

## Navy, Marine drill to span 17 time zones

By ALISON BATH

*Stars and Stripes*

NAPLES, Italy — A U.S. naval and amphibious exercise billed as the largest of its kind in 40 years begins Tuesday, in a globe-spanning effort that analysts say aims to send a message to Russia and China that America can simultaneously answer aggression on multiple fronts.

Large Scale Exercise 2021 is a return to similar Cold War exercises in the 1980s demonstrating resolve and new capabilities, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet said in a recent statement.

The exercise also comes as the military updates its long-standing combat doctrine to defend against attacks on its communications systems and logistical networks. A simulated battle against a high-end enemy in October exposed those vulnerabilities and spurred changes, Gen. John Hyten, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said last month.

Large Scale Exercise runs through Aug. 16 and will include units in 17 different time zones, the Navy said.

“LSE will test our commanders across

the spectrum of naval warfare from the tactical to the strategic, integrating the Marine Corps to demonstrate the world-wide fleet’s ability to conduct coordinated operations from the open ocean to the littoral,” said Vice Adm. Gene Black, U.S. 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet commander.

LSE potentially puts adversaries on notice that the U.S. can simultaneously address challenges in the Black Sea, eastern Mediterranean Sea, South China Sea and East China Sea – shutting down efforts to spread American military forces thin, said James R. Holmes, the J.C. Wylie Chair of Maritime Strategy at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

It also aims to demonstrate that U.S. naval and Marine forces can deny adversaries control of the seas, which is especially crucial in the Western Pacific, where the U.S. hopes to prevent China from occupying Taiwan or seizing the Japan-administered Senkaku Islands, Holmes said.

But it isn’t certain if Russia or China will interpret the exercise in those ways or if they are even paying attention, Holmes said.

Even so, the exercise also tests U.S. operational methods and technologies, such as deemphasizing large ships and high-end systems to create a nimble, efficient and effective force designed to take a loss and continue fighting without measurable impact, Holmes said.

“In that sense we’re reverting to our World War II approach, when we had lots of inexpensive, good-enough stuff and could lose some of it and still carry on,” Holmes said. “If we show our adversaries this approach works, we bolster our ability to deter them from assailing ourselves or our allies.”

About 36 ships and more than 50 virtual units, in addition to military, civilian and contract personnel, will participate in the exercise. Six naval and Marine Corps component commands, five U.S. fleets and three Marine Expeditionary Forces will be involved.

USS Mount Whitney, the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet flagship, also will participate. The first LSE will include only U.S. forces, but future exercises are planned to include allies and partners, the statement said.

## Taliban into major cities for first time in 20 years

*The Washington Post*

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — The Taliban are ramping up pressure on some of Afghanistan’s largest cities, striking busy transit hubs and pushing front lines deep into urban areas for the first time since the militants were overthrown nearly two decades ago.

Taliban fighters launched rockets Saturday at airports in Kandahar and Herat, two of the country’s largest cities and busiest economic centers. The attacks disrupted commercial travel, though flights in and out of Herat subsequently resumed.

“There was a large blast and

the whole room started shaking,” said Massoud Ahmad Pashtun, the chief of Kandahar airport, who was present at the time of the attack. He said three rockets landed within seconds of each other and damaged one of the runways.

The attacks mark a potential turning point in the Afghan conflict. Previously, clashes were largely confined to the country’s rural areas or smaller cities contested by the militants. Large-scale conventional attacks on Kandahar and Herat, the second- and fourth-largest cities in the country, have the potential to endanger millions more civilians.

Initial reports suggested the

Kandahar rocket attack came from the eastern side of the city, where Taliban fighters have made advances. Pashtun said he feared more attacks in the coming days, because of the deteriorating security situation and the removal of an American antimissile system that protected the airfield before the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the southern province.

Gen. Ajmal Shinwari, a security forces spokesperson, said at a news conference on Sunday that all troops were on high alert due to “the emergency situations” in Kandahar and Herat. Hundreds more Afghan forces have been sent

to the southern and western provinces as reinforcements.

Taliban attacks in Kandahar province have been ongoing for months, but in recent days the group began pushing closer into the city center.

In Herat, Afghan special forces were deployed to the city on Sunday to help push back Taliban advances. Taliban fighters breached the city limits and a United Nations compound was attacked, as clashes raged for hours. The U.N. condemned the attack. A Taliban statement described the destruction as “regrettable,” saying the group remains committed to protecting the U.N.

# US allows more Afghan asylum claims

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. will give more asylum opportunities to at-risk Afghans as Taliban violence surges ahead of the withdrawal of American forces by the end of August.

The State Department said Monday that “many thousands” of Afghans now qualify to permanently resettle in the United States. That number includes current and former employees of American news organizations, development agencies and other U.S.-funded relief groups.

“The U.S. objective remains a peaceful, secure Afghanistan,” the State Department said. “However, in light of increased levels of Taliban violence, the U.S. government is

working to provide certain Afghans, including those who worked with the United States, the opportunity for refugee resettlement.”

