

## US: China's support for Russia snarled ties

*Associated Press*

NUSA DUA, Indonesia — China's support for Russia's war in Ukraine is complicating U.S.-Chinese relations at a time when they are already beset by rifts and enmity over numerous other issues, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told his Chinese counterpart on Saturday.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi blamed the U.S. for the downturn in relations and said that American policy has been derailed by what he called a misperception of China as a threat.

"Many people believe that the United States is suffering from a China-phobia," he said, according to a Chinese statement. "If such threat-expansion is allowed to grow, U.S. policy toward China will be a dead end with no way out."

In five hours of talks in their first-to-face meeting since October, Blinken said he expressed deep concern about China's stance on Russia's actions in Ukraine and did not believe Beijing's protestations that it is neutral in the conflict.

The talks had been arranged in a new effort to try to rein in or at least manage rampant hostility that has come to define recent

relations between Washington and Beijing.

"We are concerned about the PRC's alignment with Russia," Blinken told reporters after the meeting in the Indonesian resort of Bali. He said it is difficult to be "neutral" in a conflict in which there is a clear aggressor but that even it were possible, "I don't believe China is acting in a way that is neutral."

The Chinese statement said the two sides had an in-depth exchange of views on Ukraine but provided no details.

The Biden administration had hoped that China, with its long history of opposing what it sees as interference in its own internal affairs, would take a similar position with Russia and Ukraine. But it has not, choosing instead what U.S. officials see as a hybrid position that is damaging the international rules-based order.

Blinken said every nation, China included, stands to lose if that order is eroded.

The two men met a day after they both attended a gathering of top diplomats from the Group of 20 rich and large developing countries that ended without a joint call to end Russia's war in Ukraine or plan for how to deal with its impacts on food and energy security.

However, Blinken said he believed Russia had come away from G-20 meeting isolated and alone as most participants expressed opposition to the Ukraine war. However, the ministers were unable to come to a unified G-20 call for an end to the conflict.

"There was a strong consensus and Russia was left isolated," Blinken said of individual condemnations of Russia's actions from various ministers, some of whom shunned conversations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

On China, Blinken said he and Wang discussed a range of contentious issues from tariffs and trade and human rights to Taiwan and disputes in the South China Sea that have all been complicated by the Chinese position on Ukraine.

U.S. officials had said ahead of time they didn't expect any breakthroughs from Blinken's talks with Wang. But they said they were hopeful the conversation could help keep lines of communications open and create "guardrails" to guide the world's two largest economies as they navigate increasingly complex and potentially explosive matters.

## Ukraine governor: Russia trying to 'raise true hell'

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Russian forces are managing to "raise true hell" in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland despite reports claiming they were taking an operational pause, a regional governor said Saturday, while another Ukrainian official urged people in Russian-occupied southern areas to evacuate quickly "by all possible means" ahead of a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Deadly Russian shelling was reported in Ukraine's east and south.

The governor of the eastern region of Luhansk, Serhyi Haidai, said Russia launched over

20 artillery, mortar and rocket strikes in the province overnight and its forces were pressing toward the border with the Donetsk region.

"We are trying to contain the Russians' armed formations along the entire front line," Haidai wrote on Telegram.

Last week, Russia captured the last major stronghold of Ukrainian resistance in Luhansk, the city of Lysychansk. Analysts predicted Moscow's troops likely would take some time to rearm and regroup.

But "so far, there has been no operational pause announced by the enemy. He is still attacking and shelling our

lands with the same intensity as before," Haidai said. In a later post, he claimed Russian bombardment of Luhansk was suspended because Ukrainian forces had destroyed ammunition depots and barracks used by the Russians.

Ukraine's deputy prime minister, Iryna Vereshchuk, appealed to residents of Russian-held territories in the south to evacuate so the occupying forces could not use them as human shields during a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

"You need to search for a way to leave, because our armed forces are coming to occupy," she said. "There will

be a massive fight. I don't want to scare anyone. Everyone understands all of this anyway."

Speaking at a news conference late Friday, Vereshchuk said a civilian evacuation effort was underway for parts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. She declined to give details, citing safety considerations.

It was not clear how civilians were expected to safely leave Russian-controlled areas while missile strikes and artillery shelling continue in surrounding areas, or whether they would be allowed to depart or even hear the government's appeal.

# US to send more military aid to Ukraine

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

The United States will send four rocket artillery systems to Ukraine and advanced howitzer rounds in a new \$400 million security assistance package approved Friday by President Joe Biden, Pentagon officials said.

With the new round of aid, the Pentagon has now provided the Ukrainian military with 12 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS, for its war against Russia. Since their arrival on the battlefield in recent weeks, HIMARS, which can strike targets about 50 miles away, have bolstered Ukraine's efforts to attack Russian targets — including command and control nodes — behind enemy lines, a senior U.S. defense official said Friday.

