

Inaction cited in Navy fuel spill response

By **WYATT OLSON**
Stars and Stripes

CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii — Human error was the primary cause of two separate fuel spills at a Navy storage facility in Hawaii in 2021 that contaminated drinking water for thousands of residents of military communities, according to an investigative report released Thursday.

“But human error is not the full story,” concludes the investigation ordered by Adm. Samuel Papparo, the head of U.S. Pacific Fleet, only days after residents in late November began complaining of petroleum-tainted water.

“The investigation further revealed several preventable contributing factors included a culture of procedural non-compliance; material deficiencies; poor training and supervision; ineffective command and control; absence of ownership regarding operational safety; unacceptable

immediate response actions, including a lack of timely, accurate and thorough reporting; and a fundamentally flawed investigative process concerning” the first of the two spills on May 6 and Nov. 20.

Jet fuel from the spills at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility, a massive World War II-era underground tank farm, seeped into one of three wells the Navy uses in its water distribution system for communities on and near Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. The contamination displaced thousands of residents for several months beginning in late November. The contaminated well remains closed as work continues to rid it of petroleum. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced March 7 that the storage facility would be permanently closed.

The multi-phase plan for emptying and closing the facility will not be completed until the end of

2024, Meredith Berger, assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, said during a roundtable Thursday at Camp H.M. Smith.

The investigation, which was completed in January, and a supplemental portion that wrapped up in April detail missteps from both spills that led directly to the well contamination.

On May 6, 2021, operators at the storage facility “improperly executed a fuel transfer procedure,” which caused two pipe joints to rupture, the report states.

Roughly 21,000 gallons of jet fuel emptied into a room designed to automatically seal in the event of a leak. The leak activated sump pumps that pushed the fuel into a lengthy fire-suppression retention line, according to the investigation, but operators remained unaware of the pump action.

A “cursory” investigation by the Naval Supply Systems Com-

mand “failed to identify the root causes” of the spill and recommended no “meaningful corrective measures,” the newly released investigation states.

Between May and November, the weight of the missing fuel now lodged in the plastic retention line caused it to slowly sag. Workers move about the lower access tunnel using a cart on rail lines, and over time the overhead retention line sagged enough for the cart to graze a valve and crack the pipe.

On Nov. 20, the cart operator discovered the pipe leaking, according to the investigative report. About 5,000 gallons of fuel seeped into the well shaft.

“Had leaders at the scene questioned more critically the potential for a release to the environment, they would have acted more decisively to stop the source of the spill and demanded more resources to manage it,” the report states.

3 Sikhs seek to keep beards during Marine Corps boot camp

By **ALISON BATH**
Stars and Stripes

Three Sikh men suing the U.S. military on religious freedom grounds are seeking a ruling allowing them to attend Marine Corps boot camp without having to shave their beards or meet other grooming standards.

On Tuesday, Milaap Singh Chahal, Jaskirat Singh and Aakash Singh asked a federal court in Washington to find that the Marine Corps’ denial of their religious accommodation requests for boot camp is discriminatory and violates their constitutional rights, said Amrith Kaur Aakre, legal director at the New York City-based Sikh Coalition, which represents the men.

The prospective recruits, who are in their late teens and early

20s and have passed fitness and other tests, could have to wait years before their lawsuit is resolved, potentially hurting their future military careers.

The judge’s decision is expected in a few months, Aakre said.

Objections to similar Army rules first raised by the coalition in 2008 didn’t bring about an official policy change until January 2017, Aakre said.

The Justice Department, which is defending the Marine Corps and other agencies named in the lawsuit, did not respond Friday to a request for comment.

In April, the three plaintiffs and a Sikh active-duty Marine artillery officer sued the Marine Corps, the Navy, the Defense Department and several U.S. military officials, alleging that rules

preventing them from having beards and long hair and wearing turbans or other religious items in combat zones or during boot camp violate their constitutional rights. In court filings, the government has defended grooming requirements, such as clean-shaven faces and short hair on men, as necessary to maintaining discipline, order and esprit de corps.

It also has said that beards could interfere with the effectiveness of gas masks in a chemical or similar attack. During the roughly hourlong hearing Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Richard Leon focused on recent changes to grooming standards in the Marine Corps that allow beards in some circumstances and eased restrictions on tattoos.

Other services, too, have begun

to modify their rules. Last week, the Army announced that tattoos on hands or the back of the neck or behind the ear will be allowed.

The services also have allowed exemptions to the facial hair policy for troops with a painful skin condition caused by shaving, and they have approved such hairstyles as braids and locks.

As it did previously, the government asserted Tuesday that those changes were needed to help with recruitment and retention.

Aakre contends that accommodations for secular reasons but not for religious ones runs counter to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which limits the federal government from restricting a person’s exercise of religion, even in cases where it may have a compelling interest.

Mattis: Trump, N. Korea meetings were fruitless

BY DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — Donald Trump's unconventional summits with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in 2018 and 2019 produced nothing, former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said at a forum here Friday.

