

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Report: China plans expanded military

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON— China rapidly built up its navy to become the largest in the world and now plans to do the same with its nuclear weapons arsenal as it sets its sights on establishing more military bases and influence around the globe, according to a new Defense Department report released Tuesday.

The Chinese military is being used to advance the nation's foreign policy, particularly with respect to its global interests and its aims to revise aspects of the international order, said Chad Sbragia, the deputy assistant secretary of Defense for China.

"Beijing very much intends or believes it will have to use this military instrument to advance and defend its conception of Chinese sovereignty, security and developmental interests," he said, explaining the findings from the Pentagon's annual report on China's military during an event with the American Enterprise Institute, a think tank in Washington.

His summary highlighted the growth of the Chinese navy and the country's plans

to increase its capability of deploying nuclear weapons.

China now has the world's largest navy with 350 ships and submarines, surpassing the 295 battle force ships in the U.S. Navy. In last year's Pentagon report on China, its Navy was only stated to be the largest in the region.

"China is the top ship-producing nation in the world by tonnage and is increasing its shipbuilding capacity and capability for all naval classes," the report states.

More so, China "will significantly evolve" its nuclear forces through modernizations, including growing its nuclear arsenal. "Over the next decade, China will expand and diversify its nuclear forces, likely at least doubling its nuclear warhead stockpile," according to the new 200-page report.

The report on China's military power is provided to Congress every year. In addition, the Pentagon's 2018 National Defense Strategy has shifted the U.S. military's focus from counterterrorism operations to "great-power competition" with China and Russia. The economic policies of China and

its militarization of the South China Sea and Russia's efforts to undermine NATO and its nuclear arsenal are major concerns for the U.S. military, according to the National Defense Strategy.

China's leaders want to develop their military to be "world-class" by 2049, which the Pentagon interprets to mean to be on par or better than other world powers such as the United States, according to the report.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper, who is traveling through the Indo-Pacific, has repeatedly stated that China and the Indo-Pacific region are his top priorities.

"It is unlikely that the [Communist] party will seek an end state in which China remains in a position of military inferiority vis-a-vis the United States or any other rival. A permanent condition of military inferiority is anathema to the party's goal to transform China into a 'great modern socialist country,'" Sbragia said.

China's military has already surpassed the United States in three areas highlighted in the report: shipbuilding, land-based conventional ballistic and cruise missiles, and integrated air defense systems.

## Coronavirus crisis starting to ease across Sun Belt

*Associated Press*

The torrid coronavirus summer across the Sun Belt is easing after two disastrous months that brought more than 35,000 deaths. Whether the outbreak will heat up again after Labor Day and the resumption of school and football remains to be seen.

Seven of the nine states along the nation's Southern and Western rim are experiencing drops in three important gauges — new deaths, new cases and the percentage of tests coming back positive for the virus. Alabama is the only state in the region where all three numbers are rising; Mississippi's deaths are up, but positive rates and cases are dropping.

In Florida, where reported deaths from COVID-19 are running at about 114 a day on average, down from a peak of 185 in early August, Gov. Ron DeSantis announced Tuesday that he is easing the state's 5-month-old ban on visitors to nursing homes.

"Part of having a healthy society is understanding that human beings seek affection," DeSantis said, his voice cracking at times as he wondered aloud whether his actions had contributed to the suffering by separating the elderly from their loved ones. He paused for about 20 seconds to collect himself.

The governor also said the number of people in Florida hospitals with COVID-19 is down nearly 60% from its peak in July and that newly confirmed cases on Monday dropped below 2,000, the lowest daily total since mid-June.

The U.S. leads the world in coronavirus deaths and confirmed infections after a spring outbreak centered around New York, followed by the summer flareup across the Sun Belt.

As of Tuesday, there were more than 25.3 million confirmed cases and over 850,000 deaths worldwide, according to the tally by Johns Hopkins University, with the U.S.

accounting for more than 6 million infections and 183,000 of the dead.

About 68,000 of the U.S. deaths have come since the start of summer, with the number of infections among Americans nearly tripling during the same period.

"It's been a summer of fire, not ice," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious-disease expert at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. "If anything, we've learned that this virus is even nastier than we thought it was in the spring."

Texas alone amassed more than 10,000 virus deaths in July and August, Florida added over 7,600, and California recorded nearly 7,000. The Sun Belt also includes Arizona, New Mexico, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia.

States across the region began to make progress against the virus after suspending or rolling back business reopenings and taking a harder line on mask-wearing and social distancing.

# Philippine court orders early release of US Marine in killing

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — A Philippine court has ordered the early release for good conduct of a U.S. Marine convicted in the 2014 killing of a transgender Filipino woman, which sparked anger in the former American colony.

The Regional Trial Court Branch 74's order Tuesday for the release of Lance Cpl. Joseph Scott Pemberton drew protests from the family and lawyers of Jennifer Laude, who was found dead in a motel room in Olongapo city, northwest of Manila, after they met at a disco bar in October 2014.

Pemberton has been held six years of a maximum 10-year jail term, mostly in a compound jointly guarded by Philippine and American security personnel at the main military camp in metropolitan Manila.