The new “Priority 2” category of the U.S. Refugee Admission Program was created to address the situations of Afghans who don’t qualify for an existing Special Immigrant Visa. It applies to Afghans and members of their immediate family who may be in peril because of U.S. affiliation.

Rights groups had called on President Joe Biden to do more to protect Afghans who had been affiliated with the U.S. but may not have worked directly for the U.S. government.

The groups said those Afghans face just as many risks as counterparts covered by

the provisions of the Special Immigrant Visa.

About 20,000 Afghans who worked for the U.S. government as translators or in other positions have already applied to resettle in the U.S. as part of the visa program.

Of those, 2,500 who passed security screenings are now being relocated. The first group of about 200 applicants arrived at Fort Lee, Va., on Friday.

The Taliban have taken control of about half of the country’s roughly 400 districts and continue to launch offensives, according to the U.S. military.

Last week, the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction said the continued violence poses an “existential crisis” for the country.

## AFRICOM head quietly visits base in Somalia

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. military’s top commander for Africa made a quiet visit to a remote base in Somalia on a recent tour through the region, meeting with commandos in a contested area where American special operators once came under fire.

U.S. Africa Command confirmed that Gen. Stephen Townsend was at the Baledogle Military Airfield last week to meet with Somalia’s advanced infantry unit, known as the Danab “Lightning Brigade,” which the United States has focused on developing over the past several years.

The visit came as U.S. forces renew airstrikes against al-Shabaab militants after a six-month pause.

On Sunday, the U.S. launched its third airstrike in two weeks, which was in support of Danab and other Somali troops that had come under attack, Voice of

America reported.

AFRICOM on Friday issued a statement highlighting Townsend’s tour through East Africa, but made no public mention of the Baledogle meeting with Danab troops, which was highlighted on social media by Somalia’s military.

Townsend, whose five-day trip ended Friday, said AFRICOM remains committed to battling militants and working with regional partners such as Kenya.

“In East Africa, we work alongside Kenyan forces to fight al-Shabaab, maintain awareness in the western Indian Ocean and assure regional security,” Townsend said in a statement.

“We are grateful for our relationship with Kenya, which will only continue to grow as we move forward together.”

In addition to his Baledogle visit, Townsend held talks in Mogadishu and in Kenya, Tanzania and Djibouti.

## US blames Iran for ship strike, plans ‘appropriate response’

*Bloomberg News*

The United States and Israel vowed to respond to a deadly drone attack on a tanker last week in a major waterway for global oil shipments that they blamed on Iran.

Middle East foes Iran and Israel have traded multiple accusations of shipping attacks in recent months. But Thursday’s strike off the coast of Oman, which Tehran denied carrying out, was the first to kill crew members — a Romanian and a Briton.

The two fatalities have raised tensions in the Persian Gulf at a critical juncture with Iran preparing to inaugurate a new president, and talks with world powers over its 2015 nuclear deal stalled.

“I promise you that Israel will not sit silently by after a strike against ships or citizens and will respond once it finds the where, the when and the how,” Ram Ben Barak, the head of the Israeli parliament’s Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, told

Army Radio on Monday.

Romania said it had summoned the Iranian ambassador, while Britain is sending a team to investigate the attack on the Mercer Street oil-products tanker, now moored off the United Arab Emirates, its deputy envoy to Israel told Israeli broadcaster Kan.

“There is no justification for this attack, which follows a pattern of attacks and other belligerent behavior,” U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement Sunday. “We are working with our partners to consider our next steps and consulting with governments inside the region and beyond on an appropriate response, which will be forthcoming.”

He gave no further details of what the response might entail. A spokesperson for the U.S. Navy’s 5th Fleet, which is based in the region, declined to comment. The U.S. and its allies created a maritime force in 2019 in response to similar attacks to protect sea lanes in the Middle East.

# USAF: Maintenance error led to F-22 crash in Fla.

*Stars and Stripes*

An error during routine maintenance caused a \$201 million F-22 Raptor to crash last year at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, media reports said following a brief service statement.

The May 15, 2020, crash was caused by “a maintenance error made after the aircraft was washed, which impacted control inputs transmitted to the aircraft,” the Northwest Florida Daily News reported last week, citing an emailed statement from the Air Combat Command. The pilot, assigned to the 43rd Fighter Squadron, 325th Fighter Wing, ejected and sustained only minor injuries, but the aircraft was destroyed, said the command, which is in charge of training, equipping and maintaining units for rapid deployment abroad.

The Air Force requires that an investigative board be convened following Class A mishaps, which are accidents that cause loss of life or more than \$2.5 million in damage. But that requirement can be waived by authorities.

Operational concerns led the ACC to forgo an AIB report, which would have de-

tailed how the crash occurred and outlined what investigators determined had caused it, Air Force Magazine reported.

The requirement for an AIB was waived by the deputy commander of the ACC, the magazine said, citing a command spokesperson.