The White House announced last month

that it would send eight HIMARS to Ukraine to help the country's battle for its eastern Donbas region, which has been controlled largely by Russian troops since shortly after their February invasion. The fighting in the Donbas has been largely an artillery battle that has seen few major changes in territorial control, despite large numbers of casualties, according to the Pentagon and outside war observers including the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War.

The HIMARS have proven "especially important and effective in assisting Ukraine in coping with the Russian artillery battle in the Donbas," said the Pentagon official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the new assistance package ahead of the White House's expected announcement Friday afternoon.

"Increasingly in the last week, what we've seen is the ability of the Ukrainians to use these HIMARS systems to significantly disrupt the ability of the Russians to move forward," the official said.

The new weapons package announced Friday also included additional HIMARS rounds, three tactical vehicles, demolition munitions, counter-battery systems, and spare parts and other equipment, the official said.

The 1,000 howitzer rounds included in the latest security package were described by the senior defense official as "greater precision" 155 mm artillery rounds than those the United States has provided Ukraine previously. The official declined to provide specifics about the type of artillery round but said the new ammunition would provide Ukraine with a new "precision capability for specific targets."

## Wis. high court rejects absentee ballot drop boxes

*Associated Press*

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin's conservative-controlled Supreme Court ruled Friday that absentee ballot drop boxes may be placed only in election offices and that no one other than the voter can return a ballot in person, dealing a defeat to Democrats who said the decision would make it harder to vote in the battleground state.

However, the court didn't address whether anyone other than the voter can return his or her own ballot by mail. That means that anyone could still collect multiple ballots for voters and, instead of using a drop box, put them in the mail.

Republicans have argued that practice, known as ballot harvesting, is rife with fraud although there has been no evidence of that happening in Wisconsin. Democrats and others argue that many voters, particularly the elderly and disabled, have difficulty returning their ballots without the assistance of others.

Supporters argue drop boxes are a better option than mailing ballots because they go directly to the clerks and can't be lost or delayed in transit.

Twenty-nine other states allow for absentee ballot drop boxes, according to the U.S. Vote Foundation.

The decision sets absentee ballot rules for the Aug. 9 primary and the fall election; Republican U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson and Democratic Gov. Tony Evers are seeking reelection in key races.

Johnson and other Republicans hailed it as a win for voter integrity.

"This decision is a big step in the right direction," Johnson said.

Evers and other Democrats said the ruling will make it more difficult for people to vote.

"It's a slap in the face of democracy itself," said Democratic Party Chairman Ben Wikler.

## White House seeks court's OK on deportation policy

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration asked the Supreme Court on Friday to allow it to put in place guidance that prioritizes deportation of people in the country illegally who pose the greatest risk to public safety.

The emergency request to the court follows conflicting decisions by federal appeals courts in recent days over a September directive from the Homeland Security Department that paused deportation unless individuals had committed acts of terrorism, espionage or "egregious threats to public safety."

The federal appeals court in Cincinnati overturned a district judge's order that put the policy on hold in a lawsuit filed by Arizona, Ohio and Montana.

But in a separate suit filed by Texas and Louisiana, a federal judge in Texas ordered a nationwide halt to the guidance and a federal appellate panel in New Orleans declined to step in.

The administration turned to the Supreme Court in the latter case, asking that the policy be allowed to be put in place nationwide, or at the very least, everywhere outside Texas and

Louisiana.

The judge's order "is disrupting DHS's efforts to focus its limited resources on the non-citizens who pose the gravest threat to national security, public safety, and the integrity of our Nation's borders," Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar wrote in the Supreme Court filing.

The guidance, issued after Joe Biden became president, updated a Trump-era policy that removed people in the country illegally regardless of criminal history or community ties.

# Musk drops offer to buy Twitter

Associated Press

Elon Musk announced Friday that he will abandon his tumultuous \$44 billion offer to buy Twitter after the company failed to provide enough information about the number of fake accounts. Twitter immediately fired back, saying it would sue the Tesla CEO to uphold the deal.

The likely unraveling of the acquisition was just the latest twist in a saga between the world's richest man and one of the most influential social media platforms, and it may portend a titanic legal battle

ahead.

Twitter could have pushed for a \$1 billion breakup fee that Musk agreed to pay under these circumstances. Instead, it looks ready to fight to complete the purchase, which the company's board has approved and CEO Parag Agrawal has insisted he wants to consummate.

In a letter to Twitter's board, Musk lawyer Mike Ringler complained that his client had for nearly two months sought data to judge the prevalence of "fake or spam" accounts on the social media platform.

"Twitter has failed or refused to provide this information. Sometimes Twitter has ignored Mr. Musk's requests, sometimes it has rejected them for reasons that appear to be unjustified, and sometimes it has claimed to comply while giving Mr. Musk incomplete or unusable information," the letter said.

Musk also said the information is fundamental to Twitter's business and financial performance, and is needed to finish the merger.

