

## Biden: 3 US troops killed in Jordan attack

*Associated Press*

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Three American troops were killed and “many” were wounded Sunday in a drone strike in northeast Jordan near the Syrian border, President Joe Biden said. He blamed Iran-backed militias for the first U.S. fatalities after months of strikes by the groups against American forces across the Middle East amid the Israel-Hamas war.

With an increase in the risk of military escalation in the region, U.S. officials were working to conclusively identify the precise group responsible for the attack, but they have assessed that one of several Iranian-backed groups was behind it.

Biden said the United States “will hold all those responsible

to account at a time and in a manner (of) our choosing.”

Iran-backed fighters in east Syria began evacuating their posts, fearing U.S. airstrikes, according to Omar Abu Layla, a Europe-based activist who heads the Deir Ezzor 24 media outlet. He told The Associated Press that the areas are the strongholds of Mayadeen and Boukamal.

According to a U.S. official, the number of troops wounded in the attack by a one-way attack drone may grow.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not made public, said a large drone struck the base, which two other American officials identified as an installation in Jordan known as Tower 22. It is along the Syrian bor-

der and is used largely by troops involved in the advise-and-assist mission for Jordanian forces.

The small installation, which Jordan does not publicly disclose, includes U.S. engineering, aviation, logistics and security troops.

The U.S. military base at al-Tanf in Syria is just 12 miles north of Tower 22. The Jordanian installation provides a critical logistical hub for U.S. forces in Syria, including those at al-Tanf, which is near the intersection of the Iraq, Syria and Jordan borders.

Jordanian state television quoted Muhannad Mubaidin, a government spokesman, as insisting the attack happened outside the kingdom across the border in Syria. U.S. officials insist-

ed the attack took place in Jordan.

U.S. troops have long used Jordan, a kingdom bordering Iraq, Israel, the Palestinian territory of the West Bank, Saudi Arabia and Syria, as a basing point.

U.S. Central Command said 25 service members were injured the attack in addition to the three killed.

Some 3,000 American troops typically are stationed in Jordan.

Since Israel’s war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip began, U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria have faced drone and missile attacks on their bases. Sunday’s attack marks the first targeting of American troops in Jordan during the war and the first to result in the loss of American lives.

## UN official: Resume funding of Palestinian aid agency

*Associated Press*

RAFAH, Gaza Strip — The secretary-general of the United Nations on Sunday called on countries to resume funding the main agency providing aid in the Gaza Strip after a dozen of its employees were accused of taking part in the Hamas attack on Israel that ignited the war four months ago.

The dispute engulfing the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees came as U.S. officials said negotiators were closing in on a cease-fire agreement. The emerging deal would bring a two-month halt to the deadliest-ever Israeli-Palestinian violence, which has stoked instability across the Middle East.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that the agency known as UNRWA

would be forced to scale back aid to more than 2 million Palestinians in Gaza as soon as February. The coastal enclave is in the grip of a severe humanitarian crisis, with a quarter of the population facing starvation as fighting and Israeli restrictions hinder the delivery of humanitarian aid to the besieged territory.

“The abhorrent alleged acts of these staff members must have consequences,” Guterres said in a statement.

“But the tens of thousands of men and women who work for UNRWA, many in some of the most dangerous situations for humanitarian workers, should not be penalized. The dire needs of the desperate populations they serve must be met,” he added.

He said that of the 12 employees accused of taking part in the attack, nine were immediately terminated, one was confirmed dead and two others were still being identified. He said they would be held accountable, including through criminal prosecution.

UNRWA provides basic services, from medical care to education, for Palestinian families who fled or were driven out of what is now Israel during the 1948 war surrounding the country’s creation. They now live in built-up refugee camps in Gaza, the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

The refugees and their descendants number about 6 million, and in Gaza they are the majority of the population. UNRWA, which has some

13,000 staff members in Gaza, expanded its operations during the war and runs shelters that house hundreds of thousands of newly displaced people.

More than 2 million of the territory’s 2.3 million people depend on the agency’s programs for “sheer survival,” including food and shelter, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said. It’s a lifeline that could “collapse any time now,” he said after the funding was suspended.

The United States, which is the agency’s largest donor, immediately cut funding over the weekend, followed by eight other countries, including Britain, Germany and Italy. Together, the nine countries provided nearly 60% of UNRWA’s budget in 2022.

# Army widens probe into sexual abuse case

BY GARY WARNER  
*Stars and Stripes*

Army investigators are expanding their probe into allegations of sexual abuse by a doctor at Joint Base Lewis-McChord to include bases in Hawaii, Maryland and Iraq where he had been stationed, service officials said.

Maj. Michael Stockin, 38, is scheduled to be arraigned Feb. 23 on charges of abusive sexual contact and indecent viewing of 42 male patients at Madigan Army Medical Center, the hospital at Lewis-McChord. Stockin faces 54 charges stemming from incidents between November 2019 and April 2022 at the com-

bined Army-Air Force base near Tacoma, Wash., according to Michelle McCaskill, spokeswoman for the Army Office of Special Trial Counsel at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Stockin will be the first soldier prosecuted under a new law that removes commanders from deciding whether to proceed with certain criminal cases, including most sex crimes. The new Office of Special Trial Counsel will handle the prosecution.