The few details that were released said the issues that led to the crash arose shortly after takeoff, when the pilot noticed a Flight Control System advisory. He continued with takeoff, but “shortly after the aircraft became airborne, the pilot began having trouble controlling the aircraft and declared an emergency,” said the statement, reported by Air Force Magazine.

“While a recovery plan was being coordinated, the pilot continued to have issues with the aircraft and ejected,” it said.

The results of an AIB must be released publicly, although commands can also waive that requirement. Information gathered by the two types of probe conducted into the Eglin accident — a safety investigation board and a commander directed investigation — do not have to be released to the public.

## US airmen help German village's flood recovery

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN  
AND MARCUS KLOECKNER

*Stars and Stripes*

RITTERSDORF, Germany — The Nims River flows through the heart of this village in the rural Eifel region, skirting a moated castle that has stood since medieval times.

On Saturday, the waterlogged stone fortress was the meeting point for more than two dozen U.S. military personnel, who volunteered to help the town of about 1,400 clean up in the aftermath of Europe's severe flooding last month.

Rittersdorf was spared the deaths and the worst of the destruction caused by the floods, which killed about 180 people in western Germany and left thousands homeless.

But a water line above the castle's first-floor windows shows where the Nims crested at over 6 feet on July 14 and 15, pouring into the castle and homes along the banks.

The river uprooted trees, fences, street signs and anything else in its path in the worst flooding longtime residents say they have ever seen.

Village leaders last week reached out to the U.S. military community, asking for help in cleaning up debris still scattered in the basin.

“We know that they are (our) friends in hard times,” Otmar Koch, the deputy mayor of Rittersdorf, said of the Americans. “We need a lot of help here.”

No one in the village was hurt, but Koch said about two dozen families in the area lost their homes.

About 25 people at Spangdahlem Air Base answered the call for help, base officials said, as did a few airmen from Ramstein Air Base. About 20 military families at Spangdahlem living off base were displaced by the floods, base officials have said.

“These are our neighbors, our friends, we're embedded in these communities,” Rachael Kohlwey, a civilian aircraft mechanic at Spangdahlem, said, “so when you see a catastrophe like this, you can't help but want to help.”

Airmen sorted the debris into wood, metal and other garbage, piles that the Germans loaded into trailers hitched to tractors to be dumped or burned.

The Americans' help allowed residents more time to work on their yards and their homes, some of which were still full of mud and debris, they said.

## GOP lawmaker who once snubbed masks changes course in defense

*The Washington Post*

A Tennessee legislator who went from unmasked gatherings with fellow legislators to being placed on a ventilator days later has emerged with a message for constituents after a harrowing eight-month experience with long-haul COVID-19: Take the coronavirus seriously.

“It is a disease that wants to kill us,” state Rep. David Byrd, a Republican, said in a statement Friday. Byrd, 63, described an ordeal that included 55 days on a ventilator in which COVID-19 ravaged his memory, muscles and organs — it led to him having a liver transplant in June. His condition was so grave that his family began planning for his funeral at least once. Stressing that COVID-19 is real and “very dangerous,” Byrd encouraged people to get vaccinated.

“This is not an issue that should divide us,” he wrote.

Before Byrd became ill around Thanks-

giving, his attitude about the virus included a June 2020 vote for a resolution that accused the “mainstream media” of sensationalizing pandemic coverage. In November, he was among the House Republican Caucus members who gathered for an in-person multiday retreat amid surging infections statewide.

The shift from minimizing the risks of the coronavirus to urgently warning about them is not unique to Byrd, who did not respond to The Washington Post's request for comment Sunday. A growing group of Americans, including some Republicans, are now rapidly reassessing their doubts and dismissals as new infections fueled by the easier-to-spread delta variant of the virus point toward a summer virus surge.

In his statement, Byrd said he was sharing his experience in hope it “helps others to act against an enemy that knows no skin color, economic status or political affiliation.”

# Senate vote closer on infrastructure bill

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—After much delay, senators unveiled a nearly \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure package, wrapping up days of painstaking work on the inch-thick bill and launching what is certain to be a lengthy debate over President Joe Biden's big priority.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act clocked in at some 2,700 pages, and senators could begin amending it soon. Despite the hurry-up-and-wait during a rare weekend session, emotions bubbled over once the bill was produced Sunday night. The final product was not intended to stray from the broad outline senators had negotiated for weeks with the White House.

"We haven't done a large, bipartisan bill of this nature in a long time," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. He said a final vote could be held "in a matter of days."

A key part of Biden's agenda, the bipartisan bill is the first phase of the president's infrastructure plan. It calls for \$550 bil-

lion in new spending over five years above projected federal levels, what could be one of the more substantial expenditures on the nation's roads, bridges, waterworks, broadband and the electric grid in years.

Senators and staff labored behind the scenes for days to write the massive bill. It was supposed to be ready Friday, but by Sunday, even more glitches were caught and changes made. Late Sunday, most of the 10 senators involved in the bipartisan effort rose on the Senate floor to mark the moment.

"We know that this has been a long and sometimes difficult process, but we are proud this evening to announce this legislation," said Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., a lead negotiator. The bill showed "we can put aside our own political differences for the good of the country," she said.

