

## Grain ship leaves Odesa as deal finally set

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine—The first ship carrying Ukrainian grain set out Monday from the port of Odesa under an internationally brokered deal to unblock the embattled country's agricultural exports and ease the growing global food crisis.

The Sierra Leone-flagged cargo ship Razoni sounded its horn as it slowly departed with over 26,000 tons of corn destined for Lebanon.

"The first grain ship since Russian aggression has left port," Ukrainian Minister of Infrastructure Oleksandr Kubrakov declared on Twitter.

Russia and Ukraine signed agreements in Istanbul with Turkey and the United Nations on July 22, clearing the way for Ukraine to export 22 million tons of grain and other agricultural products that have been stuck in Black Sea ports because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine more than five

months ago. The deals also allow Russia to export grain and fertilizer.

As part of the agreements, safe corridors through the mined waters outside Ukraine's ports were established.

Ukraine and Russia are major global suppliers of wheat, barley, corn and sunflower oil. The holdup of food shipments because of the war has worsened rising food prices worldwide and threatened hunger and political instability in developing nations.

"Today Ukraine, together with partners, takes another step to prevent world hunger," Kubrakov said.

In Moscow, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov hailed the ship's departure as "very positive," saying it would help test the "efficiency of the mechanisms that were agreed to during the talks in Istanbul."

Under the agreements, ships going in and out of Ukrainian

ports will be subject to inspection to make sure incoming vessels are not carrying weapons and outgoing ones are bearing only grain, fertilizer or related food items, not any other commodities.

The Razoni was expected to dock Wednesday in Istanbul, where teams of Russian, Ukrainian, Turkish and U.N. officials would be set to board it for inspection. More ships are expected to leave from Ukraine's ports through the safe corridors. At Odesa, 16 more vessels, all blocked since Russia's invasion on Feb. 24, were waiting their turn, with others to follow, Ukrainian authorities said.

But some shipping companies are not yet rushing to export food across the Black Sea as they assess the danger of mines and the risk of Russian rockets hitting grain warehouses and ports.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who proposed the grain deal in April, said the Razo-

ni was "loaded with two commodities in short supply: corn and hope."

In an interview with Turkey's state-run Anadolu Agency, Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar warned that the global food crisis threatens to trigger "a serious wave of migration from Africa to Europe and to Turkey."

Lebanon, the corn's destination, is in the grip of a severe financial crisis. A 2020 explosion at its main port in Beirut shattered its capital city and destroyed grain silos. Lebanon mostly imports wheat from Ukraine but also buys its corn to make cooking oil and produce animal feed.

Kubrakov said the shipments will also help Ukraine's war-shattered economy.

"Unlocking ports will provide at least \$1 billion in foreign exchange revenue to the economy and an opportunity for the agricultural sector to plan for next year," he said.

## Reports say Pelosi to visit Taiwan despite China's warnings

**BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS**

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi will arrive in Taiwan on Tuesday night despite warnings from China that such a visit would dramatically escalate tension with the United States, Taiwan's three largest newspapers reported.

Pelosi, D-Calif., has not confirmed she will visit Taiwan as part of an Asian tour that began Sunday in Singapore. But the three Taiwanese papers — The United Daily News, Liberty Times and China Times — said she will arrive Tuesday evening in the capital city of Taipei from Malaysia and spend the night.

Zhao Lijian, spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry,

warned Friday that the U.S. "must bear all consequences arising" from Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. China claims ownership of the self-governed, democratic island, which is about 110 miles from the mainland.

"The Chinese side has repeatedly made clear to the U.S. side our serious concern over Speaker Pelosi's potential visit to Taiwan and our firm opposition to the visit," Zhao said during a news conference in Beijing. "If the U.S. side challenges China's red line, it will be met with resolute countermeasures."

As news of Pelosi's visit circulated Monday morning, Chinese diplomat Cao Yi wrote in a Twitter post that the Chinese military's eastern theater command

"stand(s) ready to bury any invading enemies."

National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said Monday during a CNN interview that the U.S. "shouldn't be intimidated by [Chinese] rhetoric or those potential actions."

Pelosi is traveling through Asia with five Democratic lawmakers, making stops in Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan, according to a statement from her office. The trip is meant to focus on "mutual security, economic partnership and democratic governance" in the Indo-Pacific region.

"This is an important trip for the speaker to be on and we're going to do whatever we can to support her," Kirby told CNN.

On Friday, he said "nothing has changed about [the U.S.] One China policy" regardless of whether Pelosi visits Taipei or not. The policy, which has been America's position since the 1970s, holds that the U.S. acknowledges China claims ownership of Taiwan, but considers the island's sovereignty status unsettled.

President Joe Biden on Friday held a two-hour-long phone call with Chinese President Xi Jinping, during which Biden "reaffirmed that nothing has changed" about America's commitment to the One China policy, Kirby said.

"There's no reason for it to come to blows, to come to increased physical tension," he said.

