

## Russia targets Ukrainian farm storage

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Russian cruise missiles, flying low and hugging the terrain to dodge Ukrainian air defenses, destroyed farm storage buildings in the Odesa region early Friday, Ukrainian officials said, as the Kremlin's forces expanded their targets following three days of bombardment of the region's Black Sea port infrastructure.

Hours later, seven Russian missiles also damaged what officials described as an "important infrastructure facility" southwest of the port city of Odesa, in what appeared to be part of an ongoing Kremlin effort to cripple Ukraine's Black Sea food exports. Officials did not immediately provide details

of that attack.

During the night, two missiles struck the agricultural storage facility, starting a fire, and while workers fought to put it out another missile hit, destroying farm and firefighting equipment, the southern Odesa region's Gov. Oleh Kiper said.

The attack injured two people and destroyed 100 metric tons of peas and 20 metric tons of barley, according to Kiper.

The attack was small-scale in comparison with barrages in recent days that put Odesa in Russia's crosshairs after Moscow tore up a wartime deal that allowed Ukraine to send grain through the key Black Sea port.

Russia targeted Ukrainian critical grain export infrastructure after vowing to retaliate for

an attack that damaged a crucial bridge between Russia and the Moscow-annexed Crimean Peninsula.

Though Friday's strike was more muted, the recent uptick in attacks has kept people in Odesa on edge.

"The enemy is continuing terror, and it's undoubtedly related to the grain deal," said Natalia Humeniuk, a spokeswoman for the Ukrainian military's Operational Command South.

Both Russia and Ukraine have announced that they will treat ships traveling to each other's Black Sea ports as potential military targets.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said the recent barrages

in southern Ukraine are part of an overarching strategy.

"The Russian military's intensifying strikes against Ukrainian port and grain infrastructure and threats of maritime escalation are likely a part of a Kremlin effort to leverage Russia's exit from the Black Sea Grain Initiative and exact extensive concessions from the West," it said in an assessment late Thursday.

The Russian Defense Ministry, meanwhile, said the navy conducted drills that simulated action to seal off a section of the Black Sea.

In the maneuvers, a missile boat fired anti-ship cruise missiles at a mock target in the northwestern part of the Black Sea.

## What North Korea may have in mind for Travis King

*Associated Press*

SEOUL, South Korea — What will North Korea do about the first U.S. soldier in decades to flee into its territory?

Its official media have yet to mention Pvt. Travis King, there's little precedent for his situation and guesses about the country's next steps vary widely.

Unauthorized crossings across the Koreas' heavily fortified border are extremely rare. The few Americans who crossed into North Korea in the past include soldiers, missionaries, human rights advocates or those simply curious about one of the world's most cloistered societies. North Korea has used a varied playbook in its handlings of them.

Defecting soldiers, like Charles Jenkins or James Dres-

nok in the 1960s, were treated as propaganda assets, showcased in leaflets and films spewing anti-U.S. hatred and praising the North's regime.

Other Americans were detained, criticized and handed harsh penalties based on confessions of anti-state activities they later said were coerced. Behind-the-scenes pleas and lengthy backdoor negotiations followed, and the detainee was freed, often flown home with a high-profile U.S. official who traveled to Pyongyang to secure the release.

None of the previous cases, however, seems relevant as a forecast for King.

The length of his stay will likely depend on whether North Koreans find a way to spin his story for their own propaganda, said Jenny Town, a senior fel-

low at the Stimson Center in Washington and director of the North Korea-focused 38 North website.

It's unclear whether the North Korea of today would treat King similarly to how it did Jenkins and Dresnok. And King might be less ideal as propaganda material. Jenkins walked into North Korea in 1965 to avoid combat duty in Vietnam, making it easier for Pyongyang to paint him as a disillusioned U.S. soldier who escaped evil imperialists and chose to live in North Korea's "socialist paradise." There's a big difference with King, who had legal problems and faced disciplinary action and a possible discharge before he bolted into North Korea.

"If they decide that he's not a good story, they may just return

him so that this doesn't exacerbate already fragile relations (with the United States)," Town said. "This is largely a wait-and-see as there's just so little precedent for it."

But Yang Moo-jin, president of the University of North Korean Studies in South Korea, says it's highly unlikely North Korea would pass up the propaganda value of a U.S. soldier who voluntarily entered the country.

