

## US, Indonesia strengthen military ties

By **SETH ROBSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

**PALEMBANG, Indonesia** — Military training involving 2,000 American and 2,000 Indonesian troops this month in Southeast Asia's most populous country is a sign of Indonesia's importance amid tensions with China, security experts said Monday.

Super Garuda Shield, which kicked off Aug. 1 and ends Sunday, includes smaller contingents of troops from a dozen other nations. It's the largest installment yet of an exercise held annually for 16 years, according to an Army news release Thursday.

The exercise began with soldiers from the United States, Indonesia and Japan parachuting Wednesday into a training area on the island of Sumatra.

Sumatra — the largest of Indonesia's 17,000 islands that is completely within the country's territory — sits on the equator and is covered in vast rainforests.

Troops who served in the Middle East may recognize the Islamic call to prayer echoing from mosques during the training. Nearly nine in 10 people in the country with 275 million citizens are Muslim.

The U.S. Army's 7th Infantry Division, out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., is overseeing American forces involved in Super Garuda Shield from a base in Baturaja. Division commander Maj. Gen. Stephen Smith leads U.S. forces on Sumatra.

The airborne operation, which involved three C-130J Super Hercules from the 374th Airlift Wing deployed from Yokota Air Base, Japan, coincided with amphibious training by members of the Okinawa-based 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit alongside Indonesian soldiers on Singkep Island, just 20 miles north of Sumatra and south of Singapore.

The amphibious operation happened near a key gateway to the South China Sea, where Beijing has territorial claims that Indonesia does not recognize. The two nations have clashed over fishing rights in recent years.

"Obviously, the South China Sea is a potential conflict area although China has been less aggressive when it comes to Indonesia than other closer [Southeast Asian] neighbors," Ralph Cossa, president emeritus of the Pacific Forum think tank in Hawaii, said in an email Monday.

Nobody involved in Garuda Shield is like-

ly to say the training is aimed at China, he said.

"China is certainly in the back (or front) of everyone's mind, especially after the events around Taiwan of the past few days," Cossa said, referring to Chinese military drills near the island after last week's visit by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Indonesia is unlikely to be an arena of conflict involving China, although both Washington and Beijing probably wish for strong ties with Jakarta given its ability to help shape politics in Southeast Asia and beyond, said Ian Chong, an associate professor of political science at the National University of Singapore.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo recently went to Beijing as the first major foreign leader to visit China since the Winter Olympics earlier this year, Chong said in an email Monday.

"In the event of a conflict, Indonesia's geographic position and growing capability, means that it is in a position to complicate access, communications and logistics for both the United States and [China]," he said. "Such conditions create incentives for Beijing and Washington to reach out to Jakarta."

## China remains priority even as US fights terrorism

*Associated Press*

**WASHINGTON** — In a recent closed-door meeting with leaders of the agency's counterterrorism center, the CIA's No. 2 official made clear that fighting al-Qaida and other extremist groups would remain a priority — but that the agency's money and resources would be increasingly shifted to focusing on China.

The CIA drone attack that killed al-Qaida's leader showed that fighting terrorism is hardly an afterthought. But it didn't change the message the agency's deputy director, David Cohen, delivered at that meeting

weeks earlier: While the United States will continue to go after terrorists, the top priority is trying to better understand and counter Beijing.

One year after ending the war in Afghanistan, President Joe Biden and top national security officials speak less about counterterrorism and more about the political, economic and military threats posed by China as well as Russia. There's been a quiet pivot within intelligence agencies, which are moving hundreds of officers to China-focused positions, including some who were previously working on terrorism.

The last week makes clear that the U.S. has to deal with both at the same time. Days after Ayman al-Zawahri was killed in Kabul, China staged large-scale military exercises and threatened to cut off contacts with the U.S. over House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan.

The U.S. has long been alarmed by China's growing political and economic ambitions. China has mounted campaigns of cyber and corporate espionage, tried to influence foreign elections and detained millions of minority Uyghurs in camps. Some experts also think Beijing

will in coming years try to seize the self-ruled island of Taiwan by force.

Intelligence officials have said they need more insights on China, including after being unable to definitively pinpoint the cause of the COVID-19 pandemic. Beijing has been accused of withholding information about the origins of the virus.

The war in Ukraine has also underscored Russia's importance as a target. The U.S. used declassified information to expose Russian President Vladimir Putin's war plans before the invasion and rally diplomatic support for Kyiv.

# Navy jet recovered from Mediterranean Sea

By ALISON BATH  
*Stars and Stripes*

NAPLES, Italy — The Navy has recovered a Super Hornet jet that was swept overboard from the USS Harry S. Truman in the Mediterranean Sea a month ago, the service announced Monday.

The F/A-18E, assigned to Carrier Air Wing 1, was recovered Wednesday from a depth of about 9,500 feet, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet said in a statement. The plane was taken to a nearby

military base and will be transported to the United States, the Navy said.

The Super Hornet was lost July 8 during unexpected heavy weather. In announcing the loss two days later, the service said a determination about recovery was being made.

The statement did not say how the plane was located or whether it was intact. It also did not give the exact location where the jet was found, but the Truman had been sailing in the Ionian Sea, USNI News report-

ed July 7.