The United States under Trump's presidency was "not traditional for what America's role has been in the world," the retired Marine general and former head of Central Command said at a gathering hosted by the Seoul Forum for International Affairs, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Korea Society in Seoul.

The two nations were threatening war in 2017, but Kim and Trump emerged friends from their 2018 summit in Singapore, trading "love letters" afterward. The two met again the following year in Hanoi, Vietnam, and at the Demilitarized Zone that separates North and South Korea.

Trump hailed the meetings as momentous developments, but foreign policy experts widely criticized them for failing to produce any agreements between the two countries.

"As far as what came out of it, I would say

nothing," Mattis said of the summits. "I saw nothing that came out of it."

In 2020, North Korea resumed missile tests and its bellicose statements aimed at the U.S. and South Korea. North Korea has so far this year launched 17 rounds of missile tests, a one-year record.

"President Trump was an unusual leader" who believed in "personal diplomacy," Mattis said.

"He was convinced that he could work something out with Kim — I was not optimistic," he added. "My job was to make certain I did everything I could to stand by the [South Korean] Ministry of Defense and make certain the U.S. military ... ties were absolutely at the top of their game to ensure that we were buying the time to safely engage in that summit."

In contrast to Trump's record, Mattis said, President Joe Biden met with South Korean President Yoon Seok Youl a record 10 days after Yoon's inauguration in May. "Under President Biden, we have seen the earliest summit meeting between Korea ... which shows the priority that the Americans place on the relationship," Mattis said.

Airmen will face ax for conviction of sexual assault

BY ALEXANDER RIEDEL
Stars and Stripes

A recent update to Air Force personnel policy has made discharge from the service the default consequence for sexual assault convictions.

The Air Force significantly narrowed the criteria allowing members found guilty of sexual assault to remain in the military, according to an internal guidance document published June 24.

"These revisions will significantly improve our ability to discharge those unworthy of calling themselves airmen and guardians," Air Force Under Secretary Gina Ortiz Jones recently said in a statement.

Officials are no longer allowed to consider personal, family or financial circumstances, medical or mental health or even good character or service record when making their discharge decision, the service said in a statement.

Mental health factors and military service may be considered only when it comes to the characterization of the final discharge.

Under new guidance, commanders are mandated to initiate discharge proceedings on members found guilty of sexual assault.

Service members facing the new default discharge for sexual assault must prove that "exception criteria" exist to receive consideration for a lesser consequence.

However, no exceptions will be granted in cases of sexual assault against a child.

The previous policy allowed airmen to remain in service if the conduct was "not likely to recur," a threshold service officials found too subjective.

Also, members will be denied retention if they have had other substantiated allegations of sexual assault against them, assaulted a victim who was incapable of consenting, used violence during an assault or used their position or rank against a victim.

"These new objective criteria reflect our commitment to justice for sexual assault survivors and accountability of offenders," Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall said in a statement June 24. "We are determined to maintain a culture of respect for the safety, dignity and personal boundaries of every airmen, guardian and civil servant."

F-35Bs practice close air support for the first time near Mount Fuji

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II stealth fighters practiced close air support recently near Mount Fuji, marking the first time the fifth-generation aircraft conducted that training in Japan.

Two F-35Bs from Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni each made four runs on Tuesday, dropping inert bombs on simulated armored vehicles at Combined Arms Training Center Camp Fuji, Col. Neil Owens, 50, said Friday.

Had they been live munitions, the "bombs definitely would have had effects on the target," Owens, the training center commander, told Stars and Stripes by

phone.

U.S. Forces Japan posted photos of senior leaders observing the drills at Camp Fuji on its Facebook page Thursday with a note that said the aircraft involved were from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 242.

"This training marked the first-ever live close air support mission in Japan with an F-35B," the note said.

The air strikes were guided from the ground by joint terminal attack controllers, or JTACs, with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, and the 5th Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, which is part of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force headquarters, Owens said.

Cavoli assumes command of EUCOM

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Gen. Christopher Cavoli, an Army officer's son who grew up on bases across Europe during the Cold War, took command Friday of more than 100,000 troops operating on a continent on edge over another war.

Besides leading U.S. European Command, he also will serve as NATO's supreme allied commander, a position he takes up Monday.

"I understand just how heavy the responsibilities are at this time in Europe," Cavoli said Friday. "I will not let you down."

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who officiated at the change of command ceremony Friday at Patch Barracks in Stuttgart,

elaborated on what Cavoli alluded to in his brief remarks.

Russia's attack on Ukraine "poses the greatest threat to European security since the end of World War II," Austin said.

Cavoli speaks Russian, Italian and French and was described by Austin as a combat-tested "soldier-statesmen" who will bring creativity and intellect to the job.

He replaced Gen. Tod Wolters, who has led EUCOM for the past three years. Wolters' tenure involved management of a series of crises, including the coronavirus pandemic, the evacuation of civilians from Afghanistan and the Russia-Ukraine war.

"No (supreme allied commander) has faced a challenge of this magnitude in recent memory," Austin said about Wolters.

