

12/24/21 Friday

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Holiday Fight Club: Watch US Travellers Throw Down on Tennessee-Bound Delta Flight
By - Gaby Arancibia

The 2021 holiday season has caused more than just run-of-the-mill traffic headaches as tens of thousands of travellers have been stranded due to staffing shortages and the spread of Omicron. Even those whose flights are successful have had their share of hiccups.

Newly-surfaced video footage captures the shocking moment in which two US travellers recently exchanged multiple punches shortly after their Delta flight touched down.

The late night flight from Los Angeles, California, to Memphis, Tennessee, reportedly got off the ground without an issue, but the landing proved another story. [Exclusive footage](#) obtained by the outlet TMZ showed two individuals throwing several blows and wrestling one another as other travellers readied to disembark.

An eyewitness told the outlet that the scuffle was initiated after a man in a light brown jacket told a man in blue that he was a "horrible person". The pair had exchanged some words moments prior.

The video shows that the not-so-dynamic-duo were pulled apart after level-headed travellers intervened and called off the match.

It was reported by TMZ that the two men maintained their distance, even after arriving at the baggage claim. Police were reportedly not called to respond to the scene.

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The Senior Rumble - Cartoon

Although US President Joe Biden previously stated an interest in running for reelection in the 2024 presidential cycle, the same cannot be said of his predecessor, who, while still eligible to run, has not yet clarified his stance.

US President Joe Biden reiterated during an [exclusive interview](#) with ABC News' David Muir that the chances of him running in the 2024 presidential election would be heightened in the event that former US President Donald Trump officially chose to run in the race.

"You're trying to tempt me now," Biden joked when asked whether he would run in 2024 with Trump as his contender. "Sure. Why would I not run against Donald Trump for the nominee? That'll increase the prospect of running."

The US commander-in-chief further noted that he would seek reelection so long as his health remains adequate to execute the duties required of the highest US political office. "I'm a great

respector of fate. Fate has intervened in my life many many times. If I'm in the health I'm in now -- from a good health. And, in fact, I would run again," he stated.

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Ex-Minnesota Cop Kimberly Potter Found Guilty in Shooting Death of Daunte Wright
By - Evan Craighead

Daunte Wright, a 20-year-old resident of Minneapolis, was fatally shot by Brooklyn Center Police Department officer Kimberly Potter during an April 11 traffic stop that led to an attempted arrest for an outstanding warrant. Potter, a 26-year law enforcement veteran, claimed that she intended to pull her Taser, but instead grabbed her gun.

A Minnesota jury has found ex-officer Kim Potter, 46, guilty of first-degree manslaughter predicated on reckless use/handling of a firearm and second-degree manslaughter in the April 11 shooting death of Daunte Wright.

District Judge Regina Chu promptly denied the defense's request to return home amid sentencing.

"I cannot treat this case any differently than any other case," Judge Chu said.

Potter was immediately taken into custody after the verdict and has no option for bail. Jeff Potter, the 46-year-old's husband, was heard shouting "I love you" as his wife was being escorted out. Potter returned his sentiments before leaving the building in handcuffs.

The verdict comes after more than 24 hours of deliberation over a period of four days.

Potter, now convicted, faces up to 25 years behind bars.

First-degree manslaughter predicated on reckless use/handling of a firearm carries a maximum sentence of 15 years behind bars and/or a \$30,000 fine. Second-degree manslaughter carries a maximum sentence of 10 years behind bars and/or a \$20,000 fine.

Sentencing has been scheduled for February 18.

Family members of Wright celebrated the verdict as they waited both inside and outside of the courthouse.

Hours prior, Wright's loved ones could be heard calling for Potter to be fully convicted for her actions on April 11.

"What do we want? Justice! If we don't get it—shut it down!" [chanted the late Minneapolis resident's loved ones.](#)

Damik Wright, the victim's brother, did not censor himself when it came to his feelings about Potter.

"We're happy with the verdict and we're happy with everything, and excuse my language, but we're gonna let that b*tch rot in hell," he said of the convicted.

Damik Wright also made a brief and vague remark about so-called supporters who, in his view, did not live up to their words.

"We're not doing this for nobody but for my moms and my pops," he asserted. "And it's been a lot of people that's been standing in our corner since day one, and it's a lot of people that said they were gonna be here that's not."