In response, the chair of Twitter's board, Bret Taylor,

tweeted that the board is "committed to closing the transaction on the price and terms agreed upon" with Musk and "plans to pursue legal action to enforce the merger agreement. We are confident we will prevail in the Delaware Court of Chancery."

On Friday, shares of Twitter fell 5% to \$36.81, well below the \$54.20 that Musk agreed to pay. Shares of Tesla, meanwhile, climbed 2.5% to \$752.29. After the market closed and Musk's letter was published, Twitter's stock continued to decline while Tesla climbed higher.

# Cipollone testifies about Capitol riot

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former White House counsel Pat Cipollone "did not contradict" testimony of previous witnesses as he appeared Friday before the Jan. 6 committee, a grueling daylong private session that produced new information to be divulged in future public hearings, one lawmaker said.

Cipollone was a highly sought-after witness, especially after bombshell testimony that he tried to prevent Donald Trump from challenging the 2020 election results and worked to stop the defeated president from joining the violent mob that laid siege to the Capitol, they said.

"He did not contradict the testimony of other witnesses," Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., said late Friday on CNN.

Lofgren, a committee member, clarified that "not contradicting is not the same as confirming." In some cases the former White House lawyer was not present for the events described or "couldn't recall with precision" some details, she said.

"He was candid with the committee; he was careful in his answers," Lofgren said. "And I think we did learn a few things, which we will be rolling out in the hearings to come."

Cipollone's central role came into focus during a surprise committee hearing last week when former White House aide Cassidy Hutchinson described his repeated efforts to stop Trump from joining the mob at the Capitol.

In a stunning public hearing, Hutchinson testified that Cipollone warned her that

Trump would be charged with "every crime imaginable" if the defeated president went to the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, trying to stop the certification of Joe Biden's election.

Hutchinson said Cipollone urged her to persuade her boss, chief of staff Mark Meadows, not to let Trump go to the Capitol.

At another key juncture, Cipollone was also part of a meeting on the Sunday before Jan. 6 with Justice Department officials at the White House threatening to resign if Trump went ahead with plans to install a new acting attorney general who would pursue his false claims of voter fraud.

Cipollone and his lawyer, Michael Purpura, who also worked at the Trump White House, did not respond to requests for comment.

# Grove of giant sequoias threatened by Calif. blaze

Associated Press

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, Calif. — The largest grove of giant sequoias in Yosemite National Park was closed Friday and hundreds of people ordered evacuated nearby as a wildfire burning through dense forest became the latest in recent years to threaten the world's largest trees.

A team was being sent to the Mariposa Grove to wrap some of the massive trunks in fire-resistant foil to protect them as the blaze burned out of control, said Nancy Phillippe, a

Yosemite fire information spokesperson.

More than 500 mature sequoias were threatened but there were no reports of severe damage to any named trees, such as the 3,000-year-old Grizzly Giant.

The cause of the fire was under investigation and the rest of the park remained open as nearly 300 firefighters tried to control the flames with the help of two water-dropping helicopters and an air tanker dumping flame retardant, Phillippe said.

The giant sequoias, native in only about 70

groves spread along the western slope of California's Sierra Nevada range, were once considered impervious to flames but have become increasingly vulnerable as wildfires fueled by a buildup of undergrowth from a century of fire suppression and drought exacerbated by climate change have become more intense and destructive.

Lightning-sparked wildfires over the past two years have killed up to a fifth of the estimated 75,000 large sequoias, which are the biggest trees by volume.



# Abe's death raises security concerns

*Associated Press*

TOKYO — A top police official on Saturday acknowledged possible security lapses that allowed an assassin to fire his gun into former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe while he was addressing a campaign rally, raising questions how could the attacker get so close behind him.

Abe was shot in the western city of Nara on Friday and airlifted to a hospital but died of blood loss. Police arrested the attacker, a former member of Japan's navy, at the scene. Police confiscated his homemade gun and sever-

al others were later found at his apartment.

Nara prefectural police chief Tomoaki Onizuka said Abe's assassination was his "greatest regret" in a 27-year career.

"I cannot deny there were problems with our security," Onizuka said. "Whether it was a setup, emergency response, or ability of individuals, we still have to find out. Overall, there was a problem and we will review it from every perspective."

Abe's assassination ahead of Sunday's parliamentary election shocked the nation and raised

questions over whether security for the former prime minister was adequate.

Some observers who watched videos of the attack noted a lack of attention in the open space behind Abe as he spoke.

A former Kyoto prefectural police investigator, Fumikazu Higuchi, said the footage suggested security was sparse at the event and insufficient for a former prime minister.

"It is necessary to investigate why security allowed Yamagami to freely move and go behind Mr. Abe," Higuchi told a Nippon TV

talk show.

Experts also said Abe was more vulnerable standing on the ground level, instead of atop a campaign vehicle, which is usually the case but was reportedly unavailable due to his hastily arranged visit to Nara.

"Looks like police were mainly focusing on frontward, while paying little attention to what's behind Mr. Abe, and nobody stopped the suspect approaching him," said Mitsuru Fukuda, a crisis management professor at Nihon University. "Clearly there were problems."