Austin and Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, credited him for deftly leading U.S. and allied forces during a tumultuous period. The retiring Wolters' humble leadership style built trust across the alliance, Austin said.

Milley said troops under EUCOM are central to deterring potential Russian aggression on the Continent and "are standing watch right now at the most pivotal and dangerous time in our lifetime."

In Cavoli, EUCOM is getting a commander already steeped in the Europe mission, as he had commanded the Army on the Continent for the past four years.

"Our eastern flank is going to remain in good hands," Milley said. "All of Europe is going to remain in good hands."

North Korea slams US, South Korea, Japan ties

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea on Sunday slammed the United States, South Korea and Japan for pushing to boost their trilateral military cooperation targeting the North, warning that the move is prompting urgent calls for the country to reinforce its military capability.

North Korea has long cited what it calls hostility by the United States and its allies as a reason to pursue a nuclear program. Sunday's statement comes as North Korea's neighbors say the country is ready for its first nuclear test in five years as part of its provocative run of weapons tests this year.

"The prevailing situation more urgently calls for building up the country's defense to actively cope with the rapid aggravation of the security environment of the Korean Peninsula and the rest of the world," the North Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement, without elaborating how it would boost its military capacity.

The statement took issue

with a trilateral meeting among the U.S., South Korean and Japanese leaders on the sidelines of a NATO summit last week, during which they underscored the need to strengthen their cooperation to deal with North Korean nuclear threats.

North Korea views U.S.-led military exercises in the region, particularly ones with rival South Korea, as an invasion rehearsal, though Washington and Seoul have repeatedly said they have no intentions of attacking the North.

During the recent trilateral meeting, U.S. President Joe Biden said he was "deeply concerned" about North Korea's continued ballistic missile tests and apparent plans to conduct a nuclear test. South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said the importance of trilateral cooperation has grown in the face of North Korea's advanced nuclear program, while Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said joint anti-missile drills would be important to deter North Korean threats.

Russia claims to control pivotal city in east Ukraine

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia claimed control Sunday over the last Ukrainian stronghold in an eastern province that is key to achieving a major goal of its grinding war.

Ukraine's General Staff of the military reported that its forces had withdrawn from Lysychansk in Luhansk province, but the president said the fight for the city was ongoing.

If confirmed, Russia's complete seizure of Luhansk would provide its forces a stronger base from which to press their advance in neighboring Donetsk province and bring them one step closer to achieving one of President Vladimir Putin's major goals: capturing the entire Donbas.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu told Putin that Russia's troops, with members of a local separatist militia, "have established full control over the city of Lysychansk" and now hold all of Luhansk, according to a ministry statement published Sunday.

As is typical with such descriptions, the Russian state-

ment characterized the victories as "the liberation of the Luhansk People's Republic." Separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk, which make up the Donbas and have significant Russian-speaking populations, declared independence from Kyiv in 2014, and Russia formally recognized their self-proclaimed republics days before its Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Ukrainian and Russian forces have fought fiercely for Lysychansk in recent days after neighboring Sievierodonsk fell last week. On Sunday evening, the General Staff of Ukraine's military confirmed on social media that its forces had withdrawn from Lysychansk "to preserve the lives of Ukrainian defenders."

Russian forces maintain an advantage in the area, he acknowledged, calling it a Ukrainian military "weak spot."

The capture of Lysychansk would give the Russians more territory from which to intensify attacks on Donetsk as they drive their campaign in the Donbas.

US still wary as virus cases decrease

Associated Press

The fast-changing coronavirus has kicked off summer in the U.S. with lots of infections but relatively few deaths compared to its prior incarnations.

COVID-19 is still killing hundreds of Americans each day, but is not nearly as dangerous as it was last fall and winter.

"It's going to be a good summer and we deserve this break," said Ali Mokdad, a professor of health metrics sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle.

With more Americans shielded from severe illness through vaccination and infection, COVID-19 has transformed — for

now at least — into an unpleasant, inconvenient nuisance for many.

"It feels cautiously good right now," said Dr. Dan Kaul, an infectious diseases specialist at the University of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor. "For the first time that I can remember, pretty much since it started, we don't have any (COVID-19) patients in the ICU."

As the nation marks July Fourth, the average number of daily deaths from COVID-19 in the United States is hovering around 360. Last year, during a similar summer lull, it was around 228 in early July. That remains the lowest threshold

since March 2020.

But there were far fewer reported cases at this time last year — fewer than 20,000 a day. Now, it's about 109,000 — and likely an undercount as home tests aren't routinely reported.

Today, in the third year of the pandemic, it's easy to feel confused by the mixed picture: Repeat infections are increasingly likely, and a sizeable share of those infected will face the lingering symptoms of long COVID-19.

Yet, the stark danger of death has diminished for many people.

"And that's because we're now at a point that everyone's

immune system has seen either the virus or the vaccine two or three times by now," said Dr. David Dowdy, an infectious disease epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "Over time, the body learns not to overreact when it sees this virus."

"What we're seeing is that people are getting less and less ill on average," Dowdy said.