Sen. Rob Portman, of Ohio, a Republican negotiator, said the final product will be "great for the American people."

Over the long weekend of starts and stops, Schumer repeatedly warned that he was prepared to

keep lawmakers in Washington for as long as it took to complete votes on both the bipartisan infrastructure plan and a budget blueprint that would allow the Senate to begin work later this year on a massive, \$3.5 trillion social, health and environmental bill.

Among the major new investments, the bipartisan package is expected to provide \$110 billion for roads and bridges, \$39 billion for public transit and \$66 billion for rail. There's also set to be \$55 billion for water and wastewater infrastructure as well as billions for airports, ports, broadband internet and electric vehicle charging stations.

The spending is broadly popular among lawmakers, bringing long-delayed capital for big-ticket items that cities and states can rarely afford on their own.

Paying for the package has been a challenge after senators rejected ideas to raise revenue from a new gas tax or other streams. Instead, it is being financed from funding sources that might not pass muster with deficit

hawks, including repurposing some \$205 billion in untapped COVID-19 relief aid, as well as unemployment assistance that was turned back by some states and relying on projected future economic growth.

"I've got real concerns with this bill," said Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah.

Bipartisan support from Republican and Democratic senators pushed the process along, and Schumer wanted the voting to be wrapped up before senators left for the August recess.

Last week, 17 GOP senators joined all Democrats in voting to start work on the bipartisan bill. That support largely held, with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., voting yes in another procedural vote to nudge the process along in the 50-50 Senate, where 60 votes are needed to overcome a filibuster and advance legislation.

The bipartisan bill still faces a rough road in the House, where progressives want a more robust package but may have to settle for this one to keep Biden's infrastructure plans on track.

## Evictions expected to spike in US as moratorium ends

Associated Press

BOSTON — Evictions, which have mostly been on pause during the pandemic, were expected to ramp up Monday after the Biden administration allowed the federal moratorium to expire over the weekend and Congress was unable to do anything to extend it.

Housing advocates fear the end of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention moratorium could result in millions of people being evicted. But most expect the wave of evictions to build slowly over the coming weeks and months as the bureaucracy of removing people from their homes restarts.

On Sunday night, House

Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the House Democratic leaders called on the Biden administration to immediately extend the moratorium.

The Biden administration announced Thursday it would allow the ban to expire, arguing its hands were tied after the U.S. Supreme Court signaled the measure had to end.

More than 15 million people live in households that owe as much as \$20 billion to their landlords, according to the Aspen Institute. As of July 5, roughly 3.6 million people in the U.S. said they faced eviction in the next two months, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey.

## S. Korea seeks to improve ties despite North threat

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea said Monday it'll keep pushing to improve ties and resume talks with rival North Korea, despite the North's threat to rekindle animosities if Seoul holds its summertime military drills with the United States.

On Sunday night, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned the drills would seriously undermine efforts to restore mutual trust between the Koreas and becloud prospects for better ties if the training is launched as scheduled this month. Her statement raised a question about the sincerity of North Korea's recent decision to reopen long-stalled communica-

tion channels with South Korea.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said Monday details of the drills haven't been fixed and that they were the issues that must be determined by South Korean and U.S. authorities. Spokesman Boo Seung-Chan repeated his previous statement that Seoul and Washington are examining factors like the coronavirus pandemic's current status, diplomat efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions and South Korea-U.S. military readiness.

Lee Jong-joo, a spokeswoman at the Unification Ministry, said Seoul views the communication channels' restoration as a starting point for restoring long-suspended ties between the Koreas.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Mountain lion caught in suburb released to wild**

**CA** RAMONA — A young mountain lion captured after roaming an Orange County neighborhood was released to the wild in the Santa Ana Mountains.

The 1-year-old male cub was captured July 13 after being spotted several times in a neighborhood in Mission Viejo.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife wardens took the mountain lion to the San Diego Humane Society's Ramona Wildlife Center, where he was evaluated and treated for parasites. Once rescuers determined the cub could survive on his own, game wardens returned him to his home territory.

**Man charged with third DUI in road rage episode**

**DE** LEWES — A Wilmington man was charged with drunken driving and weapons offenses after an alleged road rage incident in Lewes, Delaware State Police said.

Troopers responded to the parking lot of a Home Depot after a man called 911 to report that an aggressive driver followed him on Coastal Highway and into the parking lot, where he threw a lock at the man's vehicle and screamed at him, police said in a news release.

Troopers made contact with the driver later identified as John Gillen, 56, and detected a strong odor of alcohol, police said. Gillen was arrested and a search of his car turned up an 11-inch makeshift shank and a 14-inch hatchet, police said.

Gillen was charged with pos-

session of a deadly weapon during the commission of a felony, possession of a deadly weapon by a person prohibited, third offense driving under the influence, disorderly conduct and following a motor vehicle too closely.

**House fire 1 day before closing dashes plans**

**NY** WASHINGTON — A house fire has destroyed a New York home a day before a couple was scheduled to close on the property.