# S. Korea: North's missiles led to bigger US drills

By DAVID CHOI  
*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — North Korea's "very fraught" and consistent provocations will strengthen the U.S.-South Korea alliance and a nuclear test from the communist regime will prompt a firm response from Washington and Seoul, according to a weekend statement from the South's Ministry of Defense.

Following a meeting between Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and South Korean Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup on Friday, the two defense chiefs "reaffirmed the combined defense commitment" in light of North Korea's continuous provocations, the statement said.

North Korea has conducted 17 rounds of missile tests so far this year in addition to several artillery drills. North Korea last fired an unprecedented volley of eight short-range missiles on June 5, roughly two weeks after Joe Biden's first presidential trip to South Korea and Japan.

The U.S., Japanese and South Korean militaries have also said in recent weeks that they have compiled evidence suggesting Pyongyang is preparing to conduct a nuclear test, which would be the regime's first since 2017 and its seventh overall.

Austin and Lee "emphasized a point that the more North Korea provokes, the stronger the [South Korea]-U.S. alliance

would be," the statement said.

"They made it clear that if North Korea carries out its seventh nuclear test despite the opposition of global society, South Korea and the U.S. will firmly work together based on the adamant combined defense posture," the statement added.

In a separate statement from acting Pentagon press secretary Todd Breasseale on Saturday, Austin and Lee were said to have "emphasized the importance of close cooperation and maintaining 'fight tonight' readiness to reinforce deterrence in the face of [North Korea's] destabilizing activities."

The two leaders agreed that the U.S. and South Korea would expand their upcoming joint

military drills in response to the North's provocations.

South Korea's military last month announced it would resume large-scale field exercises with the U.S. that were suspended in 2018. Exercise Ulchi Freedom Shield will start late August and run for a week; exercise Freedom Shield will commence the first half of 2023.

In addition to the drills, 11 separate field exercises between U.S. and South Korean troops are scheduled in the coming months, according to the Defense Ministry. Those drills will encompass a variety of unit-level missions, such as constructing bridges and special warfare training.

## UN chief: World is one step from 'nuclear annihilation'

*Associated Press*

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations chief warned the world Monday that "humanity is just one misunderstanding, one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation."

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres gave the dire warning at the opening of the long-delayed high-level meeting to review the landmark 50-year-old treaty aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and eventually achieving a nuclear-free world. He cited especially the war in Ukraine and the threat of nuclear weapons to conflicts in the Middle East and Asia, two regions "edging toward catastrophe."

Guterres told many ministers, officials and diplomats attending the monthlong conference to review the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty that the meeting is taking place "at a critical juncture for our collective peace and se-

curity" and "at a time of nuclear danger not seen since the height of the Cold War."

The conference is "an opportunity to hammer out the measures that will help avoid certain disaster, and to put humanity on a new path toward a world free of nuclear weapons," the secretary-general said.

But Guterres warned that "geopolitical weapons are reaching new highs," almost 13,000 nuclear weapons are in arsenals around the world, and countries seeking "false security" are spending hundreds of billions of dollars on "doomsday weapons."

"All this at a time when the risks of proliferation are growing and guardrails to prevent escalation are weakening," he said, "And when crises — with nuclear undertones — are festering from the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula to Russia's invasion of Ukraine."

## US seeks to expand ties with New Zealand amid China fears

*Associated Press*

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — The commander of the U.S. military in the Pacific said Monday that he wants to expand and strengthen its ties with New Zealand.

The visit to Wellington by Adm. John Aquilino, head of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, comes as the United States is looking to increase its presence in the region amid deep concerns over China's growing ambitions in the Pacific.

They include most recently the Solomon Islands, where the U.S. and several Pacific nations expressed deep concern about a security pact the Solomons signed with China in April, which many fear could result in a military buildup in the region.

Aquilino was greeted with a traditional Maori welcome ceremony and laid a wreath at the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. He spoke briefly to media

ahead of meetings with top New Zealand defense force and government officials.

"Our partnership runs very deep," Aquilino said. "We are doing many things together to continue to ensure peace and prosperity for both of our nations and for all the nations in the region."

Aquilino said he wanted to identify new areas where the U.S. could work with New Zealand. He said the leadership of Australia and New Zealand in the Pacific was "critically important."

"The one thing you will never hear out of me is big or small. This is a partnership," Aquilino said. "All nations deliver those things that they can deliver."

Air Marshal Kevin Short, chief of New Zealand's defense force, said the relationship with the U.S. had been strong for decades, and it regularly interacts with U.S. forces so they can both operate better in the region.

# More rain falls in already flooded Kentucky region

*Associated Press*

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Another round of storms hit flooded Appalachian mountain communities where more than 30 people were killed and search and rescue teams found more bodies on Monday.

Hundreds of people remain unaccounted for and the death toll of 30 will rise, said Gov. Andy Beshear, who noted that bodies which aren't yet part of the official death count have been recovered. More than 12,000 customers remained without power, many because their homes and businesses have been destroyed or aren't fit for habitation. Shelters were housing at least 300 people.