The April 11, 2021 shooting death of Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, occurred alongside the ongoing trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer convicted of the May 25, 2020 murder of George Floyd. Chauvin's trial wrapped some nine days later. Activists, including those in support of the Black Lives Matter movement abruptly rallied behind Wright and made his name a viral hashtag. At the same time, law enforcement officials in Minnesota defended Potter and her claim of a mix-up between a Taser and handgun. Matthew Frank, an assistant attorney general at the Office of the Minnesota AG, served as the lead prosecutor in both the Chauvin and Potter trials. Erin Eldridge, who also serves as an assistant AG, was involved in both trials.

While Chauvin's team was stacked with over a dozen lawyers—both paid and charity—Potter was represented by Amanda Montgomery, Paul Engh, and Earl Gray, who notably represented Jeronimo Yanez, the officer ultimately acquitted in the July 2016 shooting death of Philando Castile.

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'You're Protected': Trump Touts Efficacy of COVID-19 Vaccines in Preventing Death, Hospitalization
By - Evan Craighead

Earlier this week, former US President Donald Trump and Fox News host Bill O'Reilly were met with confusion and jeers after expressing positive views on the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine booster urgency. Trump, once prompted, also told the "History Tour" crowd in Dallas, Texas, that he had already received a booster jab.

Despite pushback by some within the GOP, former US President Donald Trump defended the efficacy of US-approved COVID-19 vaccines in a Tuesday broadcast of "Candace," a late-night, weekly conservative commentary show hosted by GOP pundit Candace Owens.

In posing a question to the former president, Owens suggested that while COVID-19 vaccines may be a "good thing," some, in her estimation, are now being treated unfairly, including those in danger of being discharged from the US military for their failure to adhere to the Pentagon health mandate.

"The [COVID-19] vaccine is one of the greatest achievements of mankind," Trump remarked before comparing the COVID pandemic to the Spanish flu, or 1918 influenza pandemic.

He also appeared to counter Owens' earlier Pentagon vaccine argument, noting that a vast number of soldiers, including US troops, died during the 1918 influenza pandemic.

"It was a terrible thing. There were no vaccines, there were no anything," Trump asserted.

Trump went on to tout that his administration oversaw the development of three vaccines—Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson—and made them available at an "incredible speed" during the early days of the ongoing pandemic.

Donald Trump: 'The Vaccine is one of the greatest achievements of mankind' 'All three vaccines (Pfizer, Moderna, J&J) are very good' 'The vaccines work - If you take the vaccine you are protected' 'People aren't dying when they take the vaccine' pic.twitter.com/fU8q1sdMda

— Popper (@Kukicat7) [December 22, 2021](#)

"Yet more people have died under COVID this year," Owens retorted.

"By the way, under Joe Biden, than under you," she quickly added, seemingly trying to coach Trump's answer. "And more people took the [COVID-19] vaccine this year."

Without mentioning the sitting president, Trump rejected Owens' narrative, assuring her that the vaccines, although temporary, were and are effective.

"The ones who get very sick and go to the hospital are the ones that don't take the vaccine," Trump echoed.

"But it's still their choice," he qualified. "And if you take the vaccine, you're protected."

While not all Americans are on board with vaccines or the purported constitutionality of related mandates, it does not appear that Trump and US President Joe Biden have quarreled over whether to get the jab(s).

"I got my booster shot as soon as they were available," Biden [remarked in a White House address](#). "And just the other day, former President Trump announced he had gotten his booster shot. It may be one of the few things he and I agree on."

While Biden rarely mentions Trump by name, his December 21 remarks lauded both the previous president and his administration for their efforts in acquiring a COVID-19 vaccine for Americans.

Trump, although "surprised," welcomed Biden's remarks, [telling Fox News](#) that he believes the latter "did a good thing" to help the US in "healing".

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Trump's 3-Hour Silence on Jan. 6 Was Reportedly Filled With Video Retakes Urging Rioters to Leave

By - Evan Craighead

As supporters of then-US President Donald Trump stormed the US Capitol building on 6 January 2020, the Republican president and then-nominee went missing from public view for over three hours and, upon his return, issued a video message that emboldened the rioters in their act, while also asking them to leave the Capitol building.

Then-US President Donald Trump's address to his rioting supporters at the US Capitol did not come easy for 45, as "he wouldn't say the right thing" and had to record a brief message several times before his team settled on the right take, according to Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-MS), chair of the US House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol.

Prior to the storming of the US Capitol building, in which five people died, including a Capitol police officer, Trump told attendees of his "Stop the Steal" rally that they would need to "fight like hell" if they wanted to keep their country.

"It appears that he tried to do a taping several times, but he wouldn't say the right thing", [Thompson told The Washington Post](#), based on information the 9-person panel observed in interviews, media reports, and witness testimony.