While King's immediate value would be propaganda, Pyongyang could also seek opportunities to use him as a bargaining chip to wrest concessions from Washington, he said.

It's possible North Korea may demand the United States scale back its military activities with South Korea in exchange for King's release.

# Grassley releases FBI memo on Bidens

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley released an unclassified document Thursday that Republicans claim is significant in their investigation of Hunter Biden as they delve into the financial affairs of the president and his son, and revive previously debunked claims of wrongdoing.

Grassley of Iowa has been working alongside House Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer, R-Ky., as Republicans deepen their probe of President Joe Biden and his son, Hunter, ahead of the 2024 election. Comer had issued a subpoena for the document from the FBI.

While lawmakers on the Oversight Committee have already been able to partly review the

information, this is the first time the full document — which contains raw, unverified information — is being made public. Called an FD-1023 form, it involves claims a confidential informant made in 2020 about Hunter Biden's alleged business dealings when he served on the board of Ukrainian energy company Burisma. Top Republicans have acknowledged they cannot confirm whether the information is true.

"The American people can now read this document for themselves," Grassley said.

The document adds to information that had widely aired during Donald Trump's first impeachment trial, which involved Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani's efforts to dig up dirt on the Bidens ahead of the 2020 election.

It was also the subject of a subsequent Department of Justice review that Trump's Attorney General William Barr launched in 2020 and closed later that year.

Grassley's office said the FBI told the senator the document was related to an ongoing matter.

White House spokesman Ian Sams said Thursday, "It is remarkable that congressional Republicans, in their eagerness to go after President Biden regardless of the truth, continue to push claims that have been debunked for years."

"These claims have reportedly been scrutinized by the Trump Justice Department, a Trump-appointed U.S. Attorney and a full impeachment trial of the former President that centered on these very issues, and over and over again, they have been found

to lack credibility," he said. "It's clear that congressional Republicans are dead-set on playing shameless, dishonest politics and refuse to let truth get in the way."

In the four-page document, the confidential informant claims to have been involved in various meetings some years earlier, in 2015 or 2016, with officials from the Burisma energy company looking to do business in the United States. The informant claims being told by Burisma officials about their relationship and dealings with Hunter Biden.

One company official said they kept Hunter Biden on the Burisma board because they believed through "his dad" it could protect them from all kinds of problems, the informant claimed.

## Senate panel OKs ethics bill for Supreme Court

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court would have to abide by stronger ethics standards under legislation approved on Thursday by the Senate Judiciary Committee, a response to recent revelations about donor-funded trips by justices. The bill faced united opposition from Republicans, who said it could "destroy" the court.

The panel voted along party lines to set ethics rules for the court and a process to enforce them, including new standards for transparency around recusals, gifts and potential conflicts of interest. Democrats first pushed the legislation after reports earlier this year that Justice Clarence Thomas participated in luxury vacations and a real estate deal with a top GOP

donor — and after Chief Justice John Roberts declined to testify before the committee about the ethics of the court.

Since then, news reports also revealed that Justice Samuel Alito had taken a luxury vacation with a GOP donor. And The Associated Press reported last week that Justice Sonia Sotomayor, aided by her staff, has advanced sales of her books through college visits over the past decade.

The ethics legislation has little chance of passing the Senate — it would need at least nine GOP votes, and Republicans have strongly opposed it — or the Republican-controlled House of Representatives. But Democrats say the spate of revelations means that enforceable standards on the court are necessary.

## Biden pushes green jobs, courts organized labor

*Associated Press*

PHILADELPHIA — Flanked by cranes and shipyard workers, President Joe Biden made the pitch Thursday that unions will be building America's renewable energy future — a courtship of organized labor at a moment when some major unions are weighing strikes that could disrupt the growth he wants to campaign on in 2024.

The president toured the Philly Shipyard, where there was a steel-cutting ceremony for the Acadia, a vessel that will help to build offshore wind farms. Biden ticked through the various union jobs being created by the project, promoting a message he has started to amplify as he seeks a second term.

"A lot of my friends in organized labor know, when I think climate, I think jobs," the presi-

dent said. "Union workers are the best in the world."

But tensions are rising between unions and companies about a rapidly evolving economy in which artificial intelligence, clean energy and e-commerce are rewriting some of the basic rules of work. Biden is trying to allay those concerns by saying unions should be a part of the way ahead. But the Democratic president also knows from past experience that a strike could harm his reelection chances.