Search and recovery took less than 24 hours from the time the plane was located, Lt. Cmdr. Miguel Lewis, U.S. 6th Fleet salvage officer, said in the statement.

Analysts said the decision to retrieve the jet could have hinged on whether it had been updated with new technology that could be exploited by Russia or China. The Super Hornet was introduced in 1999.

Upgrades in Block III versions, the newer models, in-

clude an infrared search-and-track system that is useful in pinpointing stealth aircraft, better radar equipment and a precision-approach landing system, experts said.

In addition, the Navy plans to upgrade Block II versions, which are an older type of Super Hornet.

The jet blown off the Truman was recovered using a CURV-21 remotely operated vehicle that attached specialized rigging and lift lines to the plane.

## China extending exercises around Taiwan for 5th day

By JOSEPH DITZLER  
AND ALEX WILSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

China on Monday continued its military exercises around Taiwan that were scheduled to end at noon the previous day, according to the Chinese Ministry of Defense.

The Eastern Theater Command “continued to conduct practical joint exercises in the sea and airspace around Taiwan Island, focusing on organizing joint anti-submarine and sea assault operations,” according to a terse notice posted on the ministry website. It did not specify where or for how long the drills would continue.

Spurred by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan on Wednesday, the Chinese military undertook four days of exercises, starting with the firing of 11 ballistic missiles, five of which impacted inside Japan’s maritime exclusive economic zone on Thursday. Four likely overflew Taiwan and one came down about 50 miles north-northwest of Yonaguni at the southwest end of the Ryukyu Island chain, according

to Japan Today, which cited the Japan Defense Ministry on Friday.

On Sunday, “multiple bomber formations flew across the Taiwan Strait from north to south and from south to north, while several fighter jets conducted joint drills with destroyers and frigates,” according to China Military, an official online news site.

Beijing sent 66 aircraft and 14 warships around Taiwan on Sunday; 22 aircraft crossed the median line in the 110-mile-wide Taiwan Strait, the unofficial boundary separating Taiwan and China, according to Taiwan’s official Central News Agency.

Experts in international relations said the continuing drills constitute overreaction and “exceptional punishment” for Taiwan that risk global backfire.

“The fact that the drills have continued beyond their scheduled end is abnormal. It shows that Beijing wants to deliver exceptional punishment to Taiwan in response to Speaker Pelosi’s visit,” said James Brown, an associate professor at Temple University, Japan Campus, in Tokyo.

## UN secretary-general: Nuclear threat ‘back in focus’ in Japan

By ALEX WILSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — Nuclear-armed nations must commit to a “no first-use policy” as rising tensions between them revive the threat of nuclear war, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Monday.

The world is witnessing a “radicalization in the geopolitical situation,” he said during a news conference at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan. He cited as examples Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing enmity between North and South Korea.

“Nobody can accept the idea of a new nuclear war, because that would be the destruction of the planet,” Guterres said. “What is clear is that if nobody uses [nuclear weapons] for the first time, then there will be no war.”

He added that “any attack on nuclear plants is suicidal,” referring to reports that Ukraine’s Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant — Europe’s largest — came under fire on Saturday. Both Ukraine and Russia accused each other of the attack,

The Associated Press reported Sunday.

The news conference took place just two days after a short meeting between Guterres and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, both of whom visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum on Saturday to commemorate the 77th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, the world’s first use of a nuclear weapon in war.

Kishida, in the meeting, said Japan would lead international efforts toward a “world without nuclear weapons,” according to a Saturday news release from Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Guterres responded that no other country can speak about the issue of nuclear weapons with the same “moral authority” as Japan.

“At a time when geopolitical tensions are rising and the nuclear threat is back in focus, Japan’s strong and consistent voice on this is more important,” he said Monday.

Guterres is expected to travel from Japan to Mongolia and South Korea, according to the U.N.’s website.

# US to send another \$1B in aid to Ukraine

By **CAITLIN DOORNBOS**  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The United States will send a record-setting \$1 billion in military aid to Ukraine as the country's armed forces attempt to beat back invading Russian troops, the Pentagon announced Monday.

"President [Joe] Biden directed the 18th drawdown of an additional \$1 billion in weapons and equipment from the Department of Defense inventories," Undersecretary for Defense Colin Kahl said Monday. "This is the largest single drawdown of U.S. arms and equipment utilizing this authority to date."

The new aid includes ammunition to support National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems, or NASAMS, and High Mobility Artillery Rockets Systems, or HIMARS, according to the Pentagon.

Long-range rocket and missile systems have been important in the war since Russia shifted the focus of its invasion of Ukraine five months ago to the country's eastern Donbas region, according to the Pentagon. The National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile

Systems and High Mobility Artillery Rockets Systems have "slowed [Russia] down and made it harder for them to resupply other forces," Kahl said.

"This is a 200-pound warhead. It's kind of the equivalent of ... a precision-guided airstrike. These are GPS-guided munitions," Kahl said. "[HIMARS] have been very effective in hitting things that previously the Ukrainians had difficulty hitting reliably — control nodes of sustainment and logistics hubs, key radar systems and other things."

They have also helped Ukraine stall the ongoing battle in eastern Ukraine as the fighting begins to shift to southern Ukraine, Kahl told reporters at the Pentagon.