The death rate for COVID-19 has been a moving target, but recently has fallen to within the range of an average flu season, according to data analyzed by Arizona State University health industry researcher Mara Aspinall.

Holiday getaways push US airport traffic to new high

Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. — The Fourth of July holiday weekend is jamming U.S. airports with their biggest crowds since the pandemic began in 2020.

About 2.49 million passengers went through security checkpoints at U.S. airports Friday, surpassing the previous pandemic-era record of 2.46 million reached earlier in the week, according to figures released Saturday by the Transportation Security Administration. The escalating numbers show leisure travelers aren't being deterred from flying by rising fares, the ongoing spread of COVID-19 or worries about recurring flight delays and cancellations.

Friday's passenger volume marked a 13% increase from July 1 last year, which fell on the Thursday before Fourth of July. This year's number of passengers going through U.S. airports also eclipsed the 2.35 million screened at security checkpoints on the Friday before the Fourth of July in 2019, but that

was nearly a week ahead of Independence Day.

In a more telling sign of how close U.S. air travel is reverting back to pre-pandemic conditions, an average of 2.33 million passengers have passed through security checkpoints at domestic airports during the seven days ending July 1. That was close to the seven-day average of roughly 2.38 million passengers during the same 2019 period, according to the TSA.

But airlines have struggled to keep up with the surging demand amid staffing shortages and an assortment of other issues that have resulted in recurring waves of exasperating flight delays and cancellations that have been transforming some vacations into nightmarish ordeals.

Many airlines, including Delta, Southwest and JetBlue, have responded to the challenge by curtailing their summer schedules in an effort to reduce the inconveniences — and backlash — caused by flight delays and cancellations

Google to erase location info as abortion bans expand

Associated Press

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. — Google will automatically purge information about users who visit abortion clinics or other places that could trigger legal problems now that the U.S. Supreme Court has opened the door for states to ban the termination of pregnancies.

The company behind the internet's dominant internet search engine and the Android software that powers most of the world's smartphones outlined the new privacy protections in a Friday blog post.

Besides automatically deleting visits to abortion clinics, Google also cited counseling centers, fertility centers, addiction treatment facilities, weight loss clinics, and cosmetic surgery clinics as other destinations that will be erased from users' location histories.

Users have always had the option to edit their location histories on their own, but Google will proactively do it for them as an added level of protection.

"We're committed to delivering robust privacy protections for people who use our products, and we will continue to look for new ways to strengthen and improve these protections," Jen Fitzpatrick, a Google senior vice president, wrote in the blog post.

The pledge comes amid escalating pressure on Google and other Big Tech companies to do more to shield the troves of sensitive personal information through their digital services and products from government authorities and other outsiders.

The calls for more stringent privacy controls were triggered by the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision overturning the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling that legalized abortion.

That reversal could make abortion illegal in more than a dozen states, raising the specter that records about people's location, texts, searches and emails could be used in prosecutions against abortion procedures or even for medical care sought in a miscarriage.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Bear cub rescued after head stuck in plastic jug

CT HARWINTON — Wildlife biologists in Connecticut had to rescue a bear cub that got its head stuck in a plastic container, state wildlife officials said.

The misadventure happened when a mother bear with three cubs knocked over a garbage can in the town of Harwinton in Litchfield County, and one of the cubs stuck its head in a clear plastic jar that had spilled out.

Wildlife biologists waited for the cub to come down from the tree it was perched in and then tranquilized it and removed the container.

The bear was unhurt and quickly found its mother waiting nearby, the wildlife officials said.

Woman attacked with acid for the third time

OR EUGENE — A Eugene, Ore., woman who had acid thrown on her while walking her dog in March has been the target of two additional acid attacks at her home, believed to be committed by the same person, according to the Eugene Police Department.

The Eugene Police Department is also investigating at least two of the incidents as bias crimes after the suspect made comments about the woman being Native American, The Register-Guard reported.

The latest incident happened around 5:30 a.m. Tuesday when she opened her door and someone threw acid on her, police spokeswoman Melinda McLaughlin said. The woman was taken to a hospital for

chemical burns.

On March 28, a cup of acid was thrown on the woman, which required hospital treatment for chemical burns.

On June 19, the woman reported a man had broken into her residence, poured a chemical on her and lit her on fire. She put out the flames using a sandal and was treated for burns at the hospital, McLaughlin said.

WWII-era boat emerges from shrinking lake

NV LAS VEGAS — A sunken boat dating back to World War II is the latest object to emerge from a shrinking reservoir that straddles Nevada and Arizona.

The Higgins landing craft that has long been 185 feet below the surface is now nearly halfway out of the water at Lake Mead.

The boat was used to survey the Colorado River decades ago, sold to the marina and then sunk, according to dive tours company Las Vegas Scuba.

Higgins Industries in New Orleans built several thousand landing craft between 1942 and 1945, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported. Around 1,500 "Higgins boats" were deployed at Normandy on June 6, 1944, known as D-Day.