## Protesters set Sri Lankan PM's home on fire

*Associated Press*

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — Protesters broke into the Sri Lankan prime minister's private residence and set it on fire, hours after he said he would resign when a new government is formed, in the biggest day of angry demonstrations on Saturday that also saw crowds storming the president's home and office.

The office of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said the protesters forced their way into his Colombo home on Saturday evening. It wasn't immediately clear if he was inside at the time of the attack.

Wickremesinghe said earlier that he will resign only when all parties have agreed on a new government. He was responding to a call by leaders of political parties represented in

Parliament that he and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa quit, after tens of thousands of people trooped to the capital to vent their fury at the leaders they hold responsible for the nation's worst economic and political crisis.

"Today in this country we have a fuel crisis, a food shortage, we have the head of the World Food Program coming here and we have several matters to discuss with the IMF. Therefore, if this government leaves there should be another government," Wickremesinghe said in a voice statement.

But he made it clear he will not step down before a new government is formed, angering crowds that moved near his home to force him to leave office immediately.

Wickremesinghe said he suggested to the

president to have an all-party government, but didn't say anything about Rajapaksa's whereabouts. Opposition parties in Parliament were discussing the formation of a new government.

Rajapaksa appointed Wickremesinghe as prime minister in May in the hope that the career politician would use his diplomacy and contacts to resuscitate a collapsed economy. But people's patience wore thin as shortages of fuel, medicine and cooking gas only increased and oil reserves ran dry.

Many protesters accuse Wickremesinghe of trying to save Rajapaksa when he came under pressure to resign and every other member of his powerful political dynasty quit the Cabinet.

## Senator: GAO report on safety of tear gas inadequate

*Associated Press*

SALEM, Ore. — In 2020, Black Lives Matter protesters were doused with tear gas, making them gasp for breath, their eyes feeling as if they were on fire. Bystanders, including children and pregnant women, were also exposed.

As police responded to mass protests across the nation two years ago with tear gas and other chemical munitions, more than a dozen U.S. senators asked the congressional watchdog to find out whether federal agencies have assessed how safe they are.

But the report by the Government Ac-

countability Office skipped that question, dedicating only three paragraphs to the effects of "chemical irritants" and flashbangs. Both of the U.S. senators from Oregon — where the Trump administration deployed militarized federal agents — believe the report leaves too many questions unanswered and are calling for regulation of the tear gas industry.

The GAO report noted there were incidents in which less-lethal force may have been used by federal agents in violation of policy, but provided no details.

"This report is completely inadequate," U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Oregon, one of

the report requesters, said through spokeswoman Molly Prescott. "Congress and the American people deserve to know the details to better understand the significant issues and damage done by inappropriate use of less-lethal force."

Portland, Ore. largest city, was an epicenter of the protests, with months of nightly, often violent demonstrations and vandalism following the murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis. Portland police used tear gas and pepper balls against protesters, and the Trump administration sent militarized federal agents to the city, starting in July 2020.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Teen saves police officer, 3 others

**MS** MOSS POINT — City officials are commending a Mississippi teen for saving a police officer and three teenage girls from drowning in the Pascagoula River.

Corion Evans, 16, jumped into the river after he saw a car drive off the I-10 boat launch. The driver of the vehicle said she was following her GPS and did not realize she was headed for the water's edge, according to a Moss Point Police Department news release.

Evans and one of his friends jumped in and helped get the teenagers inside the vehicle onto the roof, WLOX-TV reported.

Moss Point police officer Gary Mercer was called to the scene and said Evans was already in the water when he arrived. Mercer said he jumped into the river and began assisting one of the teenagers before she panicked and caused him to go underwater. Evans then helped Mercer and the teenager reach the shore.

The Moss Point mayor and board of aldermen presented Evans with a certificate of commendation for his actions.

## Sentence raised after faking cancer

**CA** SAN DIEGO — One note submitted to the federal judge sentencing a California woman, 38, for embezzlement claimed that a biopsy had revealed "cancerous cells" in her uterus. Another indicated that she was undergoing a surgical procedure, and her cancer had spread to the cervix. Yet another letter warned she "cannot

be exposed to COVID-19" because of her fragile state.

But federal officials say the notes and cancer were all fake, and now Ashleigh Lynn Chavez is headed to prison for three times as long. The court has added an additional two years to her initial, one-year prison sentence.

The fake claim of having cancer kept Chavez out on bond from the time of her guilty plea in 2019, for embezzling more than \$160,000 from her former employer, through her sentencing hearing on March 31, 2021. The notes then bought her an additional three months of freedom by the judge who believed she was getting medical treatment, according to the U.S. Attorney's office for the Southern District of California.

All told, Chavez was able to avoid being locked up for six months, federal officials said.

## Kidnapped woman found in closet

**AL** ANNISTON — Police in Alabama were searching for a 47-year-old man after a missing 75-year-old woman was found in a house associated with him, in a closet and bound with tape.

