergei Bobrovsky made 29 saves for the Panthers, and Eetu Luostarinen scored the go-ahead goal. Anthony Duclair and Mason Marchment also scored, and Owen Tippett added an empty-net goal. Sam Reinhart and Gustav Forsling each had two assists.

Charlie Coyle scored for the Bruins, and Linus Ullmark made 23 saves in his third consecutive start.

Leading 2-1, Florida stretched its lead on Duclair's goal. He brought the puck from the side boards, skated in quickly and backhanded the puck past Ullmark with 7:20 left in the third. Tippett's empty-netter with 25.4 seconds provided the final score.

The Panthers took a 2-1 lead on Luostarinen's goal at 14:16 of the second. Reinhart passed from behind the goal line to Luostarinen in front, who poked in the puck past Ullmark.

Boston took a 1-0 lead on the goal by Coyle at 10:37 of the first. Coyle passed from behind the net and the puck bounced off a Florida player and into the net.

**Maple Leafs 3, Blackhawks 2 (OT):** William Nylander scored in overtime to lift visiting Toronto over Chicago.

The Leafs snapped a four-game losing streak with the victory, and extended the Blackhawks' record to 0-6-1 since the start of the season.

John Tavares and David Kampf also scored for Toronto, and Jack Campbell stopped 25 shots. Chicago got 36 saves from Kevin Lankinen, and goals from Kirby Dach and Alex DeBrincat.

Nylander broke in on a 2-on-0 and snapped a wrist shot past Lankinen in OT.

The Maple Leafs outplayed the Blackhawks as the game went on, but Chicago ended one streak early, taking the lead for the first time this season when Dach beat Campbell with a power-play wrist shot over the glove side 5:44 in.

The Blackhawks had been tied or trailed for more than six

games at that point, the longest such streak in the NHL since 1979-80.

**Red Wings 3, Capitals 2 (OT):** Robby Fabbri tied it early in the third period, captain Dylan Larkin scored in overtime and visiting Detroit came back to beat Washington.

Larkin beat Vitek Vanecsek 1:37 into OT. Adam Erne started the comeback with a goal in the second, and Thomas Greiss made 26 saves for the Red Wings.

Alex Ovechkin scored his eighth goal of the season and Evgeny Kuznetsov his fifth to stake the Capitals to a 2-0 lead. Ovechkin's goal was the 738th of his career, putting him three back of Brett Hull for fourth on the NHL career list.

Aside from those two power-play goals, Washington looked out of sorts against a less-talented opponent and paid the price for a few defensive-zone blunders and bad rebounds.

**Golden Knights 3, Stars 2 (OT):** Evgenii Dadonov scored in overtime to give visiting Las Vegas a comeback victory over Dallas.

Shea Theodore scored the first goal for Vegas, and Jonathan Marchessault tied the game with a shot from the left faceoff dot with a minute left in the third.

Laurent Brossoit made his first start for the Golden Knights and stopped 32 shots.

For the Stars, Luke Glendening and Alexander Radulov scored, and Anton Khudobin had 18 saves.

Vegas had a season-low 21 shots on goal.

**Flyers 5, Oilers 3:** Cam Atkinson scored a pair of goals as visiting Philadelphia prevailed in a slugfest over Edmonton.

Claude Giroux, Nate Thompson and Sean Couturier also scored for the Flyers, and Carter Hart had 34 saves.

Tyson Barrie, Connor McDavid and Zach Hyman scored for the Oilers in their first loss of the season, and Mikko Koskinen had 29 saves.

The first period ended in a flurry of action, as Edmonton tied it on the power play with 18 seconds left and Philadelphia responded with less than a second left.

## Scandal raises questions about Blackhawks' culture

Associated Press

CHICAGO — For three weeks in 2010, they did nothing. That's how long it took for the leadership of the Chicago Blackhawks to act on allegations that an assistant coach sexually assaulted a player.

Three weeks. Three weeks that — more than a decade later — rocked a once-proud franchise and raised more questions about the culture of sports.

In the span of 107 pages, featuring interviews with 139 witnesses, more than 100 gigabytes of electronic records and 49 boxes of hard-copy records, a report by an outside law firm detailed how senior leaders of the Blackhawks seemingly ig-

nored the sexual assault accusations raised with the franchise days before the team won its first Stanley Cup title since 1961.

The ramifications of the independent review, commissioned by the team in response to two lawsuits, stretched into several corners of the NHL, which fined the Blackhawks \$2 million for "the organization's inadequate internal procedures and insufficient and untimely response."

Florida coach Joel Quenneville was slated to meet with NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman on Thursday, and Winnipeg general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff is planning to talk

to the commissioner on Monday. Both were with the Blackhawks when the accusations by Kyle Beach were first reported to team leadership.

According to the report, Donald Fehr, the leader of the NHL players' association, was contacted twice about allegations connected to the assistant coach, including by a Beach confidant. Fehr told investigators he couldn't recall either conversation, but did not deny that they had occurred.

"Kyle Beach has been through a horrific experience and has shown true courage in telling his story," Fehr said in a statement Wednesday night. "There is no doubt that the sys-

tem failed to support him in his time of need, and we are part of that system.

"In his media interview, Mr. Beach stated that several months after the incident he told someone at the NHLPA the details of what happened to him. He is referring to one of the program doctors with the NHL/NHLPA player assistance program. While this program is confidential between players and the doctors, the grave nature of this incident should have resulted in further action on our part. The fact that it did not was a serious failure. I am truly sorry, and I am committed to making changes to ensure it does not happen again."