"Conditions in [eastern Ukraine] have essentially stabilized and the focus is really shifting to the south in part because the Ukrainians are starting to put some pressure down south and the Russians have been forced to redeploy their forces down there," he said.

Also included in the aid is 75,000 rounds of 155 mm M777 howitzer ammunition, 20 120 mm mortar systems and 20,000

rounds of accompanying mortars, 1,000 Javelin missiles and "hundreds" of AT4 anti-armor systems, Claymore anti-personnel munitions, C-4 explosives and "demolition equipment," Kahl said.

To date, the U.S. has sent Ukraine two NASAMS, which are the same missile-defense systems that are used to protect the White House, and 16 HIMARS, truck-mounted rocket systems that can strike targets up to 43 miles away with 500-pound, precision-guided ammunition, the Pentagon has said.

The U.S. also has supplied Ukraine with about 127 M777 howitzers, which can reach distances of up to 18 miles, according to a Congressional Research Service report published Aug. 2.

The aid also includes medical supplies and armored medical transport vehicles, Kahl said. The vehicles come about two weeks after it was revealed Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin approved the treatment of wounded Ukrainian soldiers at a U.S. Army hospital in Germany. Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the largest overseas American military medical

facility, "remains postured and ready to support U.S. armed forces, NATO member countries and partners as directed," spokesman Marcy Sanchez said July 27.

Kahl estimated there have been approximately 70,000 to 80,000 Russian fighters who have either been killed or wounded in the war so far. He did not have an estimate of Ukrainian casualties.

"Yes, both sides are taking casualties," he said. "The war is the most intense conventional conflict in Europe since the Second World War but the current Ukrainians have a lot of advantages, not the least of which [is] their will to fight."

Though the battle in the east has stalled, Russia did make "some incremental gains" there last month, Kahl said.

"But that's come at extraordinary cost to the Russian military because of how well the Ukrainian military has performed and all the assistance the Ukrainian military has gotten," he said.

Monday's aid brings the total cost of weapons and equipment sent to the country since Russia's invasion on Feb. 24 to about \$9.8 billion.

## Nuke plant in Ukraine is shelled; rising dangers feared

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia and Ukraine traded accusations Monday that each side is shelling Europe's biggest nuclear power plant, in southern Ukraine. Russia claimed that Ukrainian shelling caused a power surge and fire and forced staff to lower output from two reactors, while Ukraine has blamed Russian troops for storing weapons there.

Nuclear experts have warned that more shelling of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station, which was captured by Russia early in the war, is fraught with danger. The Kremlin echoed that statement Monday, claiming that Ukrainian shelling could create "catastrophic" consequences for

Europe.

Ukraine's military intelligence spokesman, Andriy Yusov, countered that Russian forces have planted explosives at the plant to head off an expected Ukrainian counteroffensive in the region. Previously, Ukrainian officials have said Russia is launching attacks from the plant and using Ukrainian workers as human shields.

Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, has warned that the way the plant was being run under Russian forces and the fighting going on around it pose grave health and environmental risks.

An expert in nuclear materials at Imperial College London, how-

ever, said the reactor at Zaporizhzhia is modern and housed inside a heavily reinforced steel and concrete building designed to protect against disasters.

"As such I do not believe there would be a high probability of a breach of the containment building even if it was accidentally struck by an explosive shell, and even less likely the reactor itself could be damaged by such," said Mark Wenman at the college's Nuclear Energy Futures.

He also said the spent fuel tanks, where the shells reportedly hit, are strong and probably don't contain much spent fuel.

"Although it may seem worrying, and any fighting on a nuclear site would be illegal according to

international law, the likelihood of a serious nuclear release is still small," he said.

Before Sunday's shelling, the nuclear plant also came under fire last week. Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Lt. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said Monday that the Ukrainian attack Sunday caused a power surge, and smoke at its switch facility, triggering an emergency shutdown. Fire teams extinguished the flames, and the plant's personnel lowered the output of reactors No. 5 and No. 6 to 500 megawatts, he said.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov urged Western powers to force Kyiv to stop attacking the plant.



# Economic package passes Senate

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Democrats pushed their election-year economic package to Senate passage Sunday, a hard-fought compromise less ambitious than President Joe Biden's original domestic vision but one that still meets deep-rooted party goals of slowing global warming, moderating pharmaceutical costs and taxing immense corporations.

The estimated \$740 billion package heads next to the House, where lawmakers are poised to deliver on Biden's priorities, a stunning turnaround of what had seemed a lost and doomed effort that suddenly roared back to political life. Cheers broke out as Senate Democrats held united, 51-50, with Vice President Kamala Harris casting the tie-breaking vote after an all-night session.

"Today, Senate Democrats sided with American families over special interests," President Joe Biden said in a statement from Rehoboth Beach, Del. "I ran for President promising to make government work for working families again, and that is what this bill does — period."

Biden, who had his share of long nights

during his three decades as a senator, called into the Senate cloakroom during the vote on speakerphone to personally thank the staff for their hard work.

The president urged the House to pass the bill as soon as possible. Speaker Nancy Pelosi said her chamber would "move swiftly to send this bill to the president's desk." House votes are expected Friday.