The place of detention was agreed to under the terms of the treaty allies' Visiting Forces Agreement, although Laude's family had demanded that Pemberton be held in an ordinary jail.

"I deplore the short period of imprisonment meted on Pemberton, who killed a Filipino under the most gruesome manner," said presidential spokesman Harry Roque, who once served as the Laude family's lawyer. "Laude's death personifies the death of Philippine sovereignty."

"The light penalty imposed on Pemberton proves that despite the president's independent foreign policy, Americans continue to have the

status of conquering colonials in our country," Roque said.

Pemberton's lawyer, Rowena Garcia Flores, said his detention was shortened by authorities under a Philippine law that also applies to Filipinos. If all of Pemberton's good-conduct merits in jail were applied, "he's already overstaying," she said by phone.

Military spokesman Maj. Gen. Edgard Arevalo said the military will help Bureau of Corrections jail personnel release Pemberton once it receives the court order.

In December 2015, a judge convicted Pemberton of homicide, not the more serious charge of murder as prosecutors sought.

The Olongapo court judge said at the time that she downgraded the charge because factors such as cruelty and treachery had not been proven.

Pemberton, an anti-tank missile operator from New Bedford, Mass., was one of thousands of American and Philippine military personnel who participated in joint exercises in the country in 2014. He and a group of other Marines were on leave after the exercises and met Laude and her friends at a bar in Olongapo, a city known for its nightlife outside Subic Bay, a former U.S. Navy base.

Laude was later found dead, her head slumped in a toilet bowl in a motel room, where witnesses said she and Pemberton checked in. A witness told investigators that Pemberton said he choked Laude after discovering she was transgender.

## Pioneering Black Marine vet honored

By J.P. LAWRENCE

Stars and Stripes

A 95-year-old veteran who was one of the nation's first African American U.S. Marines received a medal and a car parade from the New York Senate as a birthday present.

The recognition was long overdue for Ambrose "Cowboy" Anderson of Gloversville, N.Y., said a statement by state Sen. Jim Tedisco, who on Friday presented him with the New York State Liberty Medal, one of the state's highest honors for service and valor.

Anderson served during World War II after joining the Marine Corps in 1943. He was assigned to the segregated Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, N.C., where many Black Marines endured prejudice and racism, the statement said.

Anderson hauled ammunition and supplies to infantry units while under fire during the Battle of Iwo Jima, the statement said.

The battle, which resulted in the American capture of the island and its airfields, left about 25,000 Marine casualties and 7,000 dead, as well as an estimated 18,000 Japanese dead, according to U.S. figures. The Associated Press photo of Marines planting the U.S. flag atop Mount Suribachi became one of the most enduring images of the war.

When the war ended, Anderson, a corporal, continued to serve in Japan during the U.S. occupation.

During the ensuing peace, Black Marines were forced to leave Navy ships from the rear, Anderson told the Times Union, adding that he still had bitter feelings about his time in the service.

He and other Montford Point Marines have since received the Congressional Gold Medal after it was authorized in 2011.

## Bush leaves dry dock on time

By CHRISTIAN LOPEZ

Stars and Stripes

The aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush recently left dry dock at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Va., after 18 months of its planned two-year overhaul.

This is the Bush's most extensive maintenance period and marked its first time out of water since it was built, according to a Navy statement Saturday.

Work on the 1,092-foot-long carrier began in 2006; it was commissioned in January 2009. Its overhaul was the most complex undertaken at the shipyard to date, according to the Navy.

The Bush "undocked" on schedule Saturday despite challenges surrounding the coronavirus pandemic. It moved to a pier adjacent the USS Harry S. Truman, which arrived for maintenance in July, the Navy said. This is the first time two carriers have shared a pier in the shipyard's history.

"We have been laser-focused throughout on getting Bush out of dock on time, and the folks that worked throughout the pandemic kept us on schedule," Jeff Burchett, project superintendent, said in the Navy statement. "They stepped up their game, and it was incredible

how they kept us going to make us successful."

While the carrier is at the pier, a shipyard team will start restoring its living areas ahead of the final phase of the maintenance period and before the crew comes back on board, according to the Navy.

"I know how important undocking is to this availability," Burchett said. "What's even more important is getting the ship back to the Fleet to conduct its mission. There's a quote from George H.W. Bush himself that we took on as the project team motto: 'This is my mission and I will complete it.'"



# Trump denounces Kenosha violence in visit

Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. — President Donald Trump stood at the epicenter of the latest eruption over racial injustice Tuesday and came down squarely on the side of law enforcement, blaming “domestic terror” for the violence in Kenosha, Wis., and making no nod to the underlying cause of anger and protests — the shooting of yet another Black man by police.

Trump declared the violence “anti-American.” He did not mention Jacob Blake, who was left paralyzed after being shot in the back seven times by an officer last week in Kenosha.

Soon after arriving in the city, a visit made over the objections of state and local leaders, Trump toured the charred remains of a block besieged

by violence and fire. With the scent of smoke still in the air, he spoke to the owners of a century-old store that had been destroyed and continued to link the violence to the Democrats, blaming those in charge of Kenosha and Wisconsin while raising apocalyptic warnings if their party should capture the White House.