Man indicted for multiple fake loan applications

MD BALTIMORE — A federal grand jury has indicted a Baltimore man for submitting several fraudulent loan applications as well as stealing the identity of a tax preparer, according to a federal prosecutor.

Dana Lamar Antonio Hayes Jr., 37, faces federal charges of wire fraud, money laundering and aggravated identity theft, said U.S. Attorney Erek L. Barron.

According to the six-count indictment, Hayes submitted fraudulent applications for loans from Economic Injury Disaster Relief, the Paycheck Protection Plan, the Small Business Administration and two banks.

The indictment also said Hayes used the name of a tax preparer and their identification number to submit a fraudulent Form 941 to a bank without the victim's knowledge or consent. The preparer previously had been hired by Hayes and a company he revived to prepare his personal returns as well as those of the company. Federal records indicate no such form was ever filed.

Officials: Girl seriously injured in shark attack

FL PERRY — A teenage girl was seriously injured when a shark attacked her off Florida's Gulf Coast, authorities said.

The attack occurred off Keaton Beach, according to a Taylor County Sheriff's Office news release.

The 17-year-old girl had been looking for scallops in the water with her family when a 9-foot shark wrapped its jaws around the girl's thigh, according to a statement from her family.

The girl poked the shark in the eyes and punched it before her brother, who is a firefighter, managed to fight the shark off and pull the girl onto a stranger's boat. The brother put a

tourniquet on the girl's leg to slow blood loss.

After she was brought to shore, the girl was airlifted about 60 miles to a hospital in Tallahassee, the state capital, officials said. Doctors told the family that the girl's leg suffered extensive damage.

Theme park to expand, introduce 3 attractions

NY NEW YORK — Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, step right up and witness Coney Island's Luna Park like you've never seen it before.

The beachfront tourist destination will soon be introducing three new attractions and pedestrian plazas on several acres along the iconic Coney Island, N.Y., boardwalk as part of Luna Park's expansion.

"Coney Island [has] been this great, rich place with so much legacy and emotions and memories for all — not just New Yorkers, but Americans," said Alessandro Zamperla of Central Amusement International, which operates the park.

Of the three new attractions are two intertwined rides: a roller coaster called "Tony's Express" and a log flume ride called "Leti's Treasure." The two rides are designed to pay homage to classic, 19th-century Coney Island rides, as well as Zamperla's family. The rides are named after Zamperla's late grandparents, Antonio and Letizia.

As part of the expansion, Luna Park will also introduce a 50-foot Sky Chaser Ropes Course.

— From wire reports

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Volkanovski, Adesanya win at UFC 276

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Alexander Volkanovski left no doubt about his supremacy in the UFC featherweight division while wrapping up his trilogy against Max Holloway with style.

Volkanovski defeated Holloway for the third time Saturday night, defending his 145-pound title by unanimous decision with a dominant striking performance at UFC 276.

Israel Adesanya also retained his middleweight belt with considerably less flair, winning a tepid unanimous-decision victory over Jared Cannonier in the main event at T-Mobile Arena on the Vegas Strip.

Volkanovski (25-1) extended his winning streak to 22 fights with a commanding display against Holloway (23-7), the former featherweight champion. Volkanovski executed a sharp boxing game plan against one of the UFC's best punchers, bloodying Holloway's face early on and steadily increasing the punishment into the final minutes.

"It's a bit of a journey, this rivalry," Volkanovski said. "Taking the belt, having the rematch and then the talk and all that. There was a lot of ups and downs in there, but it was good to finally put an end to it and silence a lot of people. A lot of people that needed shutting up."

Holloway's entire face was crimson at the final bell. Volkanovski won every round on all three judges' scorecards, 50-45.

"Max Holloway is an absolute beast," Volkanovski said. "That intensity that we both had, I needed it. I really needed it. I

had to get in my own head."

Adesanya (23-1) won his belt three years ago as one of the UFC's most entertaining fighters and personalities, but his elaborate ring walk might have been the most thrilling part of his dry, technical victory over the cautious Cannonier (15-6).

After copying famed professional wrestler The Undertaker on a walk that included the wrestler's signature hat and a large urn, Adesanya patiently picked at Cannonier with kicks and occasional punches for five rounds. Cannonier, getting his first UFC title shot at 38 years old, struggled to find a consistent striking range, and he didn't show enough desperation to figure it out.

Adesanya won on all three judges' scorecards, 50-45, 49-46 and 49-46. He has never lost a UFC middleweight fight, but he has just one stoppage victory in his five 185-pound fights since 2019.

"It was really hard to get going, because they had an excellent game plan," Adesanya said.

The penultimate bout of UFC 276 concluded a memorable trilogy between Volkanovski and Holloway, likely the two greatest featherweights in UFC history outside of long-reigning champ Jose Aldo. Volkanovski won two highly competitive fights by decision over Holloway in 2019 and 2020, but Holloway won his next two fights to reassert his claim to another shot at the belt he held for three years.

"I have all the respect for Max," Volkanovski said. "I wouldn't be the fighter I am

today without him. He makes me raise the bar. It makes me improve my discipline."