The Select Committee chairman suggested that the delay in Trump's action could factor into whether the committee issues a criminal referral to the US Department of Justice, which ultimately decides whether charges will be pursued.

"That dereliction of duty causes us real concern", Thompson said. "And one of those concerns is that whether or not it was intentional, and whether or not that lack of attention for that longer period of time, would warrant a referral".

Thompson noted that the Select Committee is prepared to issue a criminal referral against Trump, if deemed necessary, and is not deterred by the historic nature of the potential move. "I can assure you that if a criminal referral would be warranted, there would be no reluctance on the part of this committee to do that", he told the outlet.

DOJ Releases New Jan. 6th Footage Showing Three-Hour Assault on Police

Earlier this week, the DOJ released a three-hour video detailing the conflict between police and rioters. The now-public footage is the longest video the government has released from the deadly riot.

Several news outlets, including CNN, initially sued for access to the footage.

From crutches to flag poles and audio speakers — virtually anything that could be carried or thrown — became a weapon for the rioters.

Meanwhile, responding authorities were equipped with firearms, as well as crowd control equipment, including batons, pepper spray, and riot shields.

However, several officers had their own weapons turned against them, particularly in the nearby tunnels.

Metropolitan Police Officer Michael Fanone, who said he experienced a heart attack and fell unconscious during the series of events, can be seen being dragged from the police line and into the sea of rioters, who tased and beat him, threatening to "kill him with his own gun".

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Carnival Freedom Cruise Becomes Third South Florida Vessel to Report a COVID-19 Outbreak This Week

By - Evan Craighead

Earlier this week, Royal Caribbean's Symphony of the Seas and Odyssey of the Seas both reported dozens of positive COVID-19 infections among its vaccinated staffers and passengers. Cruise lines operating at Florida ports have expressed that early detection should curb the contagious disease's spread and allow other guests to retain some normalcy.

The Carnival Cruise Line confirmed on Friday that a southern Caribbean-bound cruise ship that departed from Miami, Florida, on Saturday was denied entry to the ports of Bonaire and Aruba on Thursday, due to the presence of at least one individual on the ship who tested positive for COVID-19.

Per the Miami Herald, there were an estimated 2,497 passengers and 1,112 crew members aboard.

Without giving numbers on those who tested positive or were quarantining, the Miami-based company [told The Hill](#) that many stops on the trip may have to be nixed due to strict mitigation measures to curb COVID-19 and its array of variants, including COVID-19's Omicron variant, the current dominant strain in the US.

"We are working closely with the [Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)] and local health authorities in all ports and destinations that we visit", Carnival told the outlet.

"The rapid spread of the Omicron variant may shape how some destination authorities view even a small number of cases, even when they are being managed with our vigorous protocols". Ashley, a passenger on the 8-day Christmas cruise, has been documenting her less-than-favourable experience of the trip. On Friday, she claimed that security guards began pulling guests from communal areas.

Carnival is not alone in its COVID-related changes, as the CDC confirmed earlier this week that it was investigating a Royal Caribbean vessel due to an outbreak resulting in more than 50 positive cases of COVID-19 on the vessel.

"All cases appear to be mild or asymptomatic", said CDC spokesperson David Daigle to USA TODAY. "Additionally, there have been no COVID-19 related hospitalizations, medical evacuations, ventilator use, or deaths from this ship".

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Manchester United Legend Reveals Premier League Favorite and Best Manager
By - Nevin Brown

Manchester United legend and Sky Sport pundit Roy Keane has pegged Manchester City's Pepe Guardiola as the Premier League's best manager.

In an episode of Sky Bet's Michah Richards and Roy Keane Driving Home for Christmas, Keane recounted why he believes Manchester City are the team to beat and Pep Guardiola is the best of all the Premier League managers.

"I remember we did a game last year, I didn't write off Man City but I think I said they lost their mojo, and then they won the league and it was like a doddle to them."

"Obviously I know they put in the hard work, but they won it and United finished second but United we're never going to catch them, I'd never bet against Man City now, I've just learnt my lesson from last year."

City, after finishing second in the Premier League in 2019-20, won the 2020-21 title with 86 points. Manchester United finished second in the table with a distant 74 points. Their +51 goal differential blew away the competition as well, with United's +29 differential the next closest.

While Keane won't bet against City, he still left the door open to a title challenge, saying "It doesn't necessarily mean Liverpool or Chelsea can't pip them to the title." Liverpool beat City to the title in 2019-20 and Chelsea bested City in the 2020-21 Champions League Final.