The new law covers 13 offenses, including murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, domestic violence, stalking, child pornography offenses and most sexual assault and sexual mis-

conduct offenses. Sexual harassment will become part of the counsel's jurisdiction on Jan. 1, 2025.

All the allegations against Stockin occurred when he was a staff anesthesiologist and pain management physician at Madigan, the Army's second-largest hospital. Some patients claim they were abused multiple times.

More charges are possible. McCaskill said the Army Criminal Investigation Division is reviewing whether Stockin could face more charges of sexual abuse from earlier assignments, starting in 2013 when he joined the Army to his latest assign-

ment at Lewis-McChord, which began in July 2019.

Stockin is facing 48 charges under Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. It deals with four levels of sex crimes: rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact and abusive sexual contact.

Stockin is also charged with five violations of Article 120c of the UCMJ, which deals with "other sexual misconduct," including looking at private areas of another person, recording or distributing materials of a sexual nature, pandering (inducing into prostitution) and indecent exposure. Stockin is charged with indecent viewing.

## Boeing jetliners return to air after side panel blowout

*Associated Press*

Alaska Airlines has begun flying Boeing 737 Max 9 jetliners again since they were grounded after a panel blew out of the side of one of the airline's planes.

The airline said in a statement that it has completed its final inspection of their group of the aircraft. They said they resumed flying the Max 9 with a flight from Seattle to San Diego on Friday afternoon.

On Wednesday, the Federal Aviation Administration approved the inspection and maintenance process to return the planes to flying. Technicians at Alaska began inspections that night, the airline said.

The airline said they expect inspections to be completed by the end of next week, allowing the airline to operate a full flight schedule. Inspections are expected to take up to 12 hours per aircraft.

"Each of our 737-9 MAX will return to service only after the rigorous inspections are complet-

ed and each plane is deemed airworthy according to FAA requirements," the airline said in a written statement Friday.

The first United passenger flight on a Boeing MAX 9 since the panel blew out on the Alaska Airlines flight departed from Newark, N.J., to Las Vegas Saturday morning. The flight carried 175 passengers and six crew members.

Boeing Commercial Airplanes president and CEO Stan Deal said in a message to Boeing employees Friday that the company's most immediate goal is to help airlines restore operations.

"Our long-term focus is on improving our quality so that we can regain the confidence of our customers, our regulator and the flying public," he wrote.

"Frankly, we have disappointed and let them down. We are deeply sorry for the significant disruption and frustration for our customers, some of whom have been publicly and unfairly criticized," he added.

## Doctors: 'No planned further treatment' for Austin's cancer

BY MATTHEW ADAMS  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin returned to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Friday for a follow-up examination after his prostate cancer surgery last month and is expected to make a full recovery, his doctors said.

"Beyond planned physical therapy and regular post-prostatectomy follow-up appointments, he has no planned further treatment for his cancer," said John Maddox and Gregory Chesnut, doctors at the medical facility in Bethesda, Md.

Austin has been working from home. On Tuesday, he participated in a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, his first public appearance since his undisclosed hospitalization for his treatment.

During a regular health screening in early December, Austin's cancer was detected. He was admitted to the hospital about three weeks later for a

prostatectomy, which involves surgery to remove part of the prostate gland. Austin was under general anesthesia during the surgery, which was conducted Dec. 22, and left the hospital the following morning.

On Jan. 1, Austin, 70, returned to Walter Reed after experiencing pain in his abdomen, hip and leg, the doctors said. He was later found to have a urinary tract infection, and Austin spent days in the intensive care unit before being released Jan. 15.

During Austin's medical treatments, no one at the Defense Department notified the White House, Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks, Congress or the public for several days.

The Defense Department inspector general announced Jan. 11 that Austin's handling of his hospitalization will be investigated, which followed a Pentagon announcement that it would conduct a 30-day review of the incident.

# USS Antietam shifts homeport to Hawaii

By ALEX WILSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Antietam steamed out of Tokyo Bay on Friday, concluding 11 years of service at the homeport of the U.S. 7th Fleet.

Sailors manned the rails in their dress blue uniforms as the guided-missile cruiser left Yokosuka, bound for its new home in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the fleet said in a news release Friday.

“For more than a decade, USS Antietam enjoyed being part of the Yokosuka community,” the cruiser’s skipper, Capt. Victor Garza, said in the release. “Antietam was at the forefront of our nation’s efforts to protect peace and stability across the Indo-Pacific.”

The ship is moving to Hawaii as part of a “planned rotation of

forces,” 7th Fleet said. Taking its place will be the guided-missile destroyer USS McCampbell, previously homeported in Everett, Wash., according to Task Force 70 spokesman Seth Koenig.

Koenig declined to comment on when the McCampbell would arrive, citing operational security concerns.

“We have no additional departures or arrivals to announce as part of the planned rotation of forces at this time,” he said in an email Friday.

The McCampbell left Yokosuka in July 2020 for a scheduled midlife modernization in Oregon before joining the 3rd Fleet.

The Antietam arrived in Yokosuka in February 2013 and swapped crews with its sister ship the USS Cowpens.