Two proficient strikers understandably kept the fight on the feet, but the smaller Volkanovski capably closed the distance to do damage in the first two rounds, particularly in opening a nasty cut above Holloway's left eye. Holloway's answers dwindled as his cuts grew larger, and Volkanovski patiently racked up scoring shots to leave no doubt in the decision.

Afterward, Volkanovski said he would like to move up 10 pounds to fight for the lightweight title, which is currently vacant after champion Charles Oliveira missed weight for his victory over Justin Gaethje in May. But Volkanovski also said he was intrigued by a post-fight challenge from Henry Cejudo, the former two-division champion who intends to end his retirement.

"He thinks he's got what it takes," Volkanovski said of Cejudo. "People want to challenge me, but they need to be big fights. I respect the guy. He can fight. It's impressive. So we'll see what happens."

Before the title fights, Alex Pereira demolished Sean Strickland with strikes midway through the first round of a victory that burnished the Brazilian kickboxing champion's status as an immediate title contender at middleweight. Pereira showered and rushed back to the arena after his bout to watch the main event.

Bryan Barberena also stopped Robbie Lawler on strikes late in the second round of a brutal fight in which both veterans absorbed tremendous punishment.

Agent: Williamson agrees to a 5-year extension

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Zion Williamson's lost season to injury and unusual absence from the New Orleans Pelicans during his recovery didn't stop the club from betting big on their long-term future together.

The star forward agreed Saturday to a five-year, \$193 million extension with New Orleans that has the potential to be worth as much as \$231 million, Williamson's agent, Austin Brown, told The Associated Press.

Classified as a maximum rookie extension under the NBA's labor agreement, the deal sets

the stage for the 6-foot-6, 280-pound, high-scoring power forward to give an All-Star caliber boost to a squad that recently proved it could make the playoffs without him.

ESPN first reported the agreement, also citing information provided by Brown, who is the co-director of CAA Sports' basketball division. The Pelicans have not yet announced the extension, which under NBA rules cannot be signed until July 6.

The move signifies a desire by the 2019 No. 1 overall draft choice out of Duke to see how

much his return could help a squad that improved dramatically late last season and made a surprisingly competitive playoff showing.

It is also a show of faith by the Pelicans in the injury-plagued Williamson, who has played a total of 85 games in his first three NBA seasons — and missed all of last season with a foot injury.

This spring, New Orleans won two Western Conference playoff games before taking top-seeded Phoenix to six games in the first round of the 2022 playoffs. It did so with a squad

led by high-scoring wing Brandon Ingram, veteran guard CJ McCollum, center Jonas Valanciunas and a supporting cast of young players who blossomed under first-time NBA head coach Willie Green.

One season earlier, Williamson averaged a team-high 27 points and became a first-time All-Star during what was his lone NBA campaign that was not mostly or entirely wiped out by injuries.

Williamson played in just 24 games as a rookie because of a preseason right knee injury (lateral meniscus).

Tsitsipas calls Kyrgios bully after hubbub, loss

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Nick Kyrgios cursed at the Wimbledon chair umpire and asked, “Are you dumb?” He demanded to see a Grand Slam supervisor after questioning why his opponent, Stefanos Tsitsipas, didn’t forfeit their ever-contentious, never-boring match for angrily hitting a ball into the stands after dropping the second set.

Unsatisfied with the response, Kyrgios asked, “What are you talking about, bro?” Then came this: “Bro, bring out more supervisors. I’m not done. Bring ‘em all out. I don’t care. I’m not playing until we get to the bottom of this.”

Narrator: He did continue to play Saturday. And the unpredictable, unseeded Kyrgios won 6-7 (2), 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (7) to reach the fourth round at the All England Club for the first time since 2016 — then was criticized by the No. 4-seeded Tsitsipas for having “a very evil side.”

“It’s constant bullying. That’s what he does. He bullies the opponents,” said Tsitsipas, the 2021 French Open runner-up, who also lost to Kyrgios on grass at a tournament in Halle, Germany, last month. “He was probably a bully at school himself. I don’t like bullies.”

There was more, so much more, from underarm serves hit by Kyrgios — including one between his legs — to the three shots purposefully smacked right at him by Tsitsipas. A total of three code violations were called by chair umpire Damien Dumusois, one on Kyrgios for an audible obscenity, and two on Tsitsipas for ball abuse, earning a point penalty.

Told of Tsitsipas’ “bully” comment, Kyrgios laughed and shook his head.

“He was the one hitting balls at me. He was the one who hit a spectator. ... I didn’t do anything. Apart from me going back and forth with the umpire, I did nothing toward Stefanos today that was disrespectful, I don’t think,” Kyrgios said at his news conference, wearing a T-shirt with former NBA player Dennis Rodman’s name on it.

“If he’s affected by that today, then that’s what’s holding him back,” Kyrgios said about Tsitsipas. “Because someone can just do that, and that’s going to throw him off his game like that? I just think it’s soft.”

There even was some terrific tennis along the way, with the players combining for 118 winners. It all took 3 hours, 17 minutes, with nary a dull moment, and finished so late that

the retractable roof at No. 1 Court was shut and the artificial lights turned on midway through the fourth set.