Keane believes that City's advantage lies in their manager, saying, "I think Pep is the man, I look at all of the managers I think Pep is the man."

The statement immediately spurred Richards to ask Keane if he thinks Guardiola is the best, to which Keane said: "I do."

Keane is aware of the boldness of his statement. The Premier League has an impressive stockpile of the sport's most talented managers. From the top of the table to the bottom there are managers who have won at the highest level and earned praise for tactical prowess.

Keane, elaborating his point, said, "If you look at Pep's [resume], and I know people always draw back, he's got the best players, but you still have to manage them, you still have to find a style of play and if you're going to pick a team to watch it's going to be Manchester City, aren't you."

Guardiola's resume is peerless in the modern game. In 12 full seasons, he has won nine domestic league titles, nine domestic cups, and two Champions Leagues. His career winning percentage of 72.89% is unheard of, and his career average of 2.36 points per match grades out at 89.7 points per 38 match season.

As Keane notably points out, Pep's detractors will point to the financial and talent advantages he enjoyed while managing Barcelona, Bayern Munich, and now Manchester City. [Since Pep joined City in the summer of 2016](#), they've spent \$1.17 billion on transfers, the most in the Premier League.

Keane's belief in Manchester City and in Pep Guardiola may be driven by the success the latter had playing for Manchester United. There he won seven Premier League titles, four FA Cups, and one Champions League under the guidance of a legendary manager, Sir Alex Ferguson, and backed by deep pockets.

The Premier League season has a long way to go yet, but through 18 matches, City have a three-point lead, the squad depth to weather any injury, and, according to Keane, the best manager in the league.

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US & Japan Reportedly Designed New Joint Military Strategy for Potential 'Taiwan Emergency'
By - Nevin Brown

The United States military and Japan's Self-Defense forces have devised a joint draft operation to use Japan's Nansei Island chain in the event of an emergency involving Taiwan. The Nansei Island chain stretches from the Japanese island of Kyushu in the north to Taiwan in the south. Citing sources from within the Japanese government, Kyodo News [reported](#) that the proposed contingency plan would see an undisclosed number of US Marine deployed to set up a temporary attack base on the Nansei Islands.

At present, Okinawa, a Japanese island in the chain, currently hosts the majority of all US military installations in Japan.

The plan, which is expected to provoke serious blowback from Beijing, would also see US military forces deploy a high-mobility artillery rocket system to a temporary base location, with Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) offering logistical support where US Marines would relocate to minimize their chances of facing a direct attack.

Sources indicated to the outlet that the contingency plan would only be executed if the Japanese government determined that a conflict between Beijing and Taiwan would threaten the peace and security of Japan.

It is believed that the plan will be formalized in January 2022, when foreign and defense chiefs from the US and Japan meet. However, the decision to use the island chain as a base of operation would make it a target of attack. The risk to those who live on the islands would require legal changes in Tokyo.

In recent years, the US military and Japan's SDF have taken steps to strengthen defense cooperation. The two allies reportedly view the region's military power dynamic as 'shifting rapidly', citing China's increased military and naval power, and North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile program as the main 'threat.'

Last April, the US and Japan, [made a joint statement saying](#), "We underscore the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and encourage the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues."

Beijing has long stood by its "One-China" policy that views Taiwan as a rogue province in need of being brought back into the fold. Earlier in November, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing Wen revealed that [US troops have helped train the Taiwanese military](#). In an exclusive with CNN, the Taiwanese official stated that it saw a growing threat from China "every day."

Beijing have stressed its steadfast opposition to any official and military contact between the United States and Taiwan, earlier urging foreign powers to steer clear of its internal territorial disputes. Regional tensions have seen a spike over the past decade as a result of disputes regarding the South China Sea.

Uninhabited islands such as the Spratly, Paracel and Senkaku islands are among territories heavily disputed by regional powers including Japan, Beijing and Taiwan. In 2012, the Japanese government purchased three islands from a private owner which prompted protests in mainland China. The contested region is directly adjacent to the Nansei Island chain.

Shinzo Abe, Japan's former prime minister, more recently created diplomatic controversy with comments he made at a Taiwanese think tank on November 30th.

Speaking virtually he said, "A Taiwan emergency is a Japanese emergency, and therefore an emergency for the Japan-US alliance. People in Beijing, President Xi Jinping in particular, should never have a misunderstanding in recognizing this."

The comments prompted Beijing to lash out against Abe, [saying he](#) "talked nonsense." The Chinese government also responded by summoning Japan's ambassador to China for an emergency meeting.