In the years that followed, the

Antietam regularly deployed with the USS George Washington and USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier strike groups; it also participated in freedom-of-navigation operations and transits of the Taiwan Strait.

One deployment included a monthlong relief mission to the Philippines following the widespread devastation dealt by Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013.

In January 2017, the Antietam ran aground on shoals in Tokyo Bay just outside Yokosuka. It was anchored near the base’s ammunition storage area when it drifted into nearby rocks.

Approximately 1,100 gallons of hydraulic fluid leaked into the bay; the Navy ultimately relieved the ship’s commander at the time, Capt. Joseph Carrigan, due to a loss of confidence in his abilities.

Months later, the Antietam incident was largely overshadowed by two separate collisions involving the guided-missile destroyers USS Fitzgerald and USS McCain, which resulted in a combined death toll of 10 sailors.

Prior to the Antietam’s departure, the crew of the Japanese guided-missile destroyer JS Kiri-shima presented the U.S. crew with a plaque commemorating the warship’s time in Japan, 7th Fleet said.

“On behalf of the crew, I want to express my appreciation for our Japanese hosts, who have become our colleagues, friends and family,” Garza said in the fleet’s release. “We’re proud of the relationships we built with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and with like-minded nations and navies throughout the region.”

## Colombian man guilty in kidnapping of 2 US troops

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

A Colombian national pleaded guilty Friday in U.S. federal court for his role in drugging, kidnapping and assaulting two American soldiers who were on temporary assignment to Bogota, Colombia.

Jeffersson Arango Castellanos, 36, and two other Colombian nationals targeted the soldiers on March 5, 2020, while they were at a bar in Zona T, an upscale entertainment district, according to court documents. The two soldiers, who are not named in the documents, went to the bar to watch soccer and dance.

Kenny Julieth Uribe Chiran and Pedro Jose Silva Ochoa were also indicted in the incident, according to court documents. However, the documents do not show whether Uribe or Silva have been extradited and no attorneys are listed for them.

At the bar, Arango and Uribe

put tranquilizers in the soldiers’ drinks while Silva waited outside with a car. The trio then kidnapped the soldiers and took their wallets, debit cards, credit cards and cellphones. Arango then used the cards to make purchases and withdraw cash.

The two soldiers lost consciousness during the ordeal, according to court documents. A toxicology screening at a local hospital confirmed the soldiers, who had bruises and abrasions, were drugged with benzodiazepines, which are tranquilizers.

Colombian National Police and the FBI worked jointly on the investigation. Arango and Uribe were arrested in Colombia in December 2020 on charges unrelated to the soldiers but for similar actions, according to court documents. An FBI agent then interviewed Arango, who admitted to drugging and robbing the soldiers. In May, Arango was extradited to the U.S.

## IG: DOD’s patchwork UFO tracking is a security risk

By PHILLIP WALTER  
WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Defense Department’s handling of UFO sightings lacks coordination and could pose a security risk to both the military and the United States as a whole, according to the Pentagon’s internal watchdog agency.

Varying processes are used for collecting and analyzing reported sightings of what the Pentagon inspector general calls unidentified anomalous phenomena, or UAP. An unclassified summary of the IG findings was released Thursday.

Collection and analysis of the reports have occurred largely without the input of regional military commands, which are responsible for detecting and deterring threats against the country, the inspector general said.

The Pentagon “has no overarching UAP policy and, as a result, it lacks assurance that na-

tional security and flight safety threats to the United States from UAP have been identified and mitigated,” the report said.

Efforts to address the sightings are currently confined to each service branch, it added.

Pilots and military personnel have reported strange phenomena in the sky for years. Many reported sightings are eventually deemed to be benign objects, but others remain unidentifiable and officials fear some of these could be spying tools used by U.S. adversaries.

The full report, containing classified sections, was delivered to Congress in August. It comes after lawmakers at a House panel hearing in July said the Pentagon was not being transparent about how it deals with UFO sightings.

Congress established the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office in July 2022, in part to learn what high levels of government know about UFOs.



# Biden open to closing US-Mexico border

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Bidding to salvage a border deal in Congress that also would unlock money for Ukraine, President Joe Biden offered fresh assurances Saturday night that he would be willing to close the U.S.-Mexico border if lawmakers would only send him a bill to sign.

Biden — also eager to disarm GOP criticism of his handling of migration at the border — said at a political event in South Carolina that he would shut down the border “right now” if Congress passed the proposed deal. The framework hasn’t been formally agreed to by Senate Democrats and Republicans and would face an uncertain future in the GOP-controlled House.

“A bipartisan bill would be good for America and help fix our broken immigration system and allow speedy access for those who deserve to be here, and Congress needs to get it done,” Biden said. “It’ll also give me as president, the emergency authority to shut down the border until it could get back under control. If that bill were the law today, I’d shut down the border right now and fix it quickly.”

The deal being negotiated in Congress would require the U.S. to shutter the border if roughly 5,000 migrants cross illegally on any given day.

Some one-day totals last year exceeded 10,000.