Authorities in Dutchess County said the house in the Millbrook section of Washington, about 15 miles northeast of Poughkeepsie, burned to the ground about 12 hours after the sellers moved out and a day before a retired New York City couple was scheduled to close on it. The Dutchess County sheriff's office told the Albany Times-Union the fire doesn't appear to be suspicious.

The unidentified couple had paid \$100,000 over the \$287,000 asking price for the 1936 cottage situated on five acres with a pond, and had given up their apartment lease, packed a truck and were ready to move in, real estate Sandi Park told the newspaper. The couple's down payment will be returned, she said.

**Firefighters stop man trying to steal firetruck**

**OK** TULSA — An Oklahoma man was arrested after being accused of trying to steal a firetruck.

After arriving at the scene, police found a group of Tulsa firefighters holding down a suspect.

Firefighters told police that

they found the man after hearing glass break and the sound of the ladder truck's horn going off. Police alleged that the man had started the truck and tried driving through the fire station's overhead doors before firefighters discovered what he was doing.

The suspect was arrested and charged with first-degree burglary, attempted auto theft and damage to property.

**Effort to restore historic Black church gets boost**

**MA** GREAT BARRINGTON — The nonprofit restoring a historic Black church in Massachusetts where civil rights activist W.E.B. Du Bois once attended services received a grant worth almost \$500,000.

The National Park Service grant announced by the Upper Housatonic Valley Natural Heritage Area will help toward the rehabilitation of the Clinton A.M.E. Zion Church in Great Barrington, The Berkshire Eagle reported.

Upon completion, the organization wants to reestablish the space as a heritage center and visitor site that will include a flexible performance space, as well as "museum-level interpretive exhibits and programming," interim executive director Eugene Sills said.

Sills said the project will cost \$5 million to \$7 million and take years to complete.

**Mother arrested after abandoning newborn**

**MD** GLEN BURNIE — A 19-year-old woman accused of abandoning her

newborn daughter in a wooded area in Glen Burnie was arrested and charged with attempted murder and other offenses, Anne Arundel County police said.

Early on July 14, officers responding to a 911 call reporting the sound of a crying baby found an unclothed baby girl with an umbilical cord still attached, police said in a news release. The baby had minor injuries after being in contact with some bushes and was taken to a hospital. Police said the baby is healthy.

When investigators identified the baby's mother, she was given medical treatment and access to crisis intervention, police said. Olivia Thompson, 19, of Glen Burnie, was arrested and charged with first- and second-degree attempted murder, assault, child abuse, neglect of a minor, reckless endangerment and desertion of a minor child, according to police.

**Artifact from steamer wreck raised by museum**

**VT** BURLINGTON — An artifact from a steamer that sank in Lake Champlain more than 200 years ago is back on the surface where it is being studied and preserved.

Earlier this summer, researchers from the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and others recovered the 125-pound cast-iron block from the bottom of the lake.

The block is believed to have held one end of the drive shaft of the Phoenix, an early Lake Champlain steamer that sank on Sept. 4, 1819, killing six of the 46 passengers and crew on board.

— From wire reports

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# Moses impressed by today's hurdlers

*Associated Press*

TOKYO — Better shoes, better tracks, better technique, better training.

Any of that could explain how Sydney McLaughlin and Dalilah Muhammad have pushed hurdling into a new golden age. Or maybe the best reason for the renaissance, according to the best hurdler in history, is that they have each other.

"I wish I'd had that kind of competition when I was running," Edwin Moses told *The Associated Press*. "I knew I could run 46.5, but I never had to work that hard at the beginning of a race, let alone at the end."

Moses, the man who once won a remarkable 107 finals in a row from 1977-87 and who lowered the world record to 47.02 seconds during his prime, says he has been enjoying watching hurdlers break new barriers over the past two years.

The drama is expected to reach a crescendo this week at the Tokyo Olympics.

McLaughlin and Muhammad, who have lowered the world record in each of their last three races on a major stage, are expected to square off in the final Wednesday. Karsten Warholm of Norway has been rewriting the record book on the men's side, and a showdown with Rai Benjamin of the U.S. is in the offing Tuesday.

Only four men have ever cracked 47 seconds. On July 1, Warholm broke a 29-year-old record held by Kevin Young when he finished in 46.70 in his first race of the season, in Oslo.

The others to crack 47 are Samba Abderahman, the Qatari who is also in Tuesday's final and Benjamin, the American who ran 46.83 at Olympic trials in June.

On the women's side, Muhammad and McLaughlin have been going back and forth for a few years.

Muhammad set the world record at the U.S. nationals in 2019, finishing in 52.20 and beating McLaughlin by more than a half-second. Nine weeks later at world championships, Muhammad lowered the record to 52.16. McLaughlin's time of 52.23 in that race would have been a world record had she run it three months earlier.

McLaughlin changed coaches, starting work with Bobby Kersee, and after a down year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all signs pointed to another record going down. But she didn't wait until she arrived in Tokyo. McLaughlin became the first woman to crack 52 seconds at the U.S. Olympic trials last month, running 51.90 and setting the stage for more this week.