Biden has long called on businesses to hire unionized workers, saying that the premium paid will lead to higher quality work. Companies, however, seem reluctant to meet unions' terms in separate contract talks with script writers, actors, autoworkers and UPS employees.

# Flooding in Northeast devastates farms

Associated Press

Well before it was warm enough to plant seedlings in the ground, farmer Micah Barritt began nursing crops like watermelon, eggplant and tomatoes — eventually transplanting them from his greenhouse into rich Vermont soil, hoping for a bountiful fall harvest.

Within a few hours last week, those hopes were washed away when flood waters inundated the small farm, destroying a harvest with a value he estimated at \$250,000. He still hopes to replant short-season crops like mustard greens, spinach, bok choy and kale.

“The loss of the crops is a very tangible way to measure the flood, but the loss of the work is hard to measure,” said Barritt, a co-owner of Diggers’ Mirth Collective Farm in Burlington, Vt. “We’re all grieving and heartbroken because of this.”

That heartbreak was felt by farmers in several Northeast states after floods dealt a devastating blow at the worst possible time, when many plants were too early to harvest, but are now too late to replant in the region’s

abbreviated growing season.

Storms dumped up to two months’ worth of rain in a couple of days in parts of the region, surpassing the amount that fell when Tropical Storm Irene blew through in 2011, causing major flooding. Officials have called last week’s flooding Vermont’s worst natural disaster since floods in 1927.

Atmospheric scientists say floods occurring around the world are fueled by climate change, with storms forming in a warmer atmosphere, making extreme rainfall more frequent. The additional warming scientists predict is coming will only make it worse.

Diggers’ Mirth is one of seven commercial organic farms located at the Intervale Center, according to Melanie Guild, development director of the center, which manages 350 acres in the heart of Burlington.

Operators of the center, located near the Winooski River, have long been aware of the threat of flooding. As the forecast called for heavy rains, the center reached out to hundreds of volunteers to harvest as much

as possible.

“This is smack dab in the middle of the growing season so anything that was ready to harvest was pulled. Whatever was left was lost,” Guild said. “There were cabbages just floating around in the flood.”

All seven farms were washed out. Losses will likely run higher than from Irene, where losses tallied about \$750,000, she said.

The Maple Wind Farm in Richmond, Vt., which produces pasture-raised animals, was also struck. Beth Whiting, who owns the farm with her husband, said even with predicted heavy rains they assumed their turkeys would be OK because they’d never seen flooding reach the area where they kept the birds.

Then on July 10, the nearby Winooski River crested higher than they’d ever imagined, Whiting said. Workers in a canoe were able to rescue about 120 of 500 turkeys. Workers also saved about 1,600 chickens, but lost 700 at a second farm.

The flooding forced many farmers into tough choices, according to Vermont Secretary of

Agriculture Anson Tebbetts. Dairy farmers who found roads to processing plants impassable were forced to dump milk.

Another problem is the loss of corn, a key source of food for the dairy industry. Thousands of acres were completely or partially underwater or flattened and unusable, he said. Flower farms were also destroyed.

As of the end of last week, Vermont farmers had reported 7,000 acres in crop damage, Tebbetts said, adding many farms must clear debris washed onto their fields when rivers overflowed.

In Massachusetts, at least 75 farms have been hurt by flooding, with about 2,000 acres in crop losses at a minimum value of \$15 million, according to the state Department of Agricultural Resources. That number is expected to climb as more damage is assessed and the longer-term impacts set in.

In Connecticut, Bryan Hurlburt, the state’s agriculture commissioner, said the flooding impacted about 2,000 acres of farmland, much of it in the Connecticut River valley.

## Amid Phoenix heat, residents ration AC due to cost

Associated Press

Temperatures have peaked at or above 110 degrees the entire month of July in Phoenix. Air conditioning, which made modern Phoenix even possible, is a lifeline.

When a cloudless sky combines with outdoor temperatures over 100, your house turns into an “air fryer” or “broiler,” as the roof absorbs powerful heat and radiates it downward, said Jonathan Bean, co-director of the Institute for Energy Solutions at the University of Arizona. Bean knows this not only from his research, he also experienced it firsthand this weekend when his air conditioner broke.