"It's been a long, tough and winding road, but at last, we have arrived," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., ahead of final votes. "The Senate is making history. I am confident the Inflation Reduction Act will endure as one of the defining legislative feats of the 21st century."

Senators engaged in a round-the-clock marathon of voting that began Saturday and stretched late into Sunday afternoon. Democrats swatted down some three dozen Republican amendments designed to torpedo the legislation. Confronting unanimous GOP opposition, Democratic unity in the 50-50 chamber held, keeping the party on track for a morale-boosting victory three months from elections when congressional control is at stake.

The bill ran into trouble midday over ob-

jections to the new 15% corporate minimum tax that private equity firms and other industries disliked, forcing last-minute changes.

Despite the momentary setback, the "Inflation Reduction Act" gives Democrats a campaign-season showcase for action on coveted goals. It includes the largest-ever federal effort on climate change — close to \$400 billion — caps out-of-pocket drug costs for seniors on Medicare to \$2,000 a year and extends expiring subsidies that help 13 million people afford health insurance. By raising corporate taxes and reaping savings from the long-sought goal of allowing the government to negotiate drug prices for Medicare, the whole package is paid for, with some \$300 billion extra revenue for deficit reduction.

Barely more than one-tenth the size of Biden's initial 10-year, \$3.5 trillion Build Back Better initiative, the new package abandons earlier proposals for universal preschool, paid family leave and expanded child care aid. That plan collapsed after conservative Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., opposed it, saying it was too costly and would fuel inflation.

## LA man among at least 3 killed in lightning strike

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — A 29-year-old Los Angeles bank executive was one of three people killed last week when lightning struck in a park across from the White House, his employer said.

Brooks Lambertson, a vice president for City National Bank, was in Washington, D.C., on business when he was hit by lightning Thursday night in Lafayette Park, the bank said in a statement Saturday. A husband and wife from Wisconsin celebrating their 56th wedding anniversary were also struck by lightning and died.

Lambertson managed sponsorships for the bank and previously worked in marketing for the Los Angeles Clippers,

according to City National's statement.

"Brooks was an incredible young man who will be remembered for his generosity, kindness and unwavering positivity," the statement said.

He graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he majored in recreation, parks and tourism administration, with a concentration in sports management, the bank said.

James Mueller, 76, and Donna Mueller, 75, of Janesville, Wis., died of their injuries after the lightning strike, the Metropolitan Police Department said.

A fourth victim, a woman identified in news reports as Amber Escudero-Kontostathis, was hospitalized in critical condition.

## North Carolina sheriff to put AR-15 rifles in schools

*Associated Press*

MARSHALL, N.C. — When schools in one North Carolina county reopen later this month, new security measures will include stocking AR-15 rifles for school resource officers to use in the event of an active shooter.

Spurred by the elementary school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, that left 19 children and two teachers dead in May, school officials and Madison County Sheriff Buddy Harwood have placed one of the semiautomatic rifles in each of the county's six schools. Each of the guns will be locked in a safe, Harwood said.

The North Carolina school district and sheriff's office are collaborating to enhance security after the Uvalde shooting revealed systemic failures and "egregiously poor decision-

making," resulting in more than an hour of chaos before the gunman was finally confronted and killed by law enforcement, according to a report written by an investigative committee from the Texas House of Representatives.

The idea of having AR-15s in schools does not sit well with Dorothy Espelage, a UNC Chapel Hill professor in the School of Education who has conducted decades of study and research on school safety and student well-being.

"What's going to happen is we're going to have accidents with these guns," Espelage told WLOS-TV. "Just the presence of an SRO increases violence in the schools. Why is it that they have to have these AR-15s? It doesn't make any sense."

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Church vandalism leads to hate crime charges

**MD** GAMBRILLS — Police in Maryland arrested a 66-year-old man on multiple hate crimes charges after racist graffiti was discovered at a church in Anne Arundel County.

The Capital newspaper reported the graffiti discovered at Kingdom Celebration Center in Gambrills on Wednesday followed a similar incident last month, when a racist slur was found on the church's doors before a food distribution one morning.

Donald Eugene Hood Jr., 66, who has no fixed address, faces three hate crime charges and a fourth charge of malicious destruction of property in the most recent incident. Police identified him after reviewing surveillance footage from the church, according to a news release from the department.

He was arrested Friday and was later released on his recognizance, the news release said.

### Arguments set on trans youth treatment ban

**AL** MONTGOMERY — A federal appeals court will hear arguments in November over Alabama's efforts to outlaw the use of gender-affirming medications to treat transgender minors.

Alabama is asking a federal appeals court to lift an injunction and let it enforce a law that would make it a felony to give puberty blockers or hormones to transgender minors to help affirm their gender identity. The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has tentatively set arguments for the

week of Nov. 14 in Montgomery.

U.S. District Judge Liles Burke in May issued a preliminary injunction to stop the state from enforcing the medication ban while a lawsuit goes forward. Families and advocacy groups challenged the ban as an illegal intrusion into family and medical decisions. Alabama has maintained the ban is needed to protect children.