Tsitsipas held a pair of set points to force a fifth, but Kyrgios saved both, the latter with a half-volley winner after serving-and-volleying on a second serve.

Kyrgios, a 27-year-old from Australia, converted his second match point with a drop shot, then roared. That sort of skill has always been evident from Kyrgios, who twice has been a Grand Slam quarterfinalist. Also long obvious: Kyrgios often appears more interested in entertaining or arguing than in doing whatever it takes to finish on the right side of the score.

His issues with Dumusois began in the first set, when he was disturbed by a reversed call by a line judge and wanted that official removed. Didn’t happen.

“There comes a point where you really get tired of it, let’s say,” said Tsitsipas, a 23-year-old from Greece. “The constant talking, the constant complaining.”

After Kyrgios broke to grab the second set, Tsitsipas swatted a ball with a backhand into the crowd.

The ball appeared to ricochet off a wall, but what wasn’t entirely clear was whether it landed on anyone.

Tsitsipas apologized for that afterward, saying it stemmed from frustration created by “all the circus show going on, on the other side of the net.”

“I didn’t hit any people. It did hit the wall, thank God,” he said, and acknowledged he was trying to hit his foe with some other balls aimed right at his body. “For sure I’m never doing that again. It’s my responsibility, for sure.”

That drew just a warning from Dumusois, which didn’t sit well with Kyrgios.

“You can’t hit a ball into the crowd and hit someone and not get defaulted,” Kyrgios said, bringing up the episode at the 2020 U.S. Open involving Novak Djokovic, who was ejected from a match after inadvertently hitting a ball that struck a line judge in the throat.

At one point, Kyrgios told Dumusois: “You don’t know how to play, so how about you don’t tell me how to play? ... Bro, the people want to see me, not you.”

They will get another chance to see Kyrgios on Monday, when he faces Brandon Nakashima for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Zhou OK despite scary first-lap crash in Britain

Associated Press

SILVERSTONE, England — Zhou Guanyu was involved in a frightening first-lap crash Sunday that brought the British Grand Prix to an immediate halt as safety crews attended to the only Chinese driver in Formula One.

Zhou’s car slid upside-down across the gravel and his Alfa Romeo seemed to be wedged between fencing and a tire barrier at the first corner. The race was red-flagged and George Russell, one of the drivers involved in the crash, sprinted from his car to the tire barrier to check on Zhou.

Zhou was taken to the track’s medical center for observation and credited the head-protecting “halo” device on the cars for protecting him.

“I’m OK, all clear. Halo saved me today. Thanks everyone for your kind messages!” he wrote on Twitter.

Alex Albon of Williams was also taken to the medical center and then his team said he’d been transferred by helicopter to Coventry Hospital for a precautionary check. Albon had spun into the pit wall after being struck by Sebastian Vettel from behind as drivers tried to avoid the incident involving Zhou.

Russell appeared to be hit from behind at the start and was knocked into Zhou, whose car went flying across a gravel trap and over a tire wall into the retaining fence. The car was skidding on the “halo,” then went airborne. It was stuck between the tire wall and the fence, delaying efforts to extricate Zhou.

Russell called it “one of the scariest crashes I’ve ever seen.”

Russell was declared out of the race by the FIA because his Mercedes was loaded onto a truck to be taken back to pit lane while he was checking on Zhou. Mercedes protested the call, but the FIA did not budge.

Carlos Sainz Jr. earned his first career Formula One victory, which started with the frightening crash and ended with intense wheel-to-wheel battles for the podium positions.

Sainz was in the lead with Charles Leclerc close behind and, while Ferrari at first said they were “free to fight,” the Italian team then asked Sainz to let Leclerc past to avoid losing time to Lewis Hamilton.

But a safety car came out and Ferrari brought Sainz into the pits for fresher, grippier soft tires. Leclerc was left on older, hard tires and Sainz soon passed his teammate to regain the lead and pull away for his first victory in his 150th F1 start.

4 HRs in 1st, one in 9th lift Cardinals

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Nolan Arenado sparked a record barrage of four straight home runs by St. Louis in the first inning, then hit a tiebreaking drive in the ninth that sent the Cardinals over the Philadelphia Phillies 7-6 Saturday.

With two outs in the first, Arenado, Nolan Gorman, Juan Yepez and Dylan Carson homered off Kyle Gibson. It was the first time in major league history a team connected for four homers in a row in the first inning.

"It was really cool just being a part of that," Arenado said. "It was almost surreal. You didn't really believe it. Those moments are special. I'm very thankful for them."

St. Louis tied the MLB record for any inning with four in a row. It was the first time it had done it, and the 11th time overall in big league history.

"That was incredible," Cardinals manager Oliver Marmol said. "Guys took some good swings. They were on attack."

Cubs 3, Red Sox 1: Mark Leiter Jr. threw 5½ solid innings of emergency relief, Nico Hoerner and Patrick Wisdom each had two hits and host Chicago capitalized on a pair of Boston errors.