There's a \$2,500 reward for information leading to the arrest of Tony Lamar White, of Anniston, the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office said on its Facebook page.

The woman was found about six hours after her family reported her missing, Sheriff Matthew Wade said.

Her car and some groceries were in her driveway, and her phone and keys were in the house.

Wade said surveillance video identified White as a suspect.

## Squeegee worker kills baseball bat assailant

**MD** BALTIMORE — A man was shot and killed after swinging a baseball bat during a confrontation with people who were cleaning windshields for cash at a downtown Baltimore intersection, according to police.

Timothy Reynolds, 48, of Baltimore was driving through an intersection near the city's Inner Harbor when he encountered so-called squeegee workers and had a heated interaction, Commissioner Michael Harrison told reporters.

"He swung the bat at one or more of those squeegee workers. In return, one of the squeegee workers pulled out a gun and fired, striking this male victim," the commissioner said.

The workers then ran from the scene.

Reynolds was pronounced dead at a hospital.

## Missing man fell into plastic shredder

**SC** SPARTANBURG — Dried blood found at a recycling plant is that of a 20-year-old who was reported missing there two months ago, a South Carolina coroner said.

Duncan Alexander Burrell Gordon, of Greer, was reported missing in early May from the recycling plant where his father is a supervisor.

Spartanburg County Coroner Rusty Clevenger said Gordon apparently fell into the plastic shredder where he was working May 5, the last time he was seen,

news agencies reported.

Clevenger said in a news release that the machine at Industrial Recycling and Recovery Inc. was inspected four times, the first by Gordon's father. The material was found during the third search, he wrote. He said the sample's DNA fit with that of Gordon's parents, WSB-TV reported.

Clevenger said sheriff's deputies were told that about 30 tons of plastic "had been processed between the time Gordon was noticed missing and when the first investigator arrived to inspect the machine."

## Officials capture more than 1K African snails

**FL** ST. PETERSBURG — Agriculture officials say they've captured more than 1,000 giant African land snails from Pasco County since the invasive pest — "one of the most damaging snails in the world" — was first detected around New Port Richey in late June.

The snails can grow to 8 inches long and consume hundreds of kinds of plants. They also pose a health threat to anyone who comes into contact with them.

They've been found on 29 properties, officials said. About 900 have been collected alive, while nearly 150 were dead. Agriculture officials said the main place they've found the snails so far is around Massachusetts Avenue in New Port Richey.

Crews are putting down snail bait at properties near the sighting — basically a pesticide for catching and killing snails.

— From Associated Press

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# Rybakina wins Wimbledon women's title

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Too nervous to wave, Elena Rybakina stepped into the Centre Court sunshine before the Wimbledon final Saturday and kept a firm double-grip on the black-and-red straps of the racket bag slung over her shoulders.

No wave. Not much of a look around. Her play early on betrayed some jitters, too, which makes sense considering it was her debut in a Grand Slam title match.

Nearly two hours of big swinging and plenty of sprinting later, she had won the championship at the All England Club with a 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Ons Jabeur — the first singles trophy at a major tournament for her adopted country of Kazakhstan.

Even then, Rybakina's reaction was muted as can be, a little sigh, a hint of a smile.

"Happy that it finished, to be honest," the 23-year-old said, "because really, I never felt something like this."

She was born in Moscow and

has represented Kazakhstan since 2018, when that country offered her funding to support her tennis career. The switch has been a topic of conversation during Wimbledon, because it barred all players who represent Russia or Belarus from entering the tournament due to the war in Ukraine.

Since the WTA computer rankings began in 1975, just one woman ranked lower than the No. 23 Rybakina has won Wimbledon — Venus Williams in 2007 at No. 31, although she had been No. 1 and already won three of her five career Wimbledon trophies.

Rybakina used her big serve and powerful forehand to overcome the No. 2-ranked Jabeur's varied style, with its mix of spins and slices, to put a halt to the 27-year-old Tunisian's 12-match winning streak, which came entirely on grass courts.

"You have an amazing game, and I don't think we have someone like this on tour," Rybakina told Jabeur during the post-match trophy ceremony, then

added this one-liner: "I ran today so much, so I don't think I need to do fitness more, honestly."

Jabeur also was participating in her first Grand Slam final.

"She deserved this. Hopefully next time will be mine," said Jabeur, whose exuberance on the court and personality off it have earned her the sobriquet "Minister of Happiness."

"Elena stole my title," Jabeur joked, "but it's OK."

By the match's third game, Jabeur was reading Rybakina's serves and creating fewer inviting opportunities for baseline power. One squash-style forehand drew a forehand into the net to earn a break point, which Jabeur converted to lead 2-1 by putting a 120 mph serve into play then watching Rybakina sail a backhand long.

Jabeur turned toward her guest box, jumped and yelled.