The floods were unleashed last week when between 8 and 10½ inches of rain fell in just 48 hours in parts of eastern Kentucky, southern West Virginia and western Virginia. Radar indicated up to 4 more inches of rain fell Sunday, and the National Weather Service warned that slow-moving showers and thunderstorms could provoke more flash flooding through Tuesday morning.

"If things weren't hard enough on the people of this region, they're getting rain right now," Beshear said Monday at the capital. "Just as concerning is high winds — think about how saturated the ground has been — it could knock over poles, it could knock over trees, so people need to be careful. And it's even going to get tougher when the rain stops. It's going to get really hot, and we need to make sure people are ultimately sta-

ble by that point."

Among the lives, homes and businesses swept away in the floods was some of the region's irreplaceable history. Appalshop, a cultural center known for chronicling Appalachian life for the rest of the world, was assessing the extensive damage at its repository of Appalachian history and culture, where historic documents and artifacts were flushed out of the building.

Beshear said he saw while touring the disaster area Sunday how people have been helping their neighbors.

"These are amazing folks. They're hurting, but they're strong. And it's amazing to see them helping each other, even when they've got nothing left," he said.

Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Chief of the U.S. National Guard Bureau, said in an Associated Press interview on Sunday that about 400 people have been rescued by helicopter.

"In light of the devastation, the response is going pretty well," he said.

The governor canceled a trip to Israel that had been scheduled for later this week, saying, "I cannot be overseas while the people of eastern Kentucky are suffering."

Meanwhile, nighttime curfews were declared in response to reports of looting in two of the devastated communities — Breathitt County and the nearby city of Hindman in Knott County.

The only exceptions will be for emergency vehicles, first responders, and people traveling for work.

# Biden virus case shows confusing CDC guidance

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — Before President Joe Biden emerged from coronavirus isolation Wednesday, he made double-sure he was no longer contagious. He received negative tests Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. To test at all meant Biden was going above and beyond the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for exiting isolation.

The CDC has built that guidance around a timeline — a prescribed minimum number of days of isolation — rather than the direct, personalized evidence of virus shedding that rapid antigen tests provide. But the usefulness of these tests was highlighted anew Saturday when Biden, who had taken the antiviral during his illness, tested positive again and returned to isolation in the White House residence.

More than 2½ years into the pandemic, and with a highly contagious version of the virus circulating, the CDC guidelines for what to do when falling ill — and when to return to public life — continue to stoke as much confusion as clarity. That's a reflection of the changing nature of the virus, the inherent unpredictability of an infection, and the demands and expectations of work and home life.

With new research showing that people are often infectious for more than five days, the CDC guidance has drawn criticism from some infectious-disease experts. The Biden protocol strikes many of them as the right way to go — because it's empirical evidence that a person isn't shedding the virus.

Biden has used his brief bout with the coronavirus as a sign that the administration is on top of the pandemic and has made the right moves by relying on vaccinations, testing and new antiviral drugs to lower the death rate.

But across the country, hundreds of thousands of people a day are getting infected with the omicron subvariant BA.5 — the exact number is impossible to know — and they have a common, urgent need to know when they are no longer contagious.

The CDC's guidance has been under internal review in recent months. A revamped set of recommendations is expected to be rolled out in coming weeks, according to three administration officials and advisers who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe sensitive internal discussions.

# 2 bodies found in Calif. fire zone

*Associated Press*

YREKA, Calif. — Two bodies were found inside a charred vehicle in a driveway in the wildfire zone of a raging California blaze that is among several burning in the western U.S. amid hot, dry and gusty conditions that boost the danger that the fires will keep growing, officials said Monday.

The McKinney Fire in Northern California near the stateline with Oregon exploded in size Sunday to more than 82 square miles after erupting Friday in the Klamath National Forest, firefighting officials said. It is California's largest wildfire of the year so far and officials have not determined a

cause.

The vehicle and the bodies were found Sunday in the driveway of a residence near the remote community of Klamath River, the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office said. The blaze cast an orange-brown hue in one neighborhood where a brick chimney stood surrounded by rubble and scorched vehicles on Sunday. Flames torched trees along State Route 96 and raced through hillsides in sight of homes.

Firefighting crews on the ground were trying to prevent the blaze from moving toward the town of Yreka, population about 7,500, about four miles away as of Sunday.



# Threat of protests stirs panic in Iraq

*Associated Press*

BAGHDAD — Hundreds took to Baghdad streets on Monday in a counterprotest planned by Iran-backed groups and Shiite political rivals against an influential cleric whose followers stormed the parliament building over the weekend and are staging a sin-in there.

Many fear the dueling protests in the Iraqi capital could escalate tensions. The prospect of opposing demonstrations deepens the crisis and the political vacuum that Iraq has been plunged into since federal elections last October.

Iraqi security forces erected concrete barriers ahead of the street protest called for by a political alliance of Iran-backed groups opposed to the followers of Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who are camped out inside the parliament building in

Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone.