Four pitchers combined to limit the Red Sox to five hits as the Cubs won for the fifth time in six games.

Dodgers 7, Padres 2: Freddie Freeman, Will Smith and Justin Turner homered during a seven-pitch span in the first inning, Tyler Anderson struck out six and host Los Angeles continued its dominance of San Diego.

The Dodgers have won 14 of their last 15 against the Padres since getting swept in a three-game series last June in San Diego.

Rangers 7, Mets 3: Kole Calhoun homered twice and drove in four runs, and Martín Pérez won his seventh straight decision as visiting Texas beat New York.

Starling Marte launched an early two-run

homer and Eduardo Escobar also went deep against Pérez (7-2), who had given up only two long balls in 15 starts covering 93⅓ innings coming in. But the 31-year-old lefty yielded nothing else. He is 7-0 in his last 11 starts, making a strong bid for his first All-Star selection this month.

Twins 4, Orioles 3: Jorge Polanco hit a tying homer and Jose Miranda delivered a game-ending single as host Minnesota again rallied for two runs in the bottom of the ninth inning.

After Polanco began the ninth with a home run, Alex Kirilloff doubled with one out, Gary Sánchez singled and Miranda followed with a single to win it.

Marlins 5, Nationals 3: Jesús Aguilar hit a two-run home run in the first inning and scored in the seventh, Daniel Castano picked up his first win of the season and visiting Miami continued its domination of Washington.

The Marlins have won 10 of 11 games against the Nationals in this season, but are 26-39 against everyone else.

Yankees 13, Guardians 4; Yankees 6, Guardians 1: Anthony Rizzo and Giancarlo Stanton blasted consecutive homers, Nestor Cortes shut Cleveland down for six innings and visiting New York continued its torrid winning pace by completing a doubleheader sweep.

Matt Carpenter homered twice and Gerrit Cole brushed off giving up back-to-back home runs in the Yankees' romp in the opener. The team is 25-6 since May 31.

At 58-21, New York is not only running away with the AL East, but has the second-best record after 79 games of any team in 93 years. Only the 1998 Yankees (59-20) were better, and this version is so far step for step with those World Series champions.

Tigers 4, Royals 3: Victor Reyes and Riley Greene hit back-to-back homers in the

ninth inning to lift host Detroit.

The Tigers' pitchers retired the last 17 Kansas City batters they faced.

Mariners 2, Athletics 1: Pinch-hitter Justin Upton homered to tie it in the eighth inning and Abraham Toro singled home the winning run in the ninth to lift host Seattle.

White Sox 5, Giants 3: Gavin Sheets doubled twice and drove in two runs, and visiting Chicago held on to beat San Francisco.

Dylan Cease allowed one run in five innings for his third consecutive win. The major league leader in strikeouts per nine innings, Cease (7-3) had only four against the Giants — his fewest since May 24.

Braves 4, Reds 1: Spencer Strider allowed one hit in six innings and matched a career high with 11 strikeouts, and Austin Riley homered for the second straight game and drove in two runs to lead visiting Atlanta.

Strider (4-2) didn't allow a hit until there were two outs in the fifth inning when Nick Senzel's single drove in Matt Reynolds, who entered the game when Kyle Farmer was hit by a pitch.

Rockies 11, Diamondbacks 7: Brendan Rodgers homered, Connor Joe had a three-run triple and host Colorado overcame a two-homer game by Arizona's Christian Walker.

Astros 9, Angels 1: Martín Maldonado homered twice and Jose Altuve, Kyle Tucker and Chas McCormick added a home run each as host Houston built a big lead early on Los Angeles and didn't let up.

Rays 6, Blue Jays 2; Rays 11, Blue Jays 5: Francisco Mejía homered twice, Isaac Paredes had three hits and five RBIs, and visiting Tampa Bay swept a doubleheader.

Pirates 7, Brewers 4: Oneil Cruz got his 12th RBI in 13 games since being recalled from Triple-A Indianapolis on June 20 to help host Pittsburgh bounce back from a blowout loss.

Grace wins LIV Golf's first event in the US

Associated Press

NORTH PLAINS, Ore. — Branden Grace won LIV Golf's first stop on American soil, an event that drew critics and protesters alike because of the upstart series' funding by Saudi Arabia.

Grace closed with a 7-under 65 on Saturday to finish at 13 under in the 54-hole tournament at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club. The 34-year-old South African won \$4 million.

The fledgling LIV series, fronted by CEO Greg Norman and funded by Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund, aims to challenge the PGA Tour. It has lured some players, including Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka and Phil Mickelson, with the promise of big signing bonuses, hefty prize purses and fewer events.

Grace beat Mexico's Carlos Ortiz by two strokes.

"Played flawless golf, played really, really well when I needed to do something special and came up and managed to pull it out," Grace said. "But just what a great day, it was amazing to come here, this new format, this new everything is amazing and everybody here is having a blast."

Ortiz, ranked No. 119 in the world, shot a 69. Johnson (71) finished four back with Patrick Reed (67).