“This level of heat that we are having in Phoenix right now is enormously dangerous, particularly for people who either don’t have air conditioning or cannot afford to operate their air conditioner,” said Evan Malen, a senior analyst for Georgia Institute of Technology’s Urban Climate Lab.

Yet some are cutting back on AC, trying to bear the heat, afraid of the high electricity bills that will soon arrive.

Camille Rabany, 29, has developed her own system to keep herself and her 10-month-old Saint Bernard Rigley cool during the Arizona heat wave. Through trial and error, Rabany found that 83 F is a temper-

ature she is willing to tolerate to keep her utility bill down.

Katie Martin, administrator of home improvements and community services at the Foundation for Senior Living, said she sees the pet issue, too. Older people on limited incomes are making dangerous trade-offs and often won’t come to cooling centers when they don’t allow pets.

“In recent years we are finding that most of the seniors we serve are keeping their thermostat at 80 F to save money,” she said.

Many also lack a support network of family or friends they can turn to in case of air conditioner breakdowns.

Breakdowns can be dangerous. Models from Georgia Tech show that indoors can be even hotter than outdoors, something people in poorly-insulated homes are well acquainted with. “A single family, one-story detached home with a large, flat roof heats up by over 40 degrees in a matter of hours if they don’t have air conditioning,” Malen said.

The Salvation Army has some 11 cooling stations across the Phoenix area. Lt. Colonel Ivan Wild, commander of the organization’s southwest division, said some of the people visiting now can’t afford their electricity bills or don’t have adequate air conditioning.



# House aims to ease air travel delays with more controllers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Federal Aviation Administration would get more money to hire air traffic controllers and the mandatory retirement age for airline pilots would be raised under a bill approved Thursday by the House.

The measure seeks to improve air travel, which has been plagued by delays and cancellations during its busiest times, and would reauthorize FAA programs for the next five years. It passed on a mostly bipartisan vote of 351-69.

The Senate is working on its version of the bill ahead of the Oct. 1 deadline for action. The two chambers will have to reconcile differences or else approve a short-term extension of existing FAA programs by then.

The House approval came after a string of votes on contentious issues. Lawmakers voted 243-139 to remove a provision

that would have allowed more flight simulator hours to be credited toward the 1,500-hour in-flight requirement to become an airline pilot.

Smaller airlines lobbied for the change, saying it would ease a pilot shortage that is already causing a loss of service to smaller communities. But opponents including pilot unions said the change would undermine safety.

A provision raising the mandatory retirement age for airline pilots from 65 to 67 survived despite opposition from pilot groups.

The House rejected an effort to increase the number of long-haul flights at Reagan Washington National Airport. Delta Air Lines pushed for the increase, joined by lawmakers from cities hoping to get nonstop service to the airport near downtown Washington. Flights to and from the airport are generally limited

to 1,250 miles.

Opponents said the airport is already too congested and that adding more flights would lead to more delays. United Airlines, with a major operation at farther-out Dulles Airport, lobbied against the increase in flights at National.

The Senate is behind schedule on its version of the aviation measure, which would authorize more than \$100 billion in spending.

A committee vote was blocked last month by the disagreement over pilot training.

Many provisions in the House version of the legislation will affect airline consumers, including one that would roll back a Transportation Department regulation from 2011 requiring airlines to show the total price of a ticket upfront in advertising.

Airlines could instead provide a link to the all-in price of a ticket.

# Judge sets a trial date in May for Trump case

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal judge in Florida has scheduled a trial date for next May for former President Donald Trump in a case charging him with illegally retaining hundreds of classified documents.

The May 20, 2024, trial date, set Friday by U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon, is a compromise between a request from prosecutors to set the trial for this December and a bid by defense lawyers to schedule it after the 2024 presidential election.

If the date holds, it would follow close on the heels of a separate New York trial for Trump on dozens of state charges of falsifying business records in connection with an alleged hush money payment to a porn actor. It also means the trial will not start until deep into the presidential nominating calendar and probably well after the Republican nominee is clear — though before that person is officially nominated at the Republican National Convention.

In pushing back the trial from the Dec. 11 start date that the Justice Department had asked for, Cannon wrote that “the Government’s proposed schedule is atypically accelerated and inconsistent with ensuring a fair trial.” She agreed with defense lawyers that the amount of evidence that would need to be sifted through before the trial, including classified information, was “voluminous.”

“The Court finds that the interests of justice served by this continuance outweigh the best interest of the public and Defendants in a speedy trial,” Cannon wrote.