"It's just one of those times in our sport, and especially in this event, where people are realizing that they can run this fast and it's kind of everybody moving at the same pace," McLaughlin said.

Meanwhile, Muhammad dealt with injuries and a bout of COVID-19, and had not reached top form. She felt her second-place finish in 52.42 at trials was more than respectable given what she'd been through.

Moses isn't counting her out for Tokyo —

either for the gold medal, or as the one who could lower the world record again.

"She might be in a better position. Less races. Very experienced. A real student of the hurdles. Understands that race completely," he said. "In a fast race, which you have to expect, it goes to whoever makes the least mistakes after the seventh hurdle and stays with a pattern to maximize the time."

Moses said McLaughlin and Muhammad have gotten into such good shape that they can often cover the area between hurdles in 15 strides, whereas 16 or 17 was long the standard for women.

"Their training cycle is all year long, versus it just being a seasonal sport where they would just get ready for summer like we did," Moses said. "They're also running less meets. It's like eight to 10 a year. We used to run 15 or 20."

Enhanced shoe technology that has overtaken every event combines with new surfaces — the Tokyo track seems fast — to create conditions that help runners go faster, regardless of the event.

It leads Moses to wonder how low he might have gone with today's equipment. Nobody will ever know, but he is impressed with what today's crop of hurdlers is doing with the sport he defined back in the day.

"Right now, if one of these contenders is in a race and they do everything right, there's no doubt they can be the one to break a world record again by a tenth of a second," Moses said. "It can happen any time."

## Biles says she'll return for the final in balance beam

*Associated Press*

TOKYO — Simone Biles is back.

The 2016 Olympic gymnastics champion will return to competition in the balance beam final on Tuesday, a little over a week after stepping away from the meet to focus on her mental health.

"We are so excited to confirm that you will see two U.S. athletes in the balance beam final tomorrow — Suni Lee AND Simone Biles!! Can't wait to watch you both!" USA Gymnastics said in a statement.

The 24-year-old Biles won bronze on beam in Rio de Janeiro five years ago and qualified

for the eight-woman final at the Ariake Gymnastics Centre on the first weekend of the Games.

She removed herself from the team final on July 27 after a shaky performance on vault during the first rotation. She watched from the sidelines as her three American teammates completed the meet without her; the U.S. took silver behind the team known as the Russian Olympic Committee.

The six-time Olympic medalist later said she was dealing with issues surrounding air awareness, referred to as "the twisties" in her sport. Biles qualified for all five individual event finals

but took herself out of four of them: the all-around, vault, floor exercise and uneven bars. Lee earned the gold in the all-around, becoming the fifth straight American to claim the sport's marquee title.

Considered to be the greatest gymnast of all time and the unquestioned face of the U.S. Olympic movement when she arrived in Japan, Biles continued to train and be evaluated daily by the USA Gymnastics staff after opting out of multiple finals. She has also been a fixture in the stands supporting Lee, MyKayla Skinner and Jade Carey.

She went into extensive detail about "the twisties" last week, explaining she lost the confidence of knowing what her body was going to do in midair. It's not the first time Biles dealt with the issue though she said it followed her to uneven bars and beam.

Previous bouts with the phenomenon were limited to floor exercise and vault, where more twisting elements are required.

"I'm really proud of her for coming back," said Carey, who won gold on floor exercise Monday. "She's been through a lot this Olympics so I'm really proud and happy to see her going after beam."

# Allman wins discus, 1st US track medal

Associated Press

TOKYO — The path to Valarie Allman's gold medal — the first for the U.S. track and field team at Olympic Stadium — started with, of all things, a plate of spaghetti.

That promise of pasta from her high school team was enough to lure her into the discus and to the point she reached on a rainy Monday night at the Tokyo Games: A breakthrough — and a much-needed gold medal for the United States.

Allman opened the final with a throw of 68.98 meters (226 feet, 3 inches) and then waited through an hourlong delay and around 50 throws by her competition. But nobody could pass

her.

"To be here, to be in this moment, feels so surreal," Allman said.

About that life-altering meal: As a teenager, she was a dancer who dabbled in different track disciplines. But she hadn't found her true track calling. The throwers on her high school team in Longmont, Colo., said she could partake in a pasta meal with them on one condition: She had to give throwing a try.

That's how the discus became her thing.

"Looking back, gosh darn, that was the best spaghetti dinner of my entire life," said the 26-year-old Allman, a multiple All-American while at Stanford

who now lives and trains in Austin, Texas.

Worked out well for the U.S., too.

Hardly anyone figured the country's first medal at Olympic Stadium would come from women's discus. Not so much because of the event — American Stephanie Brown Trafton won it at the 2008 Beijing Games — but because of where it fell on the schedule: Day 4.

But what seemed like good bets for wins — 4x400 mixed relay, men's 100, women's 100 hurdles — didn't materialize.

Allman came through.