### City to fight nightclub violence after shooting

**VA** NORFOLK — A nightclub shooting that wounded four people appears to be the last straw for officials in Norfolk.

The Virginian-Pilot reported that city officials said they will ask businesses from nightclubs to coffee shops to explain why they deserve the "privilege" of operating in the city's entertainment district.

City Manager Chip Filer said conditional use permits for the businesses will be evaluated and that City Council will start asking "hard questions" about whether it wants any businesses staying open until 2 a.m. on Granby Street.

The shooting Friday highlights the struggles the city has had maintaining a safe nightlife environment in recent years. Filer commended the city's staff and the businesses for correcting issues with overcrowding, long lines spilling into the streets and loitering that were common around the time of a triple homicide in March. He said the challenge now is to address the problems that start inside.

Police responded to the Legacy Restaurant and Lounge Friday at about 1:15 a.m., where they found four people with gunshot

wounds, including a sheriff's deputy. The deputy was on duty helping other officers deal with an altercation. Sheriff Joe Baron said they were attempting to move people out of the club when the suspect fired into the crowd. All four shooting victims are expected to recover.

### SeaWorld killer whale, 20, dies of infection

**CA** SAN DIEGO — A nearly 21-year-old killer whale born at SeaWorld San Diego has died of an infection, the park announced Friday.

Nakai died Thursday after aggressive efforts to treat him were unsuccessful, a park statement said.

Nakai was born at the park in September 2001. He was described as friendly and playful.

With Nakai's death, there are now eight killer whales remaining at SeaWorld, ranging in age from 9 to 57 years old.

### State worker, consultant guilty in bribery scheme

**FL** FORT LAUDERDALE — A former state child welfare worker and a substance abuse consultant pleaded guilty Wednesday to participating in a bribery scheme in South Florida.

Alexandra Alia Cadet, 31, of West Palm Beach, and Shannel Simone Escoffery, 34, of Coral Springs, pleaded guilty to extortion conspiracy in Fort Lauderdale federal court, according to court records.

According to court documents, Cadet was a licensing specialist in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health office for the Florida Department of Children and

Families. She was responsible for reviewing license applications submitted by substance abuse treatment facilities. Escoffery was a consultant for those facilities and helped prepare licensing applications and submit them to DCF. As part of the bribery scheme, Escoffery would solicit payments from facilities and then turn over all or some of the money to Cadet in exchange for Cadet's expedited review and recommendation of approval of licenses.

### School principals could face surprise pay cuts

**NC** RALEIGH — Some North Carolina principals are worried they could lose pay in the upcoming school year instead of the raises they're supposed to be receiving in the new state budget.

State lawmakers approved a budget in July that includes a 4% raise in the salary schedule for principals but also changes how school test scores will be used to determine pay. Instead of using multiple years of test data, this year's budget bases principal compensation on just the 2021-22 school year, when schools were still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The News & Observer reported that principals across the state are talking about how the change could lead to them seeing pay cuts. According to state figures, the average base salary for a principal is \$82,160.

Lauren Horsch, a spokeswoman for Senate leader Phil Berger, said Friday that there are no plans for the General Assembly to approve a hold harmless provision.

— From wire reports

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# Mets, Dodgers winning where it counts

Associated Press

The Los Angeles Dodgers and New York Mets mostly ceded the spotlight at the trade deadline.

Then they played like they didn't need much help.

The Dodgers swept a three-game series against the San Diego Padres to take a 15½-game lead in the NL West, and the Mets took four of five from Atlanta to move 6½ up on the Braves in the NL East. That was after the Padres made serious waves at the deadline by acquiring Juan Soto, and the Braves added Jake Odorizzi and Raisel Iglesias.

Los Angeles wasn't all that active, The Dodgers took Joey Gallo off the Yankees' hands but otherwise seemed content to lie low. Then they beat Soto, Manny Machado and San Diego three times by a combined score of 20-4.

Los Angeles has won eight in a row and 30 of its past 35.

Cody Bellinger hit two homers, Tyler Anderson allowed two hits in seven innings and the team completed the sweep with a 4-0 victory Sunday.

"It definitely feels good," Bellinger said after his second multihomer game against San Diego this season. "That being said, they got better. Their lineup got better.

We came in and played our game. We played the game the right way."

All weekend, the Dodgers claimed they weren't sending messages to the rival that raised the stakes in an attempt to take them down.

"No, that wasn't the intent," Anderson insisted. "Our plan is to go out and try to win every day. Doesn't matter if their uni is brown and yellow, or if it's green or whatever."

Some messages don't have to be sent to be received: The Padres know they've got a way to go after they dropped to 1-4 with four consecutive defeats since their new sluggers arrived Wednesday, culminating in only their second shutout loss since May 18.

"We made these trades, we had a really good first game, and then we've not been able to follow it up," San Diego manager Bob Melvin said. "You can have an All-Star lineup, and if you don't hit, it's not going to look good and it's not going to be exciting. ... Everybody is having a tough time with them, but we have the type of team that should give them a better run for their money than we did this series."

Los Angeles, meanwhile, has won 17 of its last 19 meetings against the Padres. The scary thing about the Dodgers is they

can still improve. Justin Turner, for example, is expected back this coming week. And Los Angeles has gone on this extended run without Walker Buehler, who hasn't pitched since June 10.