“These are not acts of peaceful protest but, really, domestic terror,” said Trump. And he condemned Democratic officials for not immediately accepting his offer of federal enforcement assistance, claiming, “They just don’t want us to come.”

The city has been the scene of protests since the Aug. 23 shooting of Blake, who was shot as he tried to get into a car

while police were trying to arrest him. Protests have been concentrated in a small area of Kenosha. While there were more than 30 fires set in the first three nights, the situation has calmed since then.

Trump’s motorcade passed throngs of demonstrators, some holding American flags in support of the president, others jeering while carrying signs that read Black Lives Matter. A massive police presence, complete with several armored vehicles, secured the area, and barricades were set up along several of the city’s major thoroughfares to keep onlookers at a distance from the passing presidential vehicles.

Offering federal resources to help rebuild the city, Trump toured a high school that had

been transformed into a heavily fortified law enforcement command post. He said he tried to call Blake’s mother but opted against it after the family asked that a lawyer listen in.

Trump later added he felt “terribly” for anyone who suffered a loss, but otherwise only noted that the situation was “complicated” and “under investigation.” The only words acknowledging the concerns of African Americans came from a pastor who attended Trump’s law enforcement roundtable.

Pressed by reporters, Trump repeatedly pivoted away from assessing any sort of structural racism in the nation or its police departments, instead blasting what he saw as anti-police rhetoric.

## Blowback is fierce after task force targets DC monuments

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A task force commissioned by the Washington, D.C., government has recommended renaming, relocating or adding context to dozens of monuments, schools, parks and buildings because of their namesakes’ participation in slavery or racial oppression. Among the targets are the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial.

Some of the proposals in the report released Tuesday are definite nonstarters, as many of the most prominent monuments and statues stand on federal land, outside D.C. government control. Still, the recommendations have already prompted fierce reactions.

“As long as President [Donald] Trump is in the White House, the mayor’s irresponsible recommendations will go absolutely nowhere, and as the mayor of our Nation’s capital city — a city that belongs to the American people — she ought to be ashamed for even suggesting them for consideration,” White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said in a statement Tuesday.

The task force, known as DCFACES (District of Columbia Facilities and Commemorative Expressions), was formed by Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser over the summer in the face of a nationwide wave of protests over police brutality and systemic racial inequities. It released a 24-page executive summary Tuesday.

Some of the group’s recommendations were widely expected; for example, Woodrow Wilson High School has been a prime candidate for a name change for years due to Wilson’s open public support for segregation. Others are more controversial, such as proposals to rename schools named for Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and “The Star-Spangled Banner” composer Francis Scott Key.

For statues and monuments on federal land, the committee advises Bowser to ask the federal government to “remove, relocate, or contextualize” landmarks such as the Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial and the statue of Christopher Columbus outside Union Station.

## Germany: Navalny poisoned with Soviet-era nerve agent

Associated Press

BERLIN — Germany’s foreign minister says the Russian ambassador has been summoned and told that Berlin expects a full and transparent investigation of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny’s poisoning.

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said it is important that those responsible are found and held to account for the sickening of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s fiercest critic.

Maas spoke after the German government said new testing had proven the presence of the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok in samples from Navalny, who is being treated at the Charite, a Berlin hospital.

Novichok is a class of nerve agents identified in a 2018 attack on a former Russian spy and his daughter in England.

Maas says the German government hopes Navalny will be able to make a complete recovery quickly.

Chancellor Angela Merkel’s spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said in a statement that testing by a special German military

laboratory at the Charite’s request had now shown “proof without doubt of a chemical nerve agent from the Novichok group.”

“It is a dismaying event that Alexei Navalny was the victim of an attack with a chemical nerve agent in Russia,” Seibert said. “The German government condemns this attack in the strongest terms.”

Germany demanded a response from the Russian government. The Kremlin said Wednesday it hadn’t been informed yet of Navalny being poisoned with a nerve agent.

Seibert said the German government would inform its partners in the European Union and NATO about the test results. He said that it will consult with its partners in light of the Russian response “on an appropriate joint response.” Germany will also contact the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, he added.

Navalny’s allies in Russia have insisted he was deliberately poisoned by the country’s authorities, accusations that the Kremlin rejected as “empty noise.”



# CDC urges halt to evictions to stop spread

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has issued a directive halting the eviction of certain renters through the end of 2020 to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Federal, state and local governments have approved eviction moratoriums during the course of the pandemic for many renters, but those protections are expiring rapidly. A recent report from one think tank, the Aspen Institute, stated that more than 20 million renters live in households that have suffered COVID-19-related job losses, and concluded that millions more are at risk of eviction in the next several months.

The administration's action stems from an executive order that President Donald Trump issued in early August. It instructed federal health officials to consider measures to temporarily halt evictions. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention followed up Tuesday by declaring that any landlord shall not evict any "covered person" from any residential property for failure to pay rent.

Renters covered through the executive order must meet four criteria. They must have an income of \$198,000 or less for couples filing jointly, or \$99,000 for single filers, demonstrate they have sought government assistance to make their rental payments, affirmatively declare they are unable to pay rent because of COVID-19 hardships and affirm they are likely to become homeless if they are evicted.