Rybakina's miscues mounted. A volley into the net tape with the full court wide open. A netted forehand after Jabeur barely got a short return in. When another forehand went

awry, Jabeur broke at love to take the opening set, yelled "Yalla!" — Arabic for "Let's go!" — and threw an uppercut as she walked to the sideline.

Jabeur was trying to become the first Arab or African woman to win a Slam singles title in the professional era, which dates to 1968.

"I love this tournament so much. I feel really sad. But it's tennis. There is only one winner," Jabeur said. "I'm really happy that I'm trying to inspire many generations from my country. I hope they're listening."

Rybakina, who beat Serena Williams at last year's French Open, finally earned her first break chance to begin the second set and went up 1-0 when Jabeur missed a forehand. After saving four break points over her next two service games, Rybakina broke again and soon led 5-1.

Jabeur leads the women's tour with 13 victories in three-setters this season, but Rybakina came out far stronger in the decider.

## Djokovic vs. Kyrgios in men's final: 21st Slam or first?

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Novak Djokovic and Nick Kyrgios used to not get along at all.

Now the two men who will meet in the Wimbledon final on Sunday have developed a bit of a "bromance," as the 40th-ranked Kyrgios put it.

"Everyone knows there was no love lost for a while there," said the 27-year-old from Australia, whose first Grand Slam title match will be Djokovic's 32nd. "It was healthy for the sport. I think every time we played each other, there was hype around it. It was interesting for the media, the people watching, all that."

Kyrgios, not one for holding his tongue, was particularly critical of Djokovic for organizing a char-

ity exhibition tour in 2020 amid the coronavirus pandemic. Fast forward to January of this year, and Kyrgios was an early voice supporting Djokovic when his decision to not get vaccinated against COVID-19 led to a legal saga and deportation from Melbourne ahead of the Australian Open.

So where do things stand now-days?

"We definitely have a better relationship than what it was," is the way the top-seeded Djokovic described things.

Kyrgios sounded a tad more excited.

"We actually message each other on DMs in Instagram now and stuff. It's real weird," Kyrgios said. "Actually, earlier in the

week, he was like, 'Hopefully, I'll see you Sunday.'"

Well, they certainly will see each other at Centre Court on Sunday afternoon, with quite a bit to play for.

For the No. 1-seeded Djokovic, a 35-year-old from Serbia, it's a chance to win a fourth consecutive trophy at the All England Club and seventh overall (Roger Federer's eight singles championships at the grass-court major are a record for a man).

It's also a chance for Djokovic to claim a 21st Grand Slam title, which would move him one ahead of Federer and just one behind Rafael Nadal, who withdrew before his semifinal against Kyrgios because of a torn abdominal muscle.

And there's this to factor in, too: Djokovic can't know for sure the next time he will get to participate in one of the four major tournaments, the events that matter the most to him these days. As things currently stand, he is not allowed into the United States as an unvaccinated foreigner, which means he couldn't go to New York for the U.S. Open in August.

His status for returning to Australia in 2023 is up in the air, too, after his visa was revoked this year.

"Every match, every Grand Slam that I get to play at this stage of my career, there is a lot on the line. I don't know how many Grand Slam opportunities to win the trophy I will still have," Djokovic said.



# Busch still awaiting a new contract

*Associated Press*

Kyle Busch doesn't know what he will be driving next year as he hits the halfway point of the NASCAR season.

It doesn't necessarily mean that Busch won't be driving for Joe Gibbs Racing. But he heads to Atlanta Motor Speedway for Sunday's race in a contract year and waiting to see if JGR can find the sponsorship money to keep the two-time Cup Series champion.

M&M Mars has sponsored Busch since he joined the Gibbs organization in 2008, but the company is pulling its NASCAR marketing spend at the end of this season. Busch earned his first win as a Gibbs driver four races into his debut season, at Atlanta, with Mars brand Snickers on the No. 18 Toyota.

Dave Alpern, president of Joe Gibbs Racing, said he intends to have Busch back next year. It's just a question of what company will be on his car.

"We're still working on sponsorship, and as much interest as there is in our sport, these take a long time," he said. "This one's taking a little longer than we thought. It's not for lack of interest. It's just trying to get everything put together."

Busch is the only active Cup driver with multiple championships and Alpern implied the delay in locking down a new con-

tract is finding the right sponsor. Busch is a favorite of young children because of the bright, candy-themed paint schemes on his car.

"What we do is get sponsors. I mean, we've been doing that for 30 years. We're in the business," Alpern said. "I think it's not a matter of just slapping something on the car. It's finding a partnership that makes sense. And so we're just trying to find the right fit."

The JGR camp also must make plans for Xfinity Series star Ty Gibbs, the grandson of team owner Joe Gibbs. Ty Gibbs has four wins this season and is coming off last Saturday's win at Road America, where he won with a late pass of current Cup champion Kyle Larson.

"Obviously, Ty's done really, really, really good," Alpern said. "This last weekend... was exciting to see him race against a Cup champion. There's a lot of interest in Ty for a number of reasons. He's a great driver. He's a great kid."