Earlier in the day, the American favorite in the 100-meter hurdles, Keni Harrison, came in second to Jasmine Camacho-

Quinn, who grew up in South Carolina, went to college at Kentucky and trains in Florida, and is taking the hurdles gold to her mother's native Puerto Rico.

"This was what I wanted for this year. I wanted to be a gold medalist," Camacho-Quinn said.

She powered ahead of Harrison early and finished in 12.37 seconds for a .15 second win — a blowout in such a short race. Megan Tapper of Jamaica finished third...

The fact Allman had to wait out a rain delay only added to the drama. She and her fellow competitors could be seen sitting under cover, with rain gear draped across their heads, after the downpour hit.

## Canada stuns US in women's soccer

Associated Press

KASHIMA, Japan — Carli Lloyd, clutch in so many critical moments for the U.S. women's soccer team, failed to connect against Canada on Monday night and the Americans won't play for a fifth Olympic gold medal.

Lloyd's look in the 86th minute with the United States trailing by a goal hit the crossbar as Canada won 1-0 and dropped the Americans into the bronze medal match. It is the second straight Olympics that the U.S. failed to reach the gold medal game.

The Americans were bounced from the 2016 Rio Games by Sweden in the quarterfinals.

As Canada celebrated wildly at Ibaraki Kashima Stadium, Lloyd knelt to the turf with her head in her hands.

"That wasn't good enough," said Lloyd, the oldest player on the U.S. team at 39 and playing in what was likely her last major tournament with the national team.

The U.S. lost starting goalkeeper Alyssa Naehler when she came down awkwardly after going up for the ball around the 20th minute. Trainers attended to her for some five minutes as backup Adrianna Franch warmed up on the sideline.

Naehler tried to stay in the game, but was replaced by Franch in the 30th minute.

Canada pounced in the 74th minute on Jessie Fleming's penalty kick, which gave Canada its first win against the United

States since 2001.

Fleming booted her PK past a diving Franch and took off toward the sideline, sliding on her knees before teammates swarmed around her.

The U.S. will play for the bronze on Thursday in Kashima against Australia, a 1-0 loser to Sweden in the other semifinal.

Canada will play for the gold Friday at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium against Sweden. Canada features Quinn, a midfielder who will become the first openly transgender athlete to win an Olympic medal.

Quinn won bronze in 2016 before coming out as transgender.

It is the second straight Olympics that the Americans, the two-time defending World Cup champions, will not play for the gold medal. The team was uncharacteristically uneven in Japan, starting with a 3-0 loss to Sweden that snapped a 44-game unbeaten streak.

The Americans bounced back to beat New Zealand but then came a scoreless draw with Australia in the group stage. A 4-2 penalty shootout against the Netherlands on Friday advanced the U.S. to the semifinals.

The loss of goalkeeper Naehler clearly hurt the U.S. She was key to the victory over the Dutch in the quarterfinals, with a penalty save during regulation and two more in the deciding shootout. After the loss, she was on crutches.

## Ross, Klineman advance to beach quarters

Associated Press

TOKYO — April Ross and Alix Klineman put away a Cuban team they had never played before.

Next up for the Americans is one of the most familiar faces in all of beach volleyball: Four-time Olympian — and defending gold medalist — Laura Ludwig.

Ross and Klineman beat Cuba in straight sets, 21-17, 21-15 in their knockout round opener on Monday to reach the quarterfinals, where they will meet the German and her current partner, Maggie Kozuch.

Ludwig and Kira Walkenhorst won it all in Rio de Janeiro, where Ross and Kerri Walsh Jennings took bronze. With Kozuch, Ludwig advanced to the round of eight by beating Brazil's Agatha and Duda on Sunday in three sets.

"We have a lot of respect for them and, obviously, Laura's success," said Klineman, who also played against Kozuch on the Italian indoor volleyball tour. "We know they're going to come out motivated. As are we."

Asked how many times she had played against the 35-year-old Ludwig over the years, Ross said "a lot. A lot." According to the Beach Volleyball Database, Ross and her partners are 20-8 over the years against Ludwig and hers.

# Bryant homers in debut with Giants

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Kris Bryant homered in his Giants debut, a two-out solo shot in the third inning, and San Francisco beat the Houston Astros 5-3 on Sunday.

Darin Ruf had three hits including a home run and two RBIs. Brandon Crawford and Donovan Solano both added two hits. The Giants won two of three in the interleague matchup of division leaders and have the best record in the majors at 66-39.

"I can't say enough good things about this first day," Bryant said. "I feel giddy. It felt like Christmas morning, honestly."

Acquired in a trade from the Chicago Cubs for two minor league prospects just minutes before Friday's deadline, Bryant was greeted by chants of "KB! KB! KB!" when he trotted onto the field for pregame warmups and received a standing ovation before his first

at-bat. The four-time All-Star was cheered again after striking out swinging.

Those cheers got louder after Bryant crushed an 0-1 pitch from Luis García (7-6) into the left field stands for his 19th home run this season.