Hundreds of Shiite men arrived at the July 14th Bridge, which leads to the Green Zone, waving Iraqi flags and those belonging to Iran-backed groups and figures.

"We are sending a message to the other side that we are with the law, the state," said one demonstrator, a member of former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's State of Law party. He declined to provide his name, fearing for his safety.

The counterprotest was called for by the Coordination Framework, an alliance led by Shiite parties close to Iran.

It has instructed the participants not to enter the Green Zone but to "wait for instructions."

That signaled to protesters not to clash with al-Sadr's followers, but opened the possibil-

ity of drawn-out demonstrations in a standoff between the two Shiite factions in Iraq.

The alliance also called on supporters to respect state security forces and carry Iraqi flags. The concrete walls erected earlier by the security forces could act as a buffer, blocking off passage from the bridge to the Green Zone.

On Sunday, al-Sadr had egged on his followers camped out inside the parliament, calling for a "revolution" to change the political system, the constitution and abolish his rivals. He urged Iraqi tribes to join him, a message his rivals see as a call to a coup.

However, fractures have appeared within the leadership of the Coordination Framework, with some members calling for restraint and others pushing for escalation.

Al-Maliki, the head of the alli-

ance, and Shiite leader Qais al-Khazali, appear to be leading the push for protests. Meanwhile, Fatah Alliance chief Hadi al-Ameri is urging control and moderation, two Shiite political officials told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Kataib Hezbollah, another Iran-backed militia group, has also suggested it will not participate in the street protests.

If things escalate, it would be the closest that al-Sadr and al-Maliki's followers have come to a confrontation since 2008, under the former prime minister when Iraqi troops drove al-Sadr's then-militia, the Mahdi Army, out of the southern city of Basra.

Al-Sadr and al-Maliki, powerful in their own right, have been bitter enemies ever since.

## Retired Briton leaves Iraq after conviction quashed

*Associated Press*

LONDON — A retired British geologist jailed in Iraq for antiquities smuggling has been freed and has left the country, his family said Sunday.

Jim Fitton, 66, was sentenced in June to 15 years in an Iraqi prison. A Baghdad appeals court overturned the conviction and last week ordered his release.

Fitton has now been reunited with family in Malaysia, where he lives. Son-in-law Sam Tasker said Fitton arrived at Kuala Lumpur airport on Friday, and the family was "absolutely over the moon." Fitton missed the wedding for his daughter Leila and Tasker in May while he was imprisoned.

Fitton was arrested in March at Baghdad Airport and charged under antiquities laws

that carried the possibility of a death sentence.

His case drew international attention after he was convicted of picking up shards of pottery and other fragments from an ancient site in southern Iraq while on an organized geology and archaeology tour.

Fitton told the court that he had no criminal intent, and some of the pieces he picked up from an unguarded site were no larger than a fingernail.

Many feared the incident would deter tourists from visiting Iraq, where the government hopes to grow the nascent tourism sector.

Frustrated by perceived inaction on the part of the British government, Fitton's family started a petition that garnered more than 350,000 signatures.

## Ex-Philippine leader who helped oust dictator dies

*Associated Press*

MANILA, Philippines — Former Philippine President Fidel Valdez Ramos, a West Point graduate and ex-general who saw action in the Korean and Vietnam wars and played a key role in a 1986 pro-democracy uprising that ousted a dictator, has died. He was 94.

Ramos' family announced his death with profound sadness but did not provide other details in a brief statement that asked for privacy.

One of his longtime aides, Norman Legaspi, told The Associated Press that Ramos had been in and out of the hospital in recent years due to a heart condition and had suffered from dementia.

Some of Ramos' relatives were with him when he died on Sunday at the Makati Medical

Center in metropolitan Manila, Legaspi said.

"He was an icon. We lost a hero and I lost a father," said Legaspi, a retired Philippine air force official, who served as a close staff to Ramos in and out of government for about 15 years.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. condoled with the family of Ramos in a Facebook post. "We did not only lose a good leader but also a member of the family," he said.

The newly elected president is the namesake son of the former Philippine dictator, whose 1986 ouster came after Ramos, then a top official of the Philippine Constabulary, and defense chief Juan Ponce Enrile withdrew their support in defections that sparked massive army-backed protests.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Virgin Mary statue back at Catholic university**

**MD** EMMITSBURG — A 26-foot statue of the Virgin Mary is back in place at a Catholic university in Maryland.

The Frederick News-Post reported that the statue has been put back in place atop a 78-foot pedestal at the National Shrine Grotto on the campus of Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg after a year of restoration work. That work continues even as the statue is back in place, surrounded by scaffolding. Workers are now in the process of layering gold leaf to the statue's exterior.

The university has raised \$400,000 to support the restoration; about \$450,000 more is needed.

The statue is expected to be completed next month, with a formal ceremony planned for October.

**Police fatally shoot ax-wielding robber**

**MN** ROCHESTER — A Rochester police officer fatally shot a robbery suspect who was armed with an ax, authorities said Saturday.