The Mets were also fairly quiet at the deadline. Of course, they made a pretty big recent addition internally when Jacob deGrom returned to the mound for the first time in almost 13 months. New York lost his first start but won his second — when he took a perfect game into the sixth inning against Atlanta on Sunday.

Pitching at home, deGrom retired his first 17 batters — 12 on strikeouts — before walking No. 9 hitter Ehire Adrianza with two outs in the sixth. That ended the longest perfect-game bid of deGrom's career.

The Braves have recovered nicely from a mediocre start, and at times they've seemed poised to overtake the Mets. But New York won two of three at Atlanta in the middle of last month and got the better of the Braves again this time.

If deGrom and Max Scherzer are healthy and Edwin Diaz keeps rolling, the Mets can certainly feel good heading into any playoff series.

"It's a really cool thing that we have going," deGrom said. "The goal is to keep it going."

## Jags' RB Etienne 'feels great' getting leveled in camp

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Travis Etienne hadn't been tackled so violently since his final college game nearly 20 months ago.

He wanted it. He needed it. He enjoyed it.

The former Clemson standout and the Atlantic Coast Conference's all-time leading rusher got leveled when Jacksonville coach Doug Pederson dialed up a lengthy stretch of live tackling during training camp Monday. Pederson's decision came three days after a lackluster performance against Las Vegas in the Hall of Fame game.

The Jaguars allowed 159 yards rushing — 4.8 yards a carry — in that 27-11 loss in Canton, Ohio. The meaningless exhibition seemed to have the attention of players and coaches when they

returned to the practice field. Etienne welcomed it as much as anyone.

Safety Andre Cisco knocked Etienne off his feet on the opening play of the somewhat rare, hard-hitting session. Etienne easily could have stepped out of bounds, but the second-year pro who missed his entire rookie season following a foot injury cherished the contact as the final part of his yearlong comeback.

"It feels great to be back out there," Etienne said following practice. "It's been a long time since I've played football. It reminded me quickly that it's a physical game. That's why we love it."

Etienne, the 25th overall pick in the 2021 NFL draft, suffered a Lisfranc injury to his left foot in Jacksonville's second preseason game

last August and had season-ending surgery. He felt "kind of lonely" rehabbing by himself for much of the season but took the approach of "falling in love with the mundane" while pushing toward a full recovery.

"You have to fall in love with it to be great," he said. "And I feel like every day I have to get better at something. If I keep stacking great days on top of each other, it's going to show. There's nothing more mundane than being (injured)..."

Although Etienne has been fully cleared to do anything and everything since organized team activities began in May, he hadn't taken part in any contact drills. Pederson even held him out of the preseason opener as a precaution. So Etienne figured he hadn't been waylaid like that since

Clemson's 2020 season finale, a 49-28 loss to Ohio State in the Sugar Bowl.

Etienne was hit a few times during camp last year and even carried twice up the middle for 3 yards in two preseason games. But none of those tackles compared to the one Cisco delivered on an outside run Monday. Etienne popped up, smiled and ran back to the huddle — eager for another.

"Ineed that!" he said. "I haven't played in so long (that) I want to get tackled. I need to get tackled just to get my body back acclimated with that. I've just been at home, working out, chilling on the couch, stuff like that, so to come out here and get some bumps and bruises ... I miss that contact. It may sound crazy, but I miss kind of being in those car crashes."



# Cardinals sweep skidding Yankees

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Nolan Arenado and Paul DeJong both homered and drove in four runs to help the St. Louis Cardinals outlast the New York Yankees 12-9 on Sunday, completing a three-game sweep.

St. Louis won its season-high seventh straight in a slugfest that took 4 hours, 25 minutes — the longest nine-inning game in the majors this season.

DJ LeMahieu homered and Aaron Judge had four RBIs for the AL-leading New York, which has lost five in a row. It's its worst skid since a seven-game slide last September.

The Cardinals (60-48) moved a season-best 12 games over .500 with their first regular-season series sweep of the Yankees. St. Louis is two games ahead of second-place Milwaukee in the NL Central.

The Cards became the first team to sweep New York in a series of at least three games this year. Atlanta and the New York Mets are the only clubs in the majors to avoid that fate so far.

**Phillies 13, Nationals 1:** Darick Hall homered twice, Nick Maton and Rhys Hoskins each hit a two-run shot and host Philadelphia finished a four-game sweep of Washington.

Aaron Nola (8-8) allowed one run in six innings to put the Phillies 12 games over .500 for the first time since August 2018.

Hall had a pair of solo homers against starter Cory Abbott (0-1). Philadelphia hit 14 homers in the four games, its most in any series in franchise history. Hoskins went deep in all four games.

**Guardians 1, Astros 0:** Triston McKenzie held Houston to two hits and struck out eight in eight innings, Luke Maile homered for the first time in three years and host Cleveland blanked Houston.

McKenzie (8-8) retired 15 straight batters before pinch-hitter Kyle Tucker walked in the eighth. Pinch-hitter Jose Altuve then bounced into an inning-ending double play.

**Blue Jays 3, Twins 2 (10):** Cavan Biggio hit a sacrifice fly in the 10th inning and Whit Merrifield scored on an overturned call to lead Toronto to a win at Minnesota to split their four-game series.