## Alaska

ANCHORAGE — The largest school district in Alaska to open for in-person classes has shifted to online learning only for three schools after five new cases of COVID-19 were confirmed.

The new infections emerged among three schools in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, Alaska Public Media reported.

Colony middle and high

schools plan distance learning until next Tuesday, while the district said an update is pending on how long Pioneer Peak Elementary will be closed to in-person classes.

The schools will be cleaned, and public health officials will notify any families with children who are considered close contacts of those who tested positive for COVID-19.

## Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is canceling some of its remaining orders for ventilators, after rushing to sign nearly \$3 billion in emergency contracts as the COVID-19 pandemic surged in the spring.

The Department of Health and Human Services issued a statement Tuesday affirming that the national stockpile has now reached its maximum capacity for the life-saving breathing machines, with nearly 120,000 available for deployment to state and local health officials. Though the orders were billed as a cost-saving measure, Democrats said the cancellations show the White House vastly overspent in its quest to fulfill President Donald Trump's pledge to make the United States the "King of Ventilators."

The agency didn't have an estimate for how much taxpayers would save by canceling the contracts because the terms and potential penalties for the early terminations were still being negotiated with the companies involved.

## Florida

MIAMI — A cyberattack and a software glitch plagued Florida's largest school district during the first two days of its virtual start to the school year, officials said Tuesday.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho said during a news conference that the district suffered a distributed denial of service attack Monday morning as a software glitch blocked

access to the district's servers, the Miami Herald reported. The glitch and DDoS attack rendered multiple online school district features useless and teaching nearly impossible.

The FBI and Secret Service have been called in and subpoenaed the school district's internet provider, Carvalho said. He added that the glitch has been completely resolved and optimized.

## Maryland

ANNAPOLIS — All businesses in Maryland will be able to open this week as the state enters the third phase of its coronavirus recovery plan, Gov. Larry Hogan announced Tuesday.

Movie theaters and performing arts centers will be able to open at 50% capacity beginning at 5 p.m. Friday. Up to 100 people will be allowed at indoor venues, or 250 people at outdoor venues.

All retail stores as well as churches and houses of worship will be able to increase capacity from 50% to 75%. Local jurisdictions will still be able to decide not to open as much as the state plan allows.

The governor said the state has continued to see declining numbers in key health metrics. Maryland's statewide positivity rate is down to 3.39%, Hogan said.

## Nevada

LAS VEGAS — Tens of thousands of working or furloughed employees at the two largest Las Vegas casino companies will keep family health benefits until March 1 under an agreement involving unions representing bartenders and culinary workers, officials said.

The pact affects about 36,000 union workers at 22 Las Vegas Strip properties, the unions said.

It came the same day casino giant MGM Resorts International laid off about 18,000 employees at locations around the United States. It followed months of negotiations over

worker safety and job protections begun when casinos were closed in mid-March because of the coronavirus pandemic.

## New Mexico

SANTA FE — New Mexico health officials reported 110 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and eight related deaths Tuesday.

The Dona Ana County area that includes Las Cruces led all counties in terms of new infections with 32 cases. Cumulative statewide deaths from the coronavirus now number 787.

The seven-day rolling average of daily new cases in New Mexico has decreased over the past two weeks, going from 156 new cases per day on Aug. 17 to 127 new cases per day on Aug. 31. That's according to an analysis by The Associated Press of data collected by Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering.

## New York

NEW YORK — New York City postponed students' return to classrooms by more than a week to keep working on coronavirus safety precautions, announcing the delay Tuesday after teachers said they might OK a strike over the city's drive to open schools.

The change came nine days before the nation's largest public school system was set to resume teaching students face-to-face.

Now, instead of starting a mix of in-person and remote learning Sept. 10, the city's more than 1 million public school students will start remote-only classes Sept. 16. In-school instruction will begin Sept. 21.

That time is to be spent finishing virus-safety steps that were already planned and working out some new provisions, including random testing of 10% to 20% of all students and staffers per month. That's intended to get a handle on whether people without symptoms might be in schools and potentially infectious.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Base sees first green sea turtle hatchlings

**HI** HONOLULU — Hawaiian green sea turtle hatchlings appeared for the first time on an Oahu beach owned by the U.S. military, which wildlife experts believe may be partly a result of the coronavirus.

Experts said there have never before been hatched eggs from the threatened turtle species on U.S. Marine Corps Base Hawaii Training Area Bellows Beach, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

Experts could not conclusively say why the mother turtles used the milelong expanse for the first time, but suspect the nesting occurred because the beach was empty due to state health restrictions.

## Official apologizes for 'fried chicken' remark

**LA** NEW ORLEANS — A New Orleans City Council member apologized for describing a preference among residents of part of her predominantly Black district for "greasy fried chicken" restaurants, comments she made while discussing the district's slow business recovery 15 years after Hurricane Katrina.

The Times-Picayune New Orleans Advocate reported Councilmember Cyndi Nguyen said her comments about constituents in the Lower 9th Ward in an earlier story in the newspaper were taken out of context.