Former President Donald Trump has been pressuring Republicans for weeks to kill the negotiations. He’s loath to give a

win to Biden on an issue that animated the Republican’s successful 2016 campaign and that he wants to use as he seeks to return to the White House. Negotiators had appeared to be closing in on a deal, but it started to fray after Trump’s admonitions to conservative lawmakers grew stronger.

In a written statement on Friday evening, Biden said the deal would allow him “a new emergency authority” to close the border. He added: “And if given that authority, I would use it the day I sign the bill into law.”

It was a stark claim from a Democratic president that was met with astonishment and shock from immigrant advocates who have said his policies do not reflect the progressive approach they had expected.

“Voters want to see our elected leaders do the hard work to fix our frayed immigration system,” said Deirdre Schifeling, chief political and advocacy officer at the American Civil Liberties Union. “President Biden and Congress must abandon these proposals and heed voters’ demands for fair and effective immigration policies that manage the border and treat people seeking safety with dignity.”

But Biden is struggling across multiple fronts, dealing with an influx of asylum seekers even as he cracks down on those who cross into the U.S. illegally. Democrats are increasingly frustrated because asylum seekers are streaming into cities that lack the resources to care for them.

# Iran claims launch of three satellites is successful

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Iran said Sunday it successfully launched three satellites into space with a rocket that had multiple failures in the past, the latest for a program that the West says improves Tehran’s ballistic missiles.

The launch comes as heightened tensions grip the wider Middle East over Israel’s continued war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip, sparking fears of a regional conflict.

While Iran has not intervened

militarily in the conflict, it has faced increased pressure within its theocracy for action after a deadly Islamic State suicide bombing earlier this month and as proxy groups like Yemen’s Houthi rebels conduct attacks linked to the war. Meanwhile, Western nations remain worried about Iran’s rapidly expanding nuclear program.

Footage released by Iranian state television showed a nighttime launch for the Simorgh rocket. An Associated Press analysis of the footage showed

that it took place at the Imam Khomeini Spaceport in Iran’s rural Semnan province.

“The roar of the Simorgh (rocket) resonated in our country’s sky and infinite space,” said Abbas Rasooli, a state TV reporter, in the footage.

State TV named the launched satellites Mahda, Kayhan-2 and Hatef-1. It described the Mahda as a research satellite, while the Kayhan and the Hatef were nanosatellites focused on global positioning and communication respectively. Iran’s Information

and Communications Technology Minister Isa Zarepour said the Mahda had already sent signals back to Earth.

There have been five failed launches in a row for the Simorgh program, a satellite-carrying rocket. The Simorgh, or “Phoenix,” rocket failures have been part of a series of setbacks in recent years for Iran’s civilian space program, including fatal fires and a launchpad rocket explosion that drew the attention of former President Donald Trump.

# Activists throw soup at glass protecting Mona Lisa

Associated Press

PARIS — Two climate activists hurled soup Sunday at the glass protecting the Mona Lisa at the Louvre Museum in Paris and shouted slogans advocating for a sustainable food system. This came amid protests by French farmers against several

issues, including low wages.

In a video posted on social media, two women with the words “FOOD RIPOSTE” written on their t-shirts could be seen passing under a security barrier to get closer to the painting and throwing soup at the glass protecting Leonardo da

Vinci’s masterpiece.

The Louvre employees could then be seen putting black panels in front of the Mona Lisa and asking visitors to evacuate the room. Paris police said two people were arrested following the incident.

On its website, the “Food Ri-

poste” group said the French government is breaking its climate commitments and called for the equivalent of the country’s state-sponsored health care system to be put in place to give people better access to healthy food while providing farmers a decent income.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**YouTuber charged with torturing animals**

**PA** UPPER DARBY — A southeastern Pennsylvania woman is facing multiple counts of aggravated animal cruelty after allegedly filming herself torturing and killing animals—and uploading the videos to her YouTube channel.

Authorities have accused Anigar Monsee, 28, of producing and disturbing at least four videos involving the killing of frogs, a rabbit, a pigeon, and a chicken. She was charged with four felony counts of aggravated cruelty to animals, local television station WPVI reported.

The YouTuber began sharing the videos last year, according to the Upper Darby Police Department.

According to investigators, Monsee would request “likes” and engage with YouTube viewers before she began torturing an animal. Some of the comments were sexually charged, NBC Philadelphia reported, citing an affidavit filed for her arrest.

**Biker tops 150 mph while filming for social media**

**CO** DENVER — A motorcyclist who authorities say posted a video of himself on YouTube speeding from Colorado Springs to the Denver metro area on Interstate 25 in 20 minutes — a trip that typically takes about an hour — is wanted on multiple charges.

Rendon Dietzmann, 32, of Texas, recorded himself Sept. 28 going more than 150 mph, squeezing through small gaps in

traffic and traveling on the shoulder, according to a Colorado State Patrol news release sent Wednesday.

The video has since been deleted from YouTube, but the State Patrol shared a clip with the news release.

Dietzmann, who is known as Gixxer Brah on YouTube, has posted multiple similar videos from different parts of the country.

He is wanted on charges of menacing, engaging in a speed contest, reckless endangerment, reckless driving, speeding 40 mph over the limit, engaging in an exhibition of speed and driving without license plates attached.