Merrifield was originally called out at the plate trying to score the go-ahead run, but the call was reversed after Twins catcher Gary Sanchez was deemed to have interfered with Merrifield. Replay officials ruled Sanchez did not leave a clear lane to the plate for Merrifield, whose right foot collided with Sanchez's left leg as he slid into

home. The out would have ended the inning.

**Rays 7, Tigers 0:** Yu Chang and Yandy Diaz drew bases-loaded walks in a seven-run ninth inning to lead Tampa Bay to a win at Detroit.

With the game scoreless, Isaac Parades hit a one-out single off Tigers closer Gregory Soto (2-6) and went to third on a two-out double by Francisco Mejia. Soto walked Jose Siri to load the bases, then missed on a 3-2 pitch to Chang. Soto also walked Diaz to make it 2-0.

**Pirates 8, Orioles 1:** Bryse Wilson pitched effectively into the sixth inning, Ke'Bryan Hayes homered and visiting Pittsburgh snapped Baltimore's five-game winning streak.

The Pirates also ended their own nine-game skid at Camden Yards, improving to 2-11 at the ballpark. Wilson (2-6) allowed a run and four hits in five-plus innings, and Pittsburgh broke the game open in the seventh after a replay review changed a call at the plate.

**Marlins 3, Cubs 0:** Jesús Luzardo allowed one hit over seven innings for his first win since April, and Jacob Stallings and Peyton Burdick hit back-to-back home runs as visiting Miami blanked Chicago to prevent a three-game sweep.

Yan Gomes singled with two outs in the fifth off Luzardo (3-4). Nick Madrigal's leadoff single in the ninth against Tanner Scott was the Cubs' only other hit. Scott then got a groundout and two strikeouts for his 15th save.

**Diamondbacks 6, Rockies 4:** Daulton Varsho jogged home with the go-ahead run on a balk, Christian Walker clubbed a two-run homer and host Arizona rallied to beat Colorado.

The Diamondbacks trailed 4-2 in the sixth inning but Emmanuel Rivera — added in a deal with Kansas City at the trade deadline — hit a solo shot that cut the deficit to one. It was his seventh homer of the year and first with his new team.

**Mariners 6, Angels 3:** Jesse Winker hit a grand slam, Marco Gonzales struck out seven and host Seattle beat Los Angeles as Shohei Ohtani received a visit from trainers and continued to struggle.

Winker's slam — the second of the season for the Mariners and the third of Winker's career — put the Mariners up 5-1 and helped them stay in third in the AL wild-card race. Eugenio Suárez added two hits and drove in a run.

**Reds 4, Brewers 2 (10):** Donovan Solano

hit a sacrifice fly off Devin Williams (2-2) in the 10th inning and Cincinnati won at Milwaukee.

Solano also had an RBI double in the eighth as the Reds won for the eighth time in 10 games.

**Royals 13, Red Sox 5:** Royals rookie MJ Melendez hit a three-run homer in the fifth inning and had a career-high six RBIs to help host Kansas City beat Boston.

The 7-8-9 hitters of Michael Massey, Nate Eaton and Kyle Isbel provided most of the production as they went a combined 6-for-9 with nine runs and five RBIs for the Royals.

**Giants 6, Athletics 4:** Mike Yastrzemski homered twice, Thairo Estrada also connected and San Francisco topped Oakland to win its seventh consecutive interleague road game.

Logan Webb (10-5) bounced back from his worst outing of the season and allowed four hits in seven innings, helping the Giants take three of four in the Bay Bridge series. Austin Slater had a pinch-hit RBI double.

**White Sox 8, Rangers 2:** Andrew Vaughn had a two-run homer among his three hits, Luis Robert socked a two-run double and AJ Pollock doubled twice in a three-hit game as Chicago won at Texas to split their four-game series.

Leury Garcia had three hits and scored twice, and Jose Abreu had three singles as the White Sox broke out offensively. They had 15 hits, five for extra bases, after being limited to four runs and 13 hits in the previous three games.

**Mets 5, Braves 2:** Jacob deGrom struck out 12 and carried a perfect game into the sixth inning of his second start all season, pitching host New York past Atlanta for its 12th victory in 14 games.

Pete Alonso drove in two runs and the first-place Mets matched a franchise record with 19 strikeouts — including three in a row from Edwin Díaz to earn his 26th save. They took four of five from the Braves in their NL East showdown, extending their division lead to 6 1/2 games over the defending World Series champions.

**Dodgers 4, Padres 0:** Cody Bellinger hit two homers, Tyler Anderson allowed two hits in seven sparkling innings and host Los Angeles completed a statement-making sweep of the revamped San Diego Padres.

Freddie Freeman had two RBI singles in the major league-leading Dodgers' eighth consecutive victory and their 30th in 35 games.

# Harvick wins at Michigan, ends drought

*Associated Press*

BROOKLYN, Mich. — Kevin Harvick got his groove back, fittingly at one of his favorite tracks.

Harvick ended a 65-race winless drought that lasted nearly two years with his sixth victory at Michigan International Speedway on Sunday.

“Good timing, for sure,” he said.