The comments came when Nguyen responded to a question about what kind of commerce the neighborhood can realistically support, given its shrunk-en population since Katrina.

"I'll be candid — having Wal-Mart come to the neighborhood, it ain't gonna happen," she said

in the interview.

She went on: "This is just a reality, OK, and this is not putting anybody down: I think people in the Lower Nine like those greasy fried chicken" places, Nguyen said.

## 54 guinea pigs rescued from hoarding situation

**WA** SEABECK — Dozens of guinea pigs were rescued from a home in Seabeck in what the Kitsap Humane Society called a "hoarding situation."

Fifty-four of the animals were moved from the home and 12 of them were pregnant at the time, KOMO-TV reported.

Humane Society spokesperson Rhonda Manville said they would call it a hoarding situation that got out of hand because the animals were kept in poor, crowded conditions and they reproduce easily.

Manville said they received an anonymous tip, prompting an investigation.

She said that they don't intend to criminally charge the owner formally because he cooperated during the rescue and surrendered all animals.

## Police believe suspect shot, killed accomplice

**PA** WILKINSBURG — Police in western Pennsylvania believe a home invasion suspect shot and killed an accomplice as they tried to flee the scene, according to a preliminary investigation.

The events unfolded when two men stopped a female at gunpoint and entered the home, Allegheny County Police said.

According to police, two armed male residents confronted the intruders and one of the suspects opened fire as he fled out the front door while the second intruder fled out the

back door.

Officers found the body of a 29-year-old man who was wearing a ski mask nearby.

Detectives said the armed residents did not return fire and the preliminary investigation suggested the dead man was struck by gunfire from his accomplice.

## Crabber runs out of fuel; stranded for several days

**WA** MT. VERNON — A member of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community reported missing in mid-August is back home after spending several days stranded in a boat that ran out of fuel followed by six days detained in Canada.

Michael Smith Jr. set out Aug. 17 for crab fishing the next day around Blaine. He was last seen on the boat, an 18-foot skiff, that day.

Shortly after that, the boat ran out of fuel and Smith drifted into Boundary Bay, near the international border, the Skagit Valley Herald reported.

Smith spent three nights drifting with no food or water, Swinomish Police Department Lt. Earl Cowan said. He reached land Aug. 20 and contacted his family.

## 2 arrested after theft of 4 trucks from dealer

**AL** PELL CITY — Police arrested two men and are looking for other suspects in the theft of four vehicles from an Alabama dealership.

Police told WBRC-TV that four people were dropped off at McSweeney Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram in Pell City by someone in a Dodge Challenger stolen in Georgia. The people broke into the dealership, stole keys and then drove off in three Dodge Ram pickups and a Jeep

Grand Cherokee.

St. Clair County deputies stopped the Challenger and arrested Timothy Floyd King, 50, charging him with burglary and multiple vehicle thefts.

Another man, Harold Lorenzo Carey, 58, was arrested after a crash involving another stolen vehicle. He, too, is charged with burglary and multiple vehicle thefts.

Two other stolen vehicles were located in the East Lake section of Birmingham. Authorities were still looking for suspects.

## Mayor charged after excavator damaged

**GA** NASHVILLE — A south Georgia mayor was arrested after a contractor alleged the mayor used an excavator without permission and damaged it.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation said that it had arrested Nashville Mayor Taylor Scarbrough on theft by conversion and theft of services charges.

Scarbrough turned himself in at the Berrien County jail and was released.

GBI said that Scarbrough used James Hobbs' excavator without permission and caused "significant damage" to the machine. Hobbs values the damage at \$12,000.

WALB-TV reported that Hobbs was working for Scarbrough and left his excavator on the mayor's land overnight. An incident report said a worker noted the next day that the equipment had been damaged. Hobbs said Scarbrough didn't have permission to use the equipment.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Roar of the crowd not an option in NFL

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — The jokes write themselves: The Jacksonville Jaguars are going to play home games in front of a significantly reduced number of fans this season.

“How’s that different than any other year?”

Don’t laugh. The Jaguars — along with Atlanta, Cincinnati, Miami, Tampa Bay and others — might be better equipped to handle the NFL’s drastic change in hometown support. They’ve dealt with it for years.

Videoboard enhancements? Player-generated content? On-field celebrations recognizing community heroes and military veterans? Some NFL teams have been doing those and more for decades to help offset fewer butts in seats.

“One of the unfortunate advantages of being in a smaller market like Jacksonville is we have to get a little more creative in terms of how we create that home-field advantage,” Jaguars President Mark Lamping said. “We’d have to do that if it’s normal capacity or not.”

Twenty-one of the NFL’s 32 teams have ruled out spectators for the start of the season, with Buffalo, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, Minnesota and San Francisco the latest to announce plans Tuesday. At least eight are preparing to host a limited number of fans.

The bottom line: home-field advantages created by generations of fandom — most notably and noticeable in Green Bay, Kansas City, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Seattle — could be momentarily wiped out by the coronavirus pandemic.

Teams are adjusting.