**Dancer with allergy dies from eating cookies**

**CT** HARTFORD — A 25-year-old professional dancer from England who moved to New York City to pursue her career has died after eating a mislabeled cookie containing peanuts, part of a batch that has since been recalled.

The grocery retailer Stew Leonard’s announced Tuesday that Vanilla Florentine Cookies sold in its stores in Danbury and Newington in Connecticut from Nov. 6 to Dec. 31 were being recalled in partnership with the Food and Drug Administration. The company said about 500 packages of the holiday cookies were sold.

The person who died was identified as Órla Baxendale, a law firm representing her interests said Thursday. She died Jan. 11 after suffering anaphylactic shock resulting from a severe allergic reaction, according to a post on the website for

Gair, Gair, Conason, Rubino-witz, Bloom, Hershendorff, Steigman & Mackauf.

**Every snowplow deserves a name in frigid state**

**MN** ST. PAUL — Snowplows are essential to enduring winter in Minnesota, so maybe it’s not surprising that every year thousands of people vote on names for the giant machines that clear the state’s roads, such as Plowy McPlowFace and Darth Blader.

The often-icy state began naming its 800 plows in 2020 and is expected to announce winners of its 2023-2024 Name a Snowplow contest this week, adding eight selections to more than three dozen names that already grace trucks scraping snow off Minnesota highways.

Besides Plowy McPlowFace and Darth Blader, winners over the years include Blizzard of Oz, Scoop Dogg and Han Snolo. Top names often have Minnesota connections. F. Salt Fitzgerald was a nod to St. Paul-born author F. Scott Fitzgerald, while The Truck Formerly Known As Plow recognized musician Prince, who for a time famously declined to be recognized by a spoken name.

**NASA’s little helicopter on Mars logs last flight**

**FL** CAPE CANAVERAL — NASA’s little Mars helicopter has flown its last flight.

The space agency announced Thursday that the 4-pound chopper named Ingenuity can no longer fly because of rotor blade damage. While it remains upright and in contact with

flight controllers, its \$85 million mission is officially over, officials said.

Originally intended as a short-term tech demo, Ingenuity logged 72 flights over three years at Mars. It accumulated more than two hours of flight time, traveling 11 miles.

That’s more than 14 times farther than planned, according to NASA. It soared as high as 79 feet and hit speeds of up to 22.4 mph.

**Whales to be protected around wind farms**

**NJ** ATLANTIC CITY — Two federal environmental agencies issued plans last week to better protect endangered whales amid offshore wind farm development.

The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released plans to protect endangered North American right whales, of which there are only about 360 left in the world.

The strategy will use artificial intelligence and passive acoustic monitoring to determine where the whales are at a given time and to monitor the impacts of wind development on the animals.

It also calls for avoiding the granting of offshore wind leases in areas where major impacts to right whales may occur; establishing noise limits during construction; supporting research to develop new harm minimization technologies; and making it a priority to develop quieter technology and operating methods for offshore wind development.

— From wire reports



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# Sinner rallies to take Australian title

*Associated Press*

MELBOURNE, Australia — Jannik Sinner lined up a forehand, drilled it down the line and dropped to the court on his back, giving himself a few moments to process how he'd come back from two sets down to win his first Grand Slam title.

The 22-year-old Sinner found a way to turn defense into attack in his first major final and take the Australian Open title from Daniil Medvedev 3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 on Sunday.

It was his third straight win over a top 5 player, including his quarterfinal win over No. 5 Andrey Rublev and his semifinal upset that ended No. 1 Novak Djokovic's long domination of the tournament. Only Djokovic and Roger Federer have done that in a major played on hard courts.

Sinner is the first Italian to win the Australian Open and the youngest winner in a men's final here since Djokovic won his

first Grand Slam title in 2008.

With Carlos Alcaraz winning Wimbledon and Sinner winning the season-opening major, a generation shift is arriving.

"It's been a hell of a journey," the 22-year-old Sinner said, "even though I'm only 22."

"It's obviously a huge tournament for me. But I want to thank everyone for making this Slam so special."

For 2021 U.S. Open champion Medvedev, the loss was his fifth in six major finals. The third-seeded Medvedev set a record with his fourth five-set match of the tournament and time on court at a major in the Open era, his 24 hours and 17 minutes surpassing Carlos Alcaraz's 23:40 at the 2022 U.S. Open.

He's also the first in the Open era to lose two Grand Slam finals in five sets after taking a 2-0 lead.

Medvedev lost back-to-back Australian Open finals — to Djokovic in 2021 and to Rafael

Nadal after holding a two-set lead the following year.

He won three five-set matches to reach the championship match this year — his sixth major final.

Sinner only dropped one set through six rounds — in a third-set tiebreaker against Djokovic — until he lost two straight to Medvedev.

It wasn't until a break in the sixth game of the fifth set that he really had a full grip on his first Grand Slam title.

Medvedev started like a man who wanted to win quickly, after all that time spent on the court.

In two of Medvedev's five-set matches — a second-round win over Emil Ruusuvuori that finished at almost 4 in the morning, and a 4-hour, 18-minute semifinal win over No. 6 Alexander Zverev — he had to come back from two sets down. Nobody had done that on the way to an Australian Open final since

Pete Sampras in 1995.