"The first homer's weird," Bryant said. "You don't know what teams do when you come to celebrate in the dugout so I was kind of lost a little bit,"

The Giants said they expected Bryant to hit a home run. After all, his former teammates in Chicago who were also traded — Javier Báez and Anthony Rizzo — homered in their first games with their new clubs.

"We were going to send him back if he didn't homer himself," joked Ruf, who homered in the fifth. "Luckily we get to keep him. He's going to be very, very valuable to our team going forward."

After Mike Yastrzemski doubled and Buster Posey walked in the third, Crawford and Ruf followed with RBI singles to put the Giants ahead 3-2. It wasn't a perfect debut for Bryant, who started at third base. His throwing error on Martín Maldonado's grounder down the line in the fifth gave the Astros a runner in scoring position with no outs. Logan Webb retired the next three batters to work out of the jam.

Webb (5-3) allowed two runs in six innings to stay unbeaten since May 5.

"He's been really responsive to the moment," Giants manager Gabe Kapler said. "What we're seeing consistently now is that his stuff plays and it plays against some of the best hitters out there."

Dominic Leone and Tyler Rogers both retired three batters. Jake McGee pitched the ninth for his 23rd save.

## McClanahan helps Rays sweep series from Red Sox

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Shane McClanahan went six strong innings, Brandon Lowe homered and the AL East-leading Tampa Rays beat the Boston Red Sox 3-2 Sunday for a three-game sweep.

McClanahan (5-4) allowed one run and four hits over six innings, helping the Rays take a 1½-game lead over the Red Sox.

Hunter Renfro homered for Boston, which has lost a season-high four in a row and five of six.

Kiké Hernández and Rafael Devers had consecutive two-out singles in the ninth off Matt Wisler, who then retired J.D. Martinez on a short fly for his first save. Nick Pivetta (8-5) was the loser.

**Yankees 3, Marlins 1:** Anthony Rizzo continued his remarkable debut with the Yankees with another key hit and New York completed a three-game sweep at Miami.

The partisan Yankees crowd got to cheer when New York had an eighth-inning rally led by RBI singles from Rizzo and Aaron Judge.

Rizzo, who went to high

school in the Miami area, singled home Brett Gardner for the tying run in his third game with the Yankees. The first baseman was acquired in a trade from the Chicago Cubs at the trade deadline and hit a homer in each of his first two games with New York before Sunday's clutch at-bat.

Joely Rodríguez (2-3) got the win in relief, and Aroldis Chapman retired the side in the ninth for his 22nd save. Anthony Bass (1-6) took the loss.

**Reds 7, Mets 1:** Rookie Max Schrock went 5-for-5 with a home run while giving All-Star Joey Votto a break, leading fellow newcomer Vladimir Gutierrez and Cincinnati to a win at New York.

Making his first major league start at first base, the 26-year-old Schrock — who's also made a relief pitching appearance this year — scored three runs and drove in two.

Votto got a rest from manager David Bell a day after his seven-game home run streak came to an end.

Gutierrez (6-3) allowed three hits in seven innings. His only

blemish was a sixth-inning home run to Jeff McNeil.

In his second game with his new team, Javier Baez went hitless in four at-bats for the NL East-leading Mets. Marcus Stroman (7-10) was the loser.

**Dodgers 13, Diamondbacks 0:** Albert Pujols doubled home three runs to cap a five-run second inning, Mookie Betts homered in his return from the injured list and Los Angeles rolled at Arizona.

**White Sox 2, Indians 1:** Brian Goodwin homered with one out in the ninth inning to lift host Chicago over Cleveland.

**Brewers 2, Braves 1:** Willy Adames hit an early homer off Charlie Morton, Brett Anderson pitched 5½ strong innings and Milwaukee won at Atlanta.

**Blue Jays 5, Royals 1:** José Berríos pitched six shutout innings in his Toronto debut and the team completed a three-game sweep in its first series north of the border since 2019, beating Kansas City.

**Tigers 6, Orioles 2:** Eric Haase hit a two-run double in a three-run first inning and host Detroit beat Baltimore.

**Phillies 15, Pirates 4:** Kyle Gibson pitched into the seventh inning in his Philadelphia debut and got plenty of support to help the Phillies roll at Pittsburgh.

**Cardinals 7, Twins 3:** Adam Wainwright threw seven effective innings and rookie Edmundo Sosa homered to help host St. Louis beat Minnesota.

**Nationals 6, Cubs 5:** Yadiel Hernández's solo shot in the ninth inning — his second homer of the day — gave Washington the victory over visiting Chicago.

**Athletics 8, Angels 3:** Yan Gomes homered in his Oakland debut, fellow newcomer Starling Marte had three hits and stole three bases, and the Athletics won at Los Angeles.

**Rangers 4, Mariners 3:** Jonah Heim hit his second walk-off homer in two games right after a tying, two-run shot from Andy Ibáñez in the ninth inning, and host Texas rallied again to beat Seattle.

**Padres 8, Rockies 1:** Ha-Seong Kim homered and drove in three runs, Jake Cronenworth contributed three hits and host San Diego beat Colorado.