"We don't want to push him too fast," he added. "There are no specific plans beyond this year in reference to a Cup race or whatever."

## Tough season

Busch goes back to Atlanta with only one

win through the first 18 races and the reconfigured track was tough on him when NASCAR visited in March. Busch was involved in a crash and finished 33rd in an event that raced more like a Daytona or Talladega than a traditional 1.5-mile oval.

Atlanta last winter underwent a repave and increased banking in the turns from 24 to 28 degrees. The track width also now varies from 55 feet to 40 feet.

"It was just as crazy as I expected. It literally got a facelift with a whole new track surface and layout and everything," Busch said. "Back in the spring, it was more like what we expected it to be, like a Daytona or Talladega speedway race. We saw a lot of pack racing with some guys two-wide and maybe three-wide, and saw how wide the track got in the time we had on it."

## Odds and ends

William Byron won at Atlanta in March. ... Chase Elliott, Ryan Blaney and Ross Chastain are co-favorites, per FanDuel Sportsbook. ... There have been 13 different winners this season, with Tyler Reddick last Sunday at Road America becoming the fifth first-time Cup winner. The 2003 season had 14 different winners, the modern era record. There were also five first-time winners in 2001, 2002, 2011 and 2022.

# Goalie carousel keeps going on Day 2 of NHL draft

*Associated Press*

MONTREAL — When Brian MacLellan declared his intention to change up the Washington Capitals' goaltending situation, the seasoned general manager knew he was joining a crowded market given how many teams already had the same need.

It didn't matter. He made a move anyway to trade a goalie and create a void in the net.

"I jumped in," MacLellan said. "I jumped into the fire. Probably not the smartest thing, right?"

Certainly not the cheapest thing. The goalie carousel kept spinning on the second day of the NHL Draft, with MacLellan trading Vitek Vanecek to the New Jersey Devils and the De-

troit Red Wings acquiring and signing Ville Husso from the St. Louis Blues.

Those moves were half of four completed Friday involving NHL players. The Philadelphia Flyers also got polarizing defenseman Anthony DeAngelo from the Carolina Hurricanes for three high draft picks and the San Jose Sharks sent a pick and a prospect to the Nashville Predators for forward Luke Kunin. But the wheels in motion for goalenders dominated the conversation and will continue to with free agency opening Wednesday.

"If you line it up and you look and kind of pay attention to what teams are thinking, it's a little chaotic and scambly,"

MacLellan said. "You've got to be constantly monitoring it and seeing what's happening."

Things started happening Friday morning even before the start of the second round, with St. Louis trading Husso's rights for the 73rd pick and Washington sending Vanecek and No. 46 to New Jersey for picks 37 and 70.

The domino effect started Thursday when the Stanley Cup-winning Colorado Avalanche got Alexandar Georgiev from the New York Rangers. That move ensured playoff starter Darcy Kuemper would hit the open market.

There's no shortage of teams interested in Kuemper and other goaltenders available by trade or in free agency.

Husso was set to be one of those options before Detroit sent the 73rd pick to St. Louis for the 27-year-old Finn. He got a \$14.25 million deal with a \$4.75 million annual cap hit over the next three seasons.

The Red Wings will now pair Husso with Alex Nedeljkovic, whom they acquired last off-season, as they move from rebuilding into contending.

New Jersey is still a couple of years away from that, but the Devils needed a goalie and got one in Vanecek along with the 46th pick after sending Nos. 37 and 70 to Washington. The Capitals are in the market for a veteran netminder to play in tandem with Ilya Samsonov, unless they also move on from him.

# All-Star starters have an LA trend

Associated Press

Mike Trout and Shohei Ohtani of the Los Angeles Angels were elected Friday to start in the July 19 All-Star Game along with Mookie Betts and Trea Turner of the host Dodgers.

Toronto catcher Alejandro Kirk and Miami second baseman Jazz Chisholm Jr. were voted to start as first-time All-Stars, finishing atop their positions in the second round of fan voting.

Aaron Judge of the New York Yankees and Ronald Acuña Jr. of the World Series champion Atlanta Braves were elected from the first round of balloting as the top vote-getters in their leagues.

The AL starting lineup includes Blue Jays first baseman Vladimir Guerrero Jr., Houston second baseman Jose Altuve, Chicago White Sox shortstop Tim Anderson, Boston third baseman Rafael Devers and Kirk be-

hind the plate. Giancarlo Stanton of the Yankees joined Judge and Trout in the outfield, while Ohtani was voted in as designated hitter.

Ohtani became the first two-way All-Star last year when he was voted the AL DH, then was picked for the pitching staff and started on the mound. Judge and Stanton will become the first Yankees teammates to start in the outfield together since Dave Winfield and Rickey Henderson in 1988.