Harvick’s win shakes up the playoff race with just three races remaining in the regular season, leaving little time for drivers to earn a spot in the 16-car postseason, and gives a boost for a veteran who entered the weekend No. 17 in points.

“Everybody that doubted us doesn’t know us,” he said.

NASCAR has had 15 different Cup winners this season. If there are two new winners over the last three races, a driver with one win will be eliminated from the 16-car playoff with a tiebreaker based on points. Ryan Blaney and Martin Truex Jr. are

top-10 drivers in points, but they have not finished first to put their postseason positioning in peril.

Harvick’s No. 4 Ford pulled away from Bubba Wallace and the rest the field following a restart with 35 laps to go at the FireKeepers Casino 400. The Stewart-Haas Racing driver took advantage of clean air, helping him coast to his 59th victory, including five wins since 2018 on the two-mile oval in the Irish Hills region of southern Michigan.

Harvick had not won since claiming a NASCAR Cup Series postseason race on Sept. 19, 2020, at Bristol Motor Speedway.

“It’s been a while,” he acknowledged. “Michigan has been a great place for us.”

Wallace finished second in his No. 23 Toyota — 2.9 seconds behind Harvick — followed by Denny Hamlin in his No. 11 Toyota.

“Second’s not good enough for the playoffs,” said Wallace, who needs to win

one of the final three regular-season races to earn a spot in the postseason.

Austin Cindric, who won the Daytona 500 for his first career victory, started the day No. 15 in points and finished last in the 37-car race after his No. 2 Ford hit the wall head-on in a nine-car crash that knocked Kyle Busch out of the competition.

## Bubba bumped

Wallace won his first career pole Saturday, becoming the only driver to break 190 mph in the Next Gen car during qualifying this season and went even faster early in the race after a 90-minute rain delay.

Wallace, driving for 23XI Racing formed by Charlotte Hornets owner Michael Jordan and Hamlin in 2020, stayed out front until he made a pit stop after 21 laps — two shy of his career high — and the decision cost him track position due to a crash soon thereafter that included one-fourth of the field.

# Dixon eyes 7th championship after Nashville victory

*Associated Press*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Scott Dixon arrived in Nashville not really a championship favorite, but still mathematically eligible to win a record-tying seventh IndyCar title.

And even though he was stuck in the middle of a tight pack of drivers jostling for the championship, The Iceman never counted himself out of the fight.

Dixon passed Mario Andretti for second on IndyCar’s all-time wins list with a victory Sunday in the messy Music City Grand Prix — a win that moved that seventh title within his reach. The win pushed Dixon up two spots in the standings and only six points behind leader Will Power with three races remaining.

“You’re in it until you’re not,” said Dixon, noting he trailed Juan Pablo Montoya by 48 points with three races remaining in his 2015 championship season.

“That’s the point — you’re never out of it until you are, so

we’ll keep digging.”

Dixon overcame a poor qualifying effort, damage to his Chip Ganassi Racing car, a crash-fest around the downtown streets of Nashville and finally a drag race against Scott McLaughlin in a two-lap push to the finish between fellow New Zealanders.

He won for the 53rd time of his career to break a tie with Andretti for second in the all-time column and now has his sights on A.J. Foyt’s record of seven IndyCar titles. Foyt is also IndyCar’s all-time winner with 67 victories.

McLaughlin, for Team Penske, finished second for a 1-2 finish against one of his heroes. The 0.1067-second margin of victory was the fourth-closest in IndyCar history on a road or street course.

“He’s a legend, the GOAT,” said McLaughlin. “I’ve always dreamed of racing him to the finish line. That was a proper duel.”

Alex Palou, the reigning IndyCar champion, finished third

as Ganassi put two drivers on the podium. Palou moved up one spot in the standings to fifth as 33 points separate the title contenders. On his way to victory lane, team owner Chip Ganassi stopped to congratulate Palou, the driver he is suing for trying to leave the organization at the end of the season.

It was their first one-on-one exchange since Ganassi and Palou publicly fractured over Ganassi picking up the option on Palou for next season, but the Spaniard announced he’s leaving to join McLaren Racing. The outcome is now winding its way through the court system.

“We didn’t really have a chance to talk since then, but it’s good, right?” Palou said. “We just finished on the podium, it was a good day, it was a good day for the team. I have no issues at all.”

Alexander Rossi and Colton Herta came back from one lap down to finish fourth and fifth, respectively, for Andretti Autosport, while hometown driver Josef Newgarden was sixth for

Penske.

Newgarden has had a rough stretch since crashing while leading at Iowa three races ago. He showed as the points leader before the crash, collapsed and hit his head after wrecking, and had to pass a battery of medical tests to be cleared to compete last weekend at Indianapolis.

In Nashville, he scaled back his obligations ahead of the race to be rested and able to compete for the win. Although he was the leader late in the race, Newgarden had to pit for fuel and had later contact with Romain Grosjean, who was furious with Newgarden after the collision.

“Welcome to IndyCar. It gets tight. I don’t know what to tell him,” Newgarden said about Grosjean’s anger. “Let me tell you what, I about got taken out six times myself. I probably need to have some discussion with some of the younger guys, but they’re aggressive. They’re very aggressive and if you’re not aggressive back, then you get run over. That’s IndyCar racing.”