Police said the man stole cash from a Rochester business about 11 p.m. on Friday and fled in a van. Officers located the van about two hours later, at which time the suspect got out of the vehicle and charged at an officer who fired his weapon. Attempts to revive the man failed and he died from his injuries, police said.

The officer involved in the shooting has been with the department for more than a year

but has previous law enforcement experience, authorities said. He has been placed on administrative leave. The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension is investigating the shooting.

**Motorcycle charity ride crash hospitalizes 8**

**PA** LEECHBURG — A crash during a motorcycle charity ride in western Pennsylvania sent at least eight riders to hospitals, authorities said.

Officials in Westmoreland County's Allegheny Township said the crash occurred at about 1 p.m. Saturday on White Cloud Road during the 11th annual Riding For the Cure event to raise funds for research and treatment of breast cancer.

Chief Duane Fisher told KDKA-TV that arriving officers were told that one rider went down after going around a curve and other bikes coming upon the downed motorcycle were caught up in the crash.

Oklahoma-Vandergrift C&S Ambulance supervisor Monica Stringer told the Tribune-Review that four people with serious to critical injuries were flown to Pittsburgh trauma centers and four others with less severe injuries were taken by ambulance to hospitals.

**Co-pilot dies after fall from small cargo plane**

**NC** RALEIGH — The co-pilot of a small cargo plane died Friday after falling from the aircraft in North Carolina before it made an emergency landing.

News outlets reported that the body of the co-pilot, 23-year-

old Charles Hew Crooks, was found in a backyard in the town of Fuquay-Varina, about 30 miles south of the Raleigh-Durham International Airport. He did not have a parachute.

The pilot made an emergency landing at the airport Friday afternoon after reporting that one of the wheels had come off the landing gear. He was treated and released from a hospital with minor injuries.

**Write-in votes to decide town council seat winner**

**SC** CHAPIN — A deadline to qualify for an open seat on a South Carolina town's council ended without any candidates filing to have their names placed on the ballot.

A Sept. 13 special election has been set to replace outgoing Chapin Councilwoman Kay Hollis, who resigned from the five-person town council last month. No candidates filed with the Lexington County Election Commission for the open seat by the noon Friday deadline.

Elections Director Lenice Shoemaker confirmed to The State that the election will proceed without any listed candidates on the ballot and a write-in option. The person who receives the most write-in votes will fill the council seat until the end of Hollis' term in November 2023.

Chapin has about 1,800 people and is located 24 miles northwest of Columbia.

**Deputies responding to road rage hit by driver**

**WI** MADISON — Investigators said two Dane County deputies investigating a case of road rage were hurt

when an alleged drunken driver crashed into their squad cars late Friday.

Their injuries are not believed to be life threatening, the Dane County Sheriff's Office said.

The incident happened in Springfield, where authorities said a person was shot and injured in a dispute near the intersection of two highways. The suspect in that incident fled the scene and was later arrested. The person who was shot is expected to survive.

The two deputies who responded to the scene were standing outside of their cars when the drunken driving suspect crashed into their vehicles. They were taken to a local hospital for treatment.

The driver was arrested.

**Federal judge seizes control of local prison**

**MS** JACKSON — A federal judge has seized control of a Mississippi jail after citing "severely deficient" conditions at the facility.

In a Friday ruling, U.S. Southern District of Mississippi Judge Carlton Reeves placed Hinds County's Raymond Detention Center in Raymond into receivership. The judge will soon appoint an expert, known as a "receiver," to temporarily manage the facility in hopes of improving its conditions.

Reeves said that deficiencies in supervision and staffing lead to "a stunning array of assaults, as well as deaths." Seven individuals died last year while detained at the jail, he said.

County officials said they're determining whether they will appeal, WLBT-TV reported.

— From wire reports

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# Perez's HR lifts Royals over Yanks

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Salvador Perez hit a three-run homer off All-Star closer Clay Holmes in the ninth inning, and the Kansas City Royals beat the New York Yankees 8-6 Sunday to avoid being swept in the season series.

Whit Merrifield walked with one out — Holmes' eighth walk in his last eight games after he issued just five in his first 37 appearances. Bobby Witt Jr. was hit on the right hand with a pitch, forcing him from the game.

Perez, who struck out three times and popped out to the catcher in his first four at-bats, drove a 1-2 sinker 441 feet into Monument Park behind the center-field wall. It was the first home run allowed this year by Holmes, who was facing his 181st batter.

"He's got such good sink and his numbers are so overwhelming," Royals manager Mike Matheny said. "You just don't see right-handers take a lot of good at-bats against him. Don't tell that to Salvador Perez."

Perez is hitting .296 with 33 homers in 686 career at-bats in late and close situations — in the seventh inning or later with the Royals either ahead by one run,

tied or trailing with the tying or go-ahead run at the plate, on base or on deck.

"I like to compete — I'm going to do my best, I don't care who's on the mound," Perez said. "He's got some good stuff, good sinker, good slider, both sides of the plate to righties, to lefties. This is the big leagues. If you make a mistake, someone's going to get you."