New-age videoboards and top-of-the-line sound systems are taking center stage and assuming the all-important role of helping hype players in home venues. Those extras could spill into living rooms as several teams, including Jacksonville, are launching phone apps designed to provide in-stadium experiences to those watching from couches and comfy chairs.

Want to see player introductions? Want to experience a military flyover just before kickoff? The Jaguars are giving fans at home a peek through their new app.

The television product, meanwhile, might not look a whole lot different aside from empty venues or sparse crowds. The NFL’s TV partners are expected to add fan reaction to broadcasts.

For players and fans on hand, the voids will be filled by simulated crowd noise. The NFL is expected to allow 80 decibels piped in, a number many teams are already using during training camp practices and scrimmages.

General managers, coaches and team officials are preparing to play with that simulated crowd noise. Normal conversa-

tion is about 60 decibels. Double that for a rock concert. Eighty decibels equate to being in heavy traffic or next to a lawn mower. Anything above 85 is considered dangerous, depending on the duration of the exposure.

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Kansas City’s Arrowhead Stadium holds the record for the loudest NFL game. Chiefs fans registered 142.4 decibels on Sept. 29, 2014, while hosting the New England Patriots on Monday Night Football.

Going from 80,000 die-hards to 80 decibels will sound like relative silence for anyone accustomed to a raucous, three-hour Sunday afternoon.

“I’m a defensive guy, so I need fans,” Philadelphia Eagles cornerback Nickell Robey-Coleman said. “I love my fans. That’s a big edge. People don’t know how much it affects offense. It affects receivers, especially when the momentum is on the defensive side. It becomes a mental game, almost. Fans yelling, crowd going crazy, people are just raving. You can get caught up in that.”

Miami Dolphins offensive coordinator Chan Gailey questioned how the piped-in noise will be monitored.

“Who controls the volume on that?” Gailey said. “If you get a homer that slips that volume a little bit louder on third down, I’m not sure I’m for that a lot.”

## Murray rallies from two sets down to defeat Nishioka

Associated Press

NEW YORK — This is was the sort of match Andy Murray came back for, the sort of competition and comeback he always lived for, the reason he went through two hip operations and all the hard work that followed.

And it was the type of vintage Murray performance — undaunted by a deficit, adjusting on the fly, muttering all the way — that was too compelling not to watch, so while there are no fans allowed into this U.S. Open because of the pandemic, fellow pros made their way into the stands to see the popular 2012 champion save a match point Tuesday and, eventually, win.

Playing his first Grand Slam match in nearly 20 months, toiling on his metal hip for 4 hours,

39 minutes in Arthur Ashe Stadium, Murray put together his 10th career comeback from two sets down and beat Yoshihito Nishioka 4-6, 4-6, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (4), 6-4.

“It was pretty emotional straight after the match finished, when I got back to the locker room — sort of look at my phone, see the messages from family and friends, the team and stuff. They’re the people that have kind of seen me go through everything, been there, seen the tough times,” said Murray, who next plays 15th-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime, a 20-year-old from Canada.

“I don’t know how many of us actually believed I’d be back kind of winning matches like that.”

Murray’s big concern after the match was whether he could get permission to use the ice bath in the Ashe locker room (he later said he did).

“They said it’s for emergencies. For me, this is an emergency right now. My body hurts,” said the 33-year-old Murray, who was treated for blisters on his two big toes by a trainer during a medical timeout. “That’s by far the most tennis I’ve played since 2019, really.”

And so many of the sport’s biggest names were there to witness it.

They included Novak Djokovic, Dominic Thiem, Naomi Osaka, Garbine Muguruza and others, some noshing while sitting on the balconies of their personal “lounges” — Ashe

suites that normally bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars during this tournament but were assigned to seeded players because of the ban on spectators.

The Murray match provided the most entertainment in the afternoon of Day 2 at Flushing Meadows, where his lengthy victory was followed in Ashe by a straight-set win for Serena Williams.

She then went out and sat in the stands to watch her older sister, Venus, take on 20th-seeded Karolina Muchova at night. Muchova won 6-3, 7-5, making it the first loss for Venus in the opening round in New York.

In night play, 2019 men’s runner-up Daniil Medvedev beat Federico Delbonis 6-1, 6-2, 6-4.



## NBA roundup

## Celtics take 2-0 lead over Raptors

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Marcus Smart didn't like a call that went against him late in the third quarter, a moment that made it seem like the Toronto Raptors were taking control against the Boston Celtics.

So, in the fourth quarter, he took matters into his own hands.

Smart changed the game with 16 points in a dazzling three-minute stretch early in the fourth, Jayson Tatum led everybody with 34 points and the Celtics have the reigning NBA champions in serious trouble. Boston topped Toronto 102-99 on Monday night, taking a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference semifinal matchup.

"Once I saw the first one go in, I knew," Smart said.

He was right.

Smart made five three-pointers in a span of 3:04, turning the last of those into a four-

point play as the Celtics erased what had been a 12-point deficit late in the third. Kemba Walker scored 11 of Boston's final 16 points from there, the last of them a stepback jumper in the final minute, and the Celtics added to a season of mastery over the Raptors.