The 27-year-old Russian had spent 20 hours and 33 minutes on court through six rounds. That was almost six hours longer than Sinner took to reach the final.

Sinner didn't give Djokovic a look at a break point as he ended the 10-time Australian Open champion's 33-match unbeaten streak at Melbourne Park dating to 2018.

Against Medvedev, though, he was in trouble early. Medvedev broke in the third game and took the first set in 36 minutes.

He had two more service breaks in the fourth and sixth games of the second set but was broken himself at 5-1 trying to serve it out. He was successful the next try.

The third set went with serve until the 10th game, when Medvedev was a point from leveling at 5-5 until three forehand errors gave Sinner the set and the momentum.

## Sabalenka wins second consecutive women's crown

*Associated Press*

MELBOURNE, Australia — In the back of her mind Aryna Sabalenka didn't want to be, in her words, that player who wins a major title and disappears.

Winning her first Grand Slam crown in Australia a year ago gave Sabalenka the confidence she could do it again. Losing the U.S. Open final last September gave her the extra motivation.

Sabalenka ensured she wasn't a one-hit wonder by clinching back-to-back Australian Open titles with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Zheng Qinwen on Saturday in a one-sided women's final that contrasted sharply with her comeback three-set victory here over Elena Rybakina last year.

"I just wanted to show that I'm able to be consistently there and I'm able to win another one," the 25-year-old from Belarus said. "So compared to last year, it's a completely different me. Compared to the U.S. Open, once again, it's a different me; I'm more controlled and kind of like don't let the rest of the things come to my mind."

In 2022, Sabalenka struggled so badly with her serve in tense moments that she doubted she could win a major. Now she's relying on it to break down opponents. She didn't serve a double-fault in the final, and she didn't face a break point.

No. 2-seeded Sabalenka set the tone with big, deep forehands and converted service breaks early in each set against the 21-year-old Zheng, who was making her debut in a Grand Slam final.

The journey and the destination were equally important for Sabalenka.

In the semifinals, she avenged her U.S. Open final loss to No. 4-ranked Coco Gauff with a straight-set win. That followed straight-set wins over 2021 French Open winner Barbora Krejčíková in the quarterfinals and Amanda Anisimova in the fourth round.

"I'm definitely a different person and a player and I have more experience playing the last stages of the Grand Slams," Sabalenka said, reflecting on the last 13 months. "There was some tough moments for me

losing the U.S. Open final — that loss actually motivated me so much to work even harder."

And that, she said, gave her more confidence in her game and more self-belief.

"The first one is always special because I feel like it's more emotional," she said. "For the second time, it's just such a relief."

Only two things slowed down Sabalenka's progress Saturday to her second Grand Slam singles title.

In the third game of the second set, with Zheng serving, the match was interrupted after an activist started yelling out. The match continued after the man was escorted out by security.

Then, when she was serving for the match, Sabalenka had three championship points at 40-0 but missed two with unforced forehand errors and another with Zheng's clever drop shot.

After giving Zheng a break-point chance, she bounced the ball away behind her in disgust. But she recovered her composure to win the next three points.



# James, Lakers beat Warriors in double OT

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Back and forth they went, one-upping the other, two of the greatest to ever play each believing he could will his team to win. Step-back 3s, fadeaway jumpers, drives and dishes. Two overtimes.

LeBron James vs. Stephen Curry. At their finest.

And at the very end, James made a pair of free throws with 1.2 seconds left to cap his triple-double of 36 points, career-high 20 rebounds and 12 assists, out-dueling Curry as the Los Angeles Lakers held off the Golden State Warriors 145-144 on Saturday night.

“It’s something I’ll be able to talk about with my grandkids, talk about me being able to compete with one of the greatest players to ever play the game,” James said. “So hopefully I can be cool with my grandkids at that point, for sure.”

Curry danced through the paint for a layup that sent the game to overtime. He knocked down a 3-pointer high over An-

thony Davis in the second overtime for a lead.

James scored the first points of a second extra session and found D’Angelo Russell the next time down for a 3.

**Nuggets 111, 76ers 105:** Nikola Jokic had 26 points and 16 rebounds, but was denied his rematch with fellow MVP contender Joel Embiid when host Denver fended off short-handed but gritty Philadelphia.

Philadelphia’s star center missed a game at Denver for a fourth consecutive season after the team’s medical staff determined he shouldn’t play on his balky left knee.

**Kings 120, Mavericks 115:** De’Aaron Fox scored 34 points and visiting Sacramento won, with Dallas star Luka Doncic finishing with 28 points, 17 assists and 10 rebounds a night after scoring a franchise-record 73 points in a win at Atlanta.

Harrison Barnes had 20 points, Kevin Huerter added 18 and Domantas Sabonis had 17 points and a game-high 11 rebounds as the Kings won their

third straight.

**Clippers 115, Celtics 96:** Kawhi Leonard scored 26 points in only 29 minutes and visiting Los Angeles routed Boston.

Paul George added 17 points for the Clippers, who used a 21-0 run in the third quarter to win their fifth straight and avenge a 37-point home loss to Boston in December.