Holmes (5-2) blew a save for the third time in 20 chances.

"Trying to get a ground ball there and he's a pretty good fast-ball hitter and that one probably just got a little much of the plate," Holmes said. "But I think the two batters before — just a walk and hit by pitch — allowed them to get something going there."

Kansas City went 1-6 against the AL leading-Yankees, who last swept a season series of seven games or more by going 7-0 against Minnesota in 2009. The win also snapped a five-game losing streak for the Royals, who entered Sunday with the third-worst record in baseball.

"Had a couple tough ones, they start to affect anybody," Matheny said. "But this team just wants to keep fighting, play

the game hard."

Taylor Clarke (2-1) threw a perfect eighth, then gave up DJ LeMahieu's single with one out in the ninth. Aaron Judge flied out to just shy of the track in right field, Rizzo walked and Gleyber Torres hit a game-ending line-out to center.

"Don't give up a homer," Clarke said dryly of his approach against Judge. "I thought he got it, just because anything to right field goes out."

Judge went 0-for-3 with two walks and ended July with a major league-leading 42 homers and 91 RBIs. His batting average dipped from .300 to .297.

No one has batted at least .300 while hitting at least 50 homers and exceeding 100 RBIs since Alex Rodriguez hit .314 with 54 homers and 156 RBIs for the Yankees in 2007.

New York overcame a 4-0 deficit and took a 6-4 lead when Anthony Rizzo hit a three-run homer into the right field second deck in the seventh off Dylan Coleman, Rizzo's 25th home run this season.

Hunter Dozier homered against Ron Marinaccio leading off the eighth, ending Marinaccio's 19-inning scoreless streak

and run of 56 consecutive batters without allowing a hit.

Marinaccio's streak of consecutive batters without a hit was the second-longest since 1974, according to STATS, behind Dennis Eckersley's 71 for Cleveland in 1977 and Dwight Gooden's 57 for the Yankees in 1996.

Royals starter Zack Greinke allowed three runs, five hits and two walks with three strikeouts over five innings.

Rizzo's home run cost Greinke a chance to earn his first ever win at the Yankees' home turf. He is 0-3 with an 8.63 ERA in eight games in the Bronx, including old Yankee Stadium.

Yankees starter Jordan Montgomery gave up four runs, four hits and two walks with six strikeouts in four-plus innings. He has a 6.27 ERA in his last four starts.

Kansas City took a 4-0 lead in the fifth on Nick Pratto's two-run single, Maikel Garcia's RBI double and Merrifield's run-scoring groundout.

Kyle Higashioka had an RBI single in the bottom half, and LeMahieu hit a two-run homer into the right-field short porch.

## Astros' Alvarez delivers RBI single in 10th against M's

Associated Press

HOUSTON — When the Seattle Mariners took a chance by pitching to Houston's Yordan Alvarez instead of walking him with two on and one out in the 10th inning Sunday, the All-Star slugger was determined to take advantage of the opportunity.

"I just got focused and said I was going to be the one," he said in Spanish through a translator.

And he was — hitting an RBI single to lift the Astros to a 3-2 win.

Mauricio Dubón started the 10th as the automatic runner on second and the Mariners intentionally walked Jose Altuve. Dubón advanced to third on a sacrifice fly by Yuli Gurriel.

Alvarez then laced a grounder off Brennan Bernardino (0-1), who was making his MLB debut, to left field to send Dubón home and start the celebration.

"Tough place to make your Major League debut in," manager Scott Servais said. "Tough situation when they start with the guy on second and here comes the Astros' top of the lineup."

Hector Neris (4-3) pitched a scoreless 10th for the win.

The Mariners were playing without star rookie Julio Rodríguez, who was placed on the injured list with a bruised right wrist Sunday.

The AL-West leading Astros scored two runs in the first inning to take the lead. The

Mariners, who are 12 games back in second place in the division, used a two-run homer by Jesse Winker in the eighth inning to tie it.

Houston's victory came a night after Seattle scored two runs in the ninth to rally for a 5-4 win.

"Once they tied it up, I think we got a lot of energy," Alvarez said. "Then we told ourselves: 'OK, we can't lose today's game like we did yesterday,' and that was kind of part of it."

Houston led 2-0 and the Mariners had managed just two singles when Ryne Stanek walked Adam Frazier with two outs in the eighth. Winker sent his next pitch into the seats in right field for his ninth homer of the season, tying it at 2.



# Duran drives Rangers past Angels

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Even after striking out in his first three trips to the plate Sunday, Texas' Ezequiel Duran wasn't lacking in confidence as he came up with the bases loaded and none out in the ninth inning of a tie game against the Los Angeles Angels.

Duran delivered a three-run double as the Rangers beat the Angels 5-2 despite Los Angeles starter Reid Detmers throwing an immaculate inning.

"I just made an adjustment and had the confidence in myself to be the best that I've always been and continue to do that," Duran said through an interpreter.