Not only do they lead the series 2-0, but they're 3-0 against Toronto in the NBA's restart bubble and 5-1 against it this season.

Smart scored 19 points, Walker had 17 and Jaylen Brown scored 16 for Boston.

OG Anunoby had 20 points for the Raptors, who got 19 from Fred VanVleet — who missed a 28-footer as time expired. Serge Ibaka and Pascal Siakam scored 17 points apiece and Kyle Lowry added 16 for Toronto.

"The shots are there," Lowry said. "We just have to make them. ... All we've got to do is get one game."

The Raptors had the Celtics under control late in the third quarter, taking a 12-point lead — the momentum seeming like it had swung on an overturned call that, correctly, went Toronto's way. A layup by VanVleet, followed by a free throw from Siakam after officials reversed a call that he said he fouled Smart, gave the Raptors a 78-66 lead with 2:46 left in the third.

Toronto scored only nine points in the next 10:39, and missed 23 of its final 28 shots overall. But just when things looked like they had gone totally awry, the Raptors scored five straight to make it a 95-92 game with 3:35 left, and they got within one on a pair of free throws by Lowry with 1:01 remaining.

They didn't score again. And just as last year against Milwaukee, Toronto is in an 0-2 hole.

**Nuggets 80, Jazz 78:** Niko-

la Jokic made the tiebreaking basket with 27 seconds left and Denver advanced to the second round of the playoffs, beating Utah when Mike Conley's three-pointer spun out at the buzzer.

The Nuggets became the 12th team in NBA history to overcome a 3-1 deficit to win a series, but only after they blew a 19-point lead in this game.

After Jokic's basket, the Jazz got the ball to Donovan Mitchell following a timeout. The Nuggets stole it from him and raced down for a fast break, but Torrey Craig missed the layup. Utah rebounded and pushed the ball up the floor to Conley, whose jumper looked good all the way until it fell out.

Jokic had 30 points and 14 rebounds and Jamal Murray scored 17 points. No. 3 seed Denver advanced to face the second-seeded Los Angeles Clippers in the Western Conference semifinals.

## NHL roundup

## Flyers, Canucks win Game 5, stave off elimination

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Philadelphia Flyers and their big boy pants are sticking around the Toronto bubble for at least one more game.

Scott Laughton scored on a redirect in overtime after Philadelphia blew a late two-goal lead, helping the Flyers stave off elimination with a 4-3 win over the New York Islanders on Tuesday night.

Philadelphia coach Alain Vigneault called on his top players to "put on their big boy pants" for Game 5.

"The big boy pants is something they're aware of," Vigneault said. "They don't need me to motivate them. They're a group that motivates themselves."

Claude Giroux and James van Riemsdyk responded to their coach's urging with their sticks, scoring their first post-season goals after New York went up 1-0 on Josh Bailey's first-period goal. Matt Niskanen added his first playoff goal early in the third period to put the Flyers up 3-1.

The scrappy Islanders made a big push late, though, tying it on goals by Brock Nelson and Derick Brassard 93 seconds apart.

"The third period we were coming," New York coach Barry Trotz said.

Flyers goalie Carter Hart, who stopped 29 shots, made some spectacular saves in overtime and Laughton redirected Ivan Provorov's shot at 12:20 to

pull Philadelphia within 3-2 in the best-of-seven second-round series. Game 6 is Thursday in the Toronto bubble.

"In games like this, you need everyone pulling the rope and moving in the right direction," van Riemsdyk said. "Everyone did their job and played their role tonight."

**Canucks 2, Golden Knights 1:** At Edmonton, Alberta, Elias Pettersson scored the go-ahead goal early in the third period, Thatcher Demko made 42 saves in his first NHL playoff start and Vancouver staved off elimination by beating Vegas in Game 5 of their second-round series.

The Western Conference top-seeded Golden Knights outshot the Canucks 43-17 and

only cracked Demko once, on a highlight reel goal by defenseman Shea Theodore in the second. Brock Boeser also scored for Vancouver and got the primary assist on Pettersson's goal by taking the shot the 21-year-old Swede deflected past Robin Lehner.

Because of Demko's dominant performance in net and timely scoring, there will be a Game 6 on Thursday night. The Canucks joined the Colorado Avalanche and Philadelphia Flyers as teams down 3-1 this round to force a Game 6. The winner of this series will face the winner of the Stars-Avalanche series in the Western final.

# Dickerson's 3 HRs lead Giants' rout

Associated Press

DENVER — Alex Dickerson hit three home runs and matched a career high with six RBIs, highlighting one of the biggest offensive shows ever at Coors Field as the San Francisco Giants beat the Colorado Rockies 23-5 on Tuesday night.

"That's by far the best game I've ever had in my life," said Dickerson, who just missed hitting a fourth home run in his final at bat in the ninth, settling for a 414-foot double that reached the warning track

in center, the deepest part of the field.

"I don't think I've seen that many barreled balls from one guy in one game before," said Brandon Crawford, who also homered among his three hits and had six RBIs. "I thought he got that last one, too. That would have been pretty cool."

Dickerson finished with 16 total bases (three homers, two doubles), tying the Giants' franchise record set by Willie Mays on April 30, 1961 at the Milwaukee Braves.