**Bucks 141, Pelicans 117:** Giannis Antetokounmpo had 30 points and 12 rebounds in host Milwaukee’s blowout victory over New Orleans.

Damian Lillard added 26 points, nine assists and six rebounds. Brook Lopez scored 24 points with 6-for-9 shooting from 3-point range, and Bobby Portis had 20 points.

**Knicks 125, Heat 109:** Jalen Brunson had 32 points and eight assists and host New York won, winning its sixth straight and sending Miami to a sixth consecutive loss.

Julius Randle added 19 points and nine rebounds for the Knicks, but left with 4:27 remaining after landing hard on

his right shoulder when Jaime Jaquez Jr. stepped in front of him trying to take a charge on Randle’s drive to the basket.

**Spurs 113, Timberwolves 112:** Devin Vassell had 25 points, Victor Wembanyama added 23 points and 10 rebounds and host San Antonio rallied to beat Minnesota.

Anthony Edwards had 32 points and 12 rebounds for Minnesota.

**Wizards 118, Pistons 104:** Kyle Kuzma scored 30 points and visiting Washington beat Detroit for interim coach Brian Keefe’s first victory.

Keefe lost his first game Thursday, hours after Wes Unseld Jr. was moved to the Wizards’ front office.

**Jazz 134, Hornets 122:** Lauri Markkanen had 33 points and 12 rebounds and visiting Utah beat Charlotte for its 11th victory in 15 games.

**Nets 106, Rockets 104:** Cam Thomas scored 37 points and host Brooklyn outlasted Houston to snap a three-game losing streak.

## Iowa State now 13-0 at home after knocking off Kansas

Associated Press

AMES, Iowa — Tre King had 21 points and nine rebounds, and No. 23 Iowa State knocked off No. 7 Kansas 79-75 on Saturday.

Iowa State (16-4, 5-2) improved to 13-0 at home this season while enhancing its status as a Big 12 contender. Keshon Gilbert scored 16 points for the Cyclones, and reserve Curtis Jones had 15 points.

All three contributed to a season-best performance from the 3-point line for the Cyclones, who went 14-for-30 from beyond the arc.

“Playing in that atmosphere, you think every shot you’re taking is going in,” Iowa State guard Tamin Lipsey said. “Just how loud the fans are and the vibe in the whole arena is so

good, you take all the shots with confidence.”

Lipsey had a 3-pointer and a layup that helped Iowa State seize control in the second half.

Hunter Dickinson led Kansas (16-4, 4-3) with 20 points and 15 rebounds.

**No. 3 North Carolina 75, Florida State 68:** RJ Davis scored 24 points and freshman Elliot Cadeau added a season-high 16 as the visiting Tar Heels rallied from an eight-point deficit early in the second half and extended its winning streak to 10 games.

**No. 4 Houston 74, Kansas State 52:** Jamal Sheard scored 17 points, J’Wan Roberts had 14 points and six rebounds and the host Cougars extended their winning streak to four games.

Damian Dunn added 13 points for Houston (18-2, 5-2 Big 12), which won its 17th straight home game.

**No. 5 Tennessee 75, Vanderbilt 62:** Dalton Knecht scored 12 straight points in the second half and finished with 32, rallying the visiting Volunteers past the Commodores.

**No. 6 Kentucky 63, Arkansas 57:** Antonio Reeves scored 24 points and the visiting Wildcats overcame a sub-par shooting performance.

**Mississippi State 64, No. 8 Auburn 58:** Josh Hubbard scored 15 of his 17 points in the second half and Cameron Matthews had 14 points and 11 rebounds as the host Bulldogs knocked off the Tigers.

**No. 9 Arizona 87, Oregon**

**78:** Caleb Love scored a career-high 36 points, and the visiting Wildcats beat the Ducks to snap a three-game road losing streak.

**No. 10 Illinois 70, Indiana 62:** Terrence Shannon Jr. made six free throws in the final two minutes to help the host Fighting Illini survive a scare from the Hoosiers.

**No. 20 Texas Tech 85, No. 11 Oklahoma 84:** Chance McMillian scored 27 points and the visiting Red Raiders rallied from a nine-point deficit in the second half to beat the Sooners.

**No. 12 Duke 72, Clemson 71:** Tyrese Proctor hit two free throws with 1 second left to help the host Blue Devils barely avert the program’s first home loss to the Tigers in nearly three decades.

# Oilers nearly at record winning streak

Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — Connor McDavid had a goal and three assists and the Edmonton Oilers won their 16th straight game to move within one of tying the NHL record, beating the Nashville Predators 4-1 on Saturday.

Edmonton will attempt to tie the record set by the 1992-93 Pittsburgh Penguins when it returns from the All-Star break to play at Vegas on Feb. 6. The Oilers matched the 2016-17 Columbus Blue Jackets for the second-longest streak.

Leon Draisaitl had a goal and two assists, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Zach Hyman also scored and Stuart Skinner made 28 saves to help Edmonton improve to 29-15-1.

Colton Sissons scored for Nashville. The Predators have lost three of four.