Texas took three of four from the Angels and went 5-6 on its season-high, 11-game road trip despite being the first team in 43 years to have three immaculate innings thrown against them in a season.

Detmers became the first pitcher in seven years with a no-hitter and an immaculate inning in the same season.

**Dodgers 7, Rockies 3:** James Outman homered on the first swing of his first big-league at-bat and finished with three hits and three RBIs as Los Angeles won at Colorado to end July with 21 victories.

Freddie Freeman added three hits and an RBI, passing teammate Trea Turner for the

MLB lead in hits. Tony Gonsolin (12-1) bounced back from his first loss of the season as the Dodgers finished the month 21-5, tying the franchise record for most wins in July.

**Padres 3, Twins 2:** Jurickson Profar homered for the second straight game and had a hand in the go-ahead rally as host San Diego took two out of three from AL Central-leading Minnesota.

That sixth-inning rally backed left-hander Sean Manaea (6-5), who overcame home runs by Luis Arraez and Jose Miranda to get the win. Luis Garcia pitched a perfect ninth for his first save.

**Cardinals 5, Nationals 0:** Paul DeJong homered for the second straight game after ending a minor league demotion, Andre Pallante pitched into the ninth inning and St. Louis won at Washington.

**Phillies 8, Pirates 2:** Alec Bohm fell a triple shy of the cycle and matched a career best with four hits as Philadelphia completed a four-game sweep at Pittsburgh.

**White Sox 4, Athletics 1:** José Abreu and Eloy Jiménez homered, Dylan Cease threw six strong innings and host Chicago won for the 10th time in 15 games and moved above .500.

**Red Sox 7, Brewers 2:** Xander Bogaerts,

J.D. Martinez and Christian Vázquez each had an RBI double as host Boston won for just the fourth time in 17 games.

**Braves 1, Diamondbacks 0:** Austin Riley hit a run-scoring double off Mark Melancon in the ninth inning and host Atlanta completed a three-game sweep of Arizona.

**Guardians 5, Rays 3:** Austin Hedges had a tiebreaking two-run single in the fifth to help Cleveland beat All-Star Game starter Shane Bieber and host Tampa Bay.

**Mets 9, Marlins 3:** Francisco Lindor had three hits and visiting New York pounded trade deadline target Pablo López and handed Miami its seventh straight home loss.

**Blue Jays 4, Tigers 1:** Matt Chapman hit a two-run home run, José Berríos pitched seven strong innings to win his third straight decision and host Toronto beat error-prone Detroit.

**Giants 4, Cubs 0:** Carlos Rodón struck out 10 over seven dominant innings amid speculation he could be traded, and host San Francisco beat Chicago.

**Reds 3, Orioles 2:** Brandon Drury reached 20 homers for the first time in his big league career when he hit a tiebreaking drive in the eighth inning to give host Cincinnati a win over Baltimore.

## Finau surges to second straight PGA Tour win

Associated Press

DETROIT — Tony Finau ran away with the Rocket Mortgage Classic on Sunday at Detroit Golf Club to become the first PGA Tour player in three years to win consecutive regular-season events. Finau closed with a 5-under 67 for a five-shot victory and a tournament-record 26-under 262 total. Taylor Pendrith, Patrick Cantlay and rookie of the year front-runner Cameron Young tied for second.

Finau coasted to his fourth career victory, a third title in 11-plus months. He was the 3M Open winner last week in Minnesota, where he rallied from five strokes back to win by three. Brendon Todd was the last to win two straight in the

regular season, doing it in 2019.

### Stenson wins LIV event

BEDMINSTER, N.J. — Two weeks after Henrik Stenson was stripped of his Ryder Cup captaincy for Europe, he's a winner in his debut on the Saudi-backed LIV Golf series. The Swede got large and immediate returns.

He shot 69 at Trump National. He won by two shots over Dustin Johnson and Matthew Wolf.

### Furue wins first

IRVINE, Scotland — Rookie Ayaka Furue of Japan won the Women's Scottish Open with a 10-under 62. She rallied from four shots behind for her first LPGA Tour victory.

## Source: 49ers near deal with All-Pro WR Samuels

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The San Francisco 49ers are finalizing a three-year contract extension with All-Pro receiver Deebo Samuel that will clear the way for their top offensive playmaker to return to the practice field.

A person familiar with the deal said Sunday the sides are putting the finishing touches on the contract a day before the Niners are set to hold their first padded practice.

### Reddick wins in OT on Indy road courses

INDIANAPOLIS — Tyler Reddick had already grabbed his first Cup career victory this month, qualified for NASCAR's

playoffs and signed a big contract with a new team. Now he's also got a victory at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Reddick closed the best month of his career with a win in overtime Sunday on the road course at Indy to give him two victories in the last five Cup races.

He broke through for his first career victory on July 3 at Road America in Wisconsin.

In other auto racing news:

■ Two-time world champion Fernando Alonso will extend his Formula One career by joining Aston Martin next season. The 41-year-old Spaniard will replace Sebastian Vettel after the German announced his retirement last week.