NL starters include Chicago Cubs catcher Willson Contreras, St. Louis first baseman Paul Goldschmidt, Chisholm at second, Turner at shortstop, San Diego third baseman Manny Machado and an outfield of Betts, Acuña and San Francisco's Joc Pederson.

Philadelphia's Bryce Harper was elected as the National League's first DH but will be replaced in the starting lineup after breaking

his left thumb when hit by a pitch from San Diego's Blake Snell on June 25.

Trout was picked for the 10th time, his ninth as a starter. Altuve and Goldschmidt earned their eighth All-Star trips and Stanton was picked for the fifth time but the first since Miami traded him to the Yankees ahead of the 2018 season.

In addition to Chisholm and Kirk, Anderson, Peterson and Turner were elected for their first All-Star starts.

Stanton beat Toronto's George Springer 22% to 20% for the final AL outfield spot after finishing fourth, just behind Springer, in the opening round. Ohtani defeated Houston's Yordan Alvarez 52% to 48% at DH.

Machado edged the Cardinals' Nolan Arenado 51% to 49% at NL third base, and Turner beat out Atlanta's Dansby Swanson 52% to 48%.

## Donaldson homers as Yankees defeat Red Sox again

Associated Press

BOSTON — Josh Donaldson hit a three-run homer during New York's four-run first inning, Matt Carpenter homered among three hits in his first start in left field in a decade, and the Yankees beat Boston 12-5 Friday night for their 10th win in their last 11 games against the Red Sox.

Joey Gallo hit a two-run triple on a fly that Boston right fielder Christian Arroyo lost in the twilight. Gallo was thrown out at the plate trying for an inside-the-park home run.

New York opened a 15½-game lead over second-place Tampa Bay in the AL East, the earliest in games and by calendar date the Yankees have taken a 15-game lead. The Red Sox are 16 games back.

Boston right-hander Connor Seabold (0-2) gave up seven runs and nine hits in 2⅓ innings, raising his ERA to 11.91. He left with what the Red Sox said was right forearm extensor tightness.

**Braves 12, Nationals 2:** Ronald Acuña Jr., Matt Olson and William Contreras homered

against Erick Fedde, leading host Atlanta to the victory.

Rookie Michael Harris II went 4-for-4 as the Braves improved to an NL-best 27-8 since June 1. Second-place Atlanta also moved within 2½ games of the NL East-leading New York Mets.

**Padres 6, Giants 3:** Manny Machado hit a three-run homer for host San Diego hours after he was named the NL starter at third base for the All-Star Game.

Machado was voted to start the All-Star Game in a tight race against St. Louis' Nolan Arenado. He lifted the Padres to a 3-0 lead before they made an out, connecting against Sam Long (0-2) in the first inning.

**Astros 8, Athletics 3:** Houston's José Urquidy allowed four hits over a career-high eight innings to win at Oakland for his third straight decision.

Alex Bregman hit a two-run homer and Martín Maldonado connected for a three-run drive on a night when every Astros starter had at least one hit. Houston outhit the Athlet-

ics 14-4 and won for the 10th time in 11 games.

**Reds 2, Rays 1 (10):** Mark Kolozsvary scored on a game-ending balk by Matt Wisler in the 10th inning, sending host Cincinnati to the victory.

Kolozsvary opened the 10th on second as a pinch-runner for Mike Moustakas. He advanced on Nick Senzel's sacrifice bunt against Wisler (2-3).

**Phillies 2, Cardinals 0:** Alec Bohm homered twice against Adam Wainwright, powering Zack Wheeler and Philadelphia to the win at St. Louis.

**Rockies 6, Diamondbacks 5:** Kris Bryant hit two solo homers, powering Colorado to the victory at Arizona.

**Mariners 5, Blue Jays 2 (11):** Eugenio Suárez hit a three-run homer off Sergio Romo in the 11th inning, and host Seattle won its season-best sixth straight victory.

**Dodgers 4, Cubs 3 (10):** Mookie Betts hit a tying sacrifice fly in the ninth inning, just missing a grand slam, and Will Smith hit a winning single in the 10th for host Los Angeles.

**Orioles 5, Angels 4:** Trey

Mancini hit a game-winning single in host Baltimore's three-run ninth inning, and it extended its season-high win streak to six games.

Los Angeles stars Mike Trout and Shohei Ohtani both homered on the night they earned All-Star selections.

**Marlins 5, Mets 2:** Miami's Garrett Cooper hit a two-run homer off the right-field foul pole in a win at New York, his team's seventh win in nine games.

**Royals 4, Guardians 3:** Michael A. Taylor hit a game-ending RBI single, lifting host Kansas City to the win.

**Tigers 7, White Sox 5:** Jeimer Candelario homered and drove in three runs, and Detroit won at Chicago for its sixth straight victory.

**Rangers 6, Twins 5:** Corey Seager hit a tiebreaking three-run homer and host Texas snapped a four-game losing streak.

**Brewers 4, Pirates 3:** Willy Adames homered for host Milwaukee and threw out Kevin Newman at the plate to end the game.