**Canucks 5, Blue Jackets 4 (OT):** Elias Pettersson got his second goal of the night 4 minutes into overtime, Brock Boeser had three goals and an assist, and host Vancouver rallied from three goals down in the third period to beat Columbus.

J.T. Miller and Quinn Hughes each had three assists, Pius Suter had two and Pettersson also

had one to help Vancouver improve to 9-0-2 in its last 11 games. Thatcher Demko finished with 25 saves.

**Penguins 3, Canadiens 2 (OT):** Marcus Pettersson scored 2:43 into overtime to lift host Pittsburgh past Montreal.

Lars Eller scored his ninth goal of the season for Pittsburgh in his 1,000th NHL game. Jake Guentzel scored his 22nd goal and Sidney Crosby continued a seven-game point streak with an assist.

**Flames 1, Blackhawks 0:** Elias Lindholm scored a power-play goal late in the second period and Jacob Markstrom made 32 saves as host Calgary snapped a four-game losing streak.

The last-place Blackhawks (14-34-2) have been shut out in two consecutive games, three of their last four and four of the past six.

**Stars 5, Capitals 4 (OT):** Defenseman Thomas Harley scored at 3:27 of overtime for his second goal of the game and second extra-period winner in two games for host Dallas.

Wyatt Johnston, Mason Marchment and Matt Duchene also scored and Jake Oettinger made 24 saves for the Stars.

**Panthers 3, Islanders 2:** Oliver Ekman-Larsson scored 1:57 into overtime and visiting Florida beat New York for its fourth straight win.

Matthew Tkachuk had a goal and an assist, and Sam Reinhart also scored for the Panthers.

**Hurricanes 3, Coyotes 1:** Dmitry Orlov and Jesper Fast scored 13 seconds apart in the final minute of the third period, and host Carolina beat Arizona.

Martin Necas also scored for the Hurricanes, who have won four of their last five games and remained two points behind the New York Rangers for first place in the Metropolitan Division.

**Maple Leafs 4, Jets 2:** Auston Matthews scored his NHL-leading 40th goal to reach 600 career points and visiting Toronto completed a home-and-home sweep of Winnipeg.

Hometown favorite Ryan Reaves, John Tavares and Simon Benoit, with an empty-net goal, all scored to help the Maple Leafs win their third straight.

**Ducks 3, Wild 2:** Troy Terry scored his second goal of the game with 8:20 left to break a tie and visiting Anaheim ended a 13-game losing streak against Minnesota.

A few seconds after exiting the penalty box, Terry gathered a puck in the neutral zone. His shot from the left circle was blocked by Ryan Hartman, but Terry followed the rebound and beat Filip Gustavsson from the slot.

**Red Wings 5, Golden Knights 2:** Dylan Larkin scored his 200th and 201st career goals to help host Detroit beat Vegas.

Jake Walman, Joe Veleno and Andrew Copp also scored, and Alex Lyon stopped 28 shots for the Red Wings.

**Sabres 5, Sharks 2:** JJ Peterka scored two goals for the second straight game and visiting Buffalo rallied to beat San Jose.

**Lightning 6, Devils 3:** Defenseman Victor Hedman had an assist for his 700th career point, Brandon Hagel and Brayden Point each scored twice and host Tampa Bay won its seventh straight at home.

**Bruins 6, Flyers 2:** David Pastrnak had two goals and an assist, James van Riemsdyk had a goal and an assist and visiting Boston beat Philadelphia.

**Rangers 7, Senators 2:** Artemi Panarin had a goal and two assists, and visiting New York scored seven unanswered goals to beat Ottawa.

## Frenchman wins PGA Tour event for first time since WWII

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Oui!

Matthieu Pavon became the first player to win a PGA Tour event under the French flag since World War II when he made an 8-foot putt on No. 18 at Torrey Pines South on Saturday for a dramatic birdie and a one-shot victory in the Farmers Insurance Open.

He raised his arms in celebration and shouted before hugging caddie Mark Sherwood after the putt rolled in as the municipal gem high above the Pacific Ocean glowed under the late-afternoon sun.

Pavon glowed, too. He said he almost quit golf 10 years ago because of the yips.

"It is big for our country," the 31-year-old

PGA Tour rookie said. "I hope it will inspire a lot of people, because coming from an amateur player which is 800 in the world to a PGA Tour winner is pretty big.

"I still can't believe it," said Pavon, who grew up playing soccer — his dad was a professional player — before switching to golf. "It feels like there is another round to play tomorrow because we're only Saturday."

The Farmers ended Saturday to avoid going up against the NFL's conference championship games.

Pavon's final-round 3-under 69 put him at 13 under, one stroke better than Nicolai Hojgaard. Pavon was two shots ahead of Stephan Jaeger, who led after the second

and third rounds, and Hojgaard and Nate Lashley.

French-American Martin Trainer won his first PGA Tour event at the 2019 Puerto Rico Open, an alternate event, while representing the United States. He later switched his nationality to France.

Pavon, who was born in Toulouse, was playing in just his 11th PGA Tour event. He has one victory on the European Tour.

Pavon said it's always been his dream to play in America.

"Since I came to America for the first time to practice in West Palm, I loved everything about America; the mentality, the sport, everything you guys do. It feels like I'm an American somehow."