# Browns QB Watson suspended 6 games for violating NFL personal conduct policy

*Associated Press*

Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson was suspended for six games Monday for violating the NFL's personal conduct policy following accusations by two dozen women in Texas of sexual misconduct during massage treatments, in what a disciplinary officer said was behavior "more egregious than any before reviewed by the NFL."

Watson, who played for four seasons with Houston before being traded to Cleveland in March, recently settled 23 of 24 lawsuits filed by women alleging sexual harassment and assault during the treatments in 2020 and 2021.

The NFL has three days to appeal the decision by retired federal judge Sue L. Robinson.

"Although this is the most significant punishment ever imposed on an NFL player for allegations of nonviolent sexual conduct, Mr. Watson's pattern of conduct is more egregious than any before reviewed by the NFL," Robinson wrote in the conclusion to her 16-page report.

Even though the only discipline in the collective bargaining agreement is a fine or suspension, Robinson mandated as condition of reinstatement that Watson should "limit his massage therapy to Club-directed sessions and Club-approved massage therapists for the duration of his career."

She added that Watson must have "no adverse involvement with law enforcement and must not commit any additional violations" of the personal conduct policy.

The NFL Players Association already stated it would abide by Robinson's ruling. If either side appeals, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell or someone he designates will make the decision, per terms of the CBA. The union then could try to challenge that ruling in federal court.

The league had pushed for an indefinite suspension of at least one year and at least a \$5 million fine for the 26-year-old Watson during a three-day hearing before Robinson in June, two people familiar with the discussions told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the hearing wasn't public.

Watson, who signed a fully guaranteed \$230 million, five-year contract, will lose only \$345,000 if the suspension is un-

changed because his base salary this season is \$1.035 million. His \$45 million signing bonus is not affected by the suspension.

In a statement, the league thanked Robinson for reviewing "the voluminous record ... that resulted in her finding multiple violations of the NFL Personal Conduct Policy by Deshaun Watson."

"In light of her findings, the league is reviewing Judge Robinson's imposition of a six-game suspension and will make a determination on next steps," the statement said.

Watson can practice and play in exhibition games before his suspension begins the first week of the regular season. He can return to practice in Week 4 and would be eligible to play on Oct. 23 when the Browns play at Baltimore.

He has been in training camp with the Browns and has continued to take most of the reps with the first-team offense, which will be turned over to backup Jacoby Brissett while he's sidelined.

After learning the ruling was imminent, the NFLPA issued a joint statement with Watson on Sunday night, saying they will not appeal Robinson's ruling and urged the league to follow suit.

"Every player, owner, business partner and stakeholder deserves to know that our process is legitimate and will not be tarnished based on the whims of the League of office" the union said in a statement.

While the NFL pushed for a severe penalty, the union had argued Watson shouldn't be punished at all because he was not convicted of any crime.

Two grand juries in Texas declined to indict Watson on criminal complaints brought by 10 of the women.

This was the first case for Robinson, who was jointly appointed by the NFL and the union to handle player misconduct — a role previously held by Goodell.

Watson, a three-time Pro Bowl pick with the Texans, has seen his playing career stalled by the allegations. He sat out the 2021 season after demanding a trade before the allegations came out.

In their lawsuits, the women accused Watson of exposing himself, touching them with his penis or kissing them against their will. One woman alleged Watson forced her to perform oral sex.

Watson has denied all wrongdoing, insist-

ing any sexual activity with three of the women was consensual. He publicly insisted his goal was to clear his name before agreeing to confidential financial settlements with 20 of the women on June 21.

"This case started because one woman had the fortitude to step forward and make her voice heard," said attorney Tony Buzbee, who represents the women in the civil lawsuits. "Her courage inspired many others with the same experience. None of this saga would have occurred without that one brave voice. One person can make a difference."

Buzbee said that although some of his clients "have strong feelings" about the NFL's proceedings, he noted that the civil process and the NFL's disciplinary process "are very different."

"My role was to advance the cause of my clients, in civil court — nothing more. I've done that. I am extremely proud of these women and our legal team's efforts. The settlements are confidential. I won't comment further on them," he said.

Watson's high-profile case has renewed scrutiny of the league's handling of player misbehavior, along with its support for women, and left the Browns wondering if they'll ever find a franchise quarterback.

Since the trade, Watson has been on public display, with fans questioning whether the league had the authority to ban him from playing despite no criminal charges.

The league has been sensitive about its image and handing out the appropriate discipline for Watson after being criticized for its handling of previous cases of domestic violence or sexual misconduct against women involving Baltimore running back Ray Rice, Pittsburgh quarterback Ben Roethlisberger and Cleveland running back Kareem Hunt among others.

The Browns were widely condemned for signing Watson. The team has been desperate to find a long-term answer at quarterback — they've had a league-high 32 starters since 1999 — and many questioned why the team would take on a player with so much baggage.

During his introductory news conference after he was traded to Cleveland, Watson was adamant about his innocence.