"It's incredible company," Dickerson

said. "The things he did in his career and everything he means to San Francisco, to even be mentioned in the same breath as him is an incredible honor."

Donovan Solano also had four hits and six RBIs. Brandon Belt and Joey Bart added three hits apiece as the Giants collected 27 hits and scored in every inning except the ninth.

"There were plenty of good performances to go around, up and down the lineup," San Francisco manager Gabe Kapler said.

## MLB roundup

# Cards' Miller has 7 RBIs in romp of Reds

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Brad Miller homered twice and drove in a career-high seven runs, and the St. Louis Cardinals pounded Sonny Gray on the way to a 16-2 defeat of the Cincinnati Reds on Tuesday, their third straight win.

Miller sparked St. Louis' six-run first inning against Gray (5-2) with a two-run double that glanced off the glove of diving first baseman Joey Votto and bounced down the line. He hit a two-run shot in the second, an RBI single in the fifth and another two-run homer in the eighth.

Kolten Wong went 4 for 4 and scored four times as the Cardinals set season highs for runs and hits with 23. Kwang Hyun Kim (2-0) pitched five scoreless innings for the win.

It was the worst loss of the season for the free-falling Reds, who have dropped three straight and four of five.

**Yankees 5, Rays 3:** New York closer Aroldis Chapman threw a 101 mph fastball near the head of pinch-hitter Michael Brosseau while closing out his first save of the season, prompting the benches to empty after the Yankees ended a six-game losing streak against Tampa Bay.

Chapman's first pitch to Brosseau with two outs in the ninth inning whizzed past

Brosseau's head, and umpires met before issuing warnings to both benches amid a budding rivalry that's been dominated this season by Tampa Bay.

Chapman struck out Brosseau to end it, and Brosseau began walking toward the visiting dugout before turning back to exchange words with someone on the Yankees. The dugouts and benches emptied and players gathered near home plate, but they mostly kept their distance before dispersing to their respective clubhouses.

**Phillies 6, Nationals 0:** Aaron Nola tossed two-hit ball over eight innings, Andrew McCutchen hit a three-run homer and Alec Bohm also went deep to lead host Philadelphia past Washington.

Nola (4-2) threw 113 pitches in his latest dominant outing before he yielded to Hector Neris for the ninth. He struck out nine and allowed two or fewer runs for the fifth time this season.

Bohm's solo shot to left field for his second homer of the season and J.T. Realmuto's RBI single off Nationals starter Patrick Corbin (2-3) gave the Phillies a two-run lead in the fifth.

**Orioles 9, Mets 5:** Renato Nunez hit two home runs, Anthony Santander also went deep and Baltimore dealt visiting New York its fifth straight loss.

Nunez hit a three-run drive off Mets newcomer Ariel Jura to give the Orioles an early lead. After New York made it 5-all, Santander's 11th homer of the season capped a three-run sixth against Franklyn Kilome (0-1).

**Marlins 3, Blue Jays 2:** Starling Marte celebrated his Miami debut with a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning in a win over visiting Toronto.

Marte, who was acquired in a trade with Arizona on Monday, drove a 1-0 pitch from Shun Yamaguchi (1-3) deep to left-center for his third homer. He also reached on an error in the sixth and scored from first on Garrett Cooper's double.

**Braves 10, Red Sox 3:** Marcell Ozuna hit three home runs in a game for the first time in his career and finished with six RBIs, leading Atlanta in a rout at Boston.

Ozuna, who was 3-for-5, hit a two-run homer in the first inning, a solo shot in the seventh and a three-run blast in the eighth. It was the eight-year veteran's second multihomer effort in the last 10 games and the 10th of his career.

**Tigers 12, Brewers 1:** Victor Reyes had four hits and five RBIs, and Detroit won at Milwaukee for its sixth straight victory.

The Tigers moved back above .500 at 17-16, but it lost starting outfielder JaCoby Jones to a

fractured left hand. Jones was hit by a pitch from Phil Bickford in the eighth inning in the reliever's big league debut.

**Indians 10, Royals 1:** Zach Plesac returned to the team with six solid innings after being punished for breaking coronavirus protocols, and Cleveland won at Kansas City.

**Twins 3, White Sox 2:** Byron Buxton returned with a bang and so did Michael Pineda, rallying Minnesota past visiting Chicago to snap a six-game losing streak.

**Rangers 6, Astros 5 (10):** Elvis Andrus hit a tying solo homer in the ninth inning and Texas got two runs in the 10th on a balk and two errors to win at Houston.

**Dodgers 6, Diamondbacks 3:** Chris Taylor drove in a season-high four runs and Julio Urias pitched six innings of four-hit ball in host Los Angeles' victory over Arizona. Taylor, AJ Pollock and Max Muncy had two hits apiece as the Dodgers opened a six-game homestand with their third straight victory.

**Cubs 8, Pirates 6 (11):** Ian Happ singled home Nico Hoerner in the 11th inning, leading Chicago to a win at Pittsburgh.

Happ also led off the game with a home run. He finished with three hits and two RBIs for the NL Central leaders.