Trump could yet face additional trials in the coming year.

# Musical stylist Tony Bennett dies at 96

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Tony Bennett, the eminent and timeless stylist whose devotion to classic American songs and knack for creating new standards such as “I Left My Heart in San Francisco” graced a decadeslong career that brought him admirers from Frank Sinatra to Lady Gaga, died Friday. He was 96, just two weeks short of his birthday.

His publicist said he died in his hometown of New York. There was no specific cause, but Bennett had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease in 2016.

The last of the great saloon singers of the mid-20th century, Bennett often said his lifelong ambition was to create “a hit catalog rather than hit records.” He

released more than 70 albums, bringing him 19 competitive Grammys — all but two after he reached his 60s — and enjoyed deep and lasting affection from fans and fellow artists.

Bennett was praised often by his peers, but never more meaningfully than by what Sinatra said in a 1965 Life magazine interview: “For my money, Tony Bennett is the best singer in the business. He excites me when I watch him. He moves me. He’s the singer who gets across what the composer has in mind, and probably a little more.”

He not only survived the rise of rock music but endured so long and so well that he gained new fans and collaborators, some young enough to be his grandchildren. In 2014, at age

88, Bennett broke his own record as the oldest living performer with a No. 1 album on the Billboard 200 chart for “Cheek to Cheek,” his duets project with Lady Gaga. Three years earlier, he topped the charts with “Duets II,” featuring such contemporary stars as Gaga, Carrie Underwood and Amy Winehouse, in her last studio recording. His rapport with Winehouse was captured in the Oscar-nominated documentary “Amy,” which showed Bennett patiently encouraging the insecure young singer through a performance of “Body and Soul.”

His final album, the 2021 release “Love for Sale,” featured duets with Lady Gaga on the title track, “Night and Day” and other Porter songs.

# Muslim nations outraged by Quran incident

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Muslim-majority nations expressed outrage Friday at the desecration of a copy of the Quran in Sweden. Some prepared for street demonstrations following midday prayers to show their anger.

In Iran, Iraq and Lebanon, protesters planned demonstrations after Swedish police permitted a protest Thursday in which an Iraqi of Christian origin — now a self-described atheist — living in Stockholm kicked and stood on a Quran, Islam's holy book, outside of the Iraqi Embassy. Hours before that, demonstrators in Baghdad broke into the Swedish Embas-

sy and lit a fire to show their anger at his threats.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani has ordered the expulsion of the Swedish ambassador from Iraq and the withdrawal of the Iraqi charge d'affaires from Sweden. But that may not be enough to calm those angered, and another protest in Baghdad is planned for Friday afternoon.

The right to hold public demonstrations is protected by the constitution in Sweden. Blasphemy laws were abandoned in the 1970s. Police generally give permission based on whether they believe a public gathering can be held without major dis-

ruptions or safety risks. For Muslims, burning or other abuse of the Quran represents a desecration of their religion's holy text.

While he showed no signs of backing off from his decision to cut diplomatic relations with Sweden, Sudani in a statement on Friday called on Iraqi protesters to "identify and deal with any disruptive individuals attempting to deviate the protests from their peaceful and constitutionally protected nature" and on security forces "to safeguard both public and private property."

On Thursday, the state-run Iraqi News Agency reported

about 20 people had been arrested in connection with the storming of Sweden's embassy.

Among those arrested were an Associated Press photographer and two Reuters staff who were covering the protests. The journalists were released hours later without charges, following an order from the prime minister's office.

In neighboring Iran, demonstrators also planned to take to the streets. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian has written a letter to the United Nations secretary-general over the Quran desecration and has summoned the Swedish ambassador.

## Police seized laptops, memoir in Tupac probe

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — A home that Las Vegas police raided this week in connection with the 1996 drive-by shooting of Tupac Shakur is tied to one of the only surviving witnesses to the crime, a man long known to investigators whose nephew was seen as a suspect shortly after the rapper's killing.

Detectives sought items "concerning the murder of Tupac Shakur" from Duane "Keffe D" Davis, according to warrant documents obtained Thursday by The Associated Press.

Davis, now 60, is a self-described "gangster" and the uncle of Orlando "Baby Lane" Anderson, one of Shakur's known rivals. Anderson denied involvement in Shakur's killing, and died two years later in a shoot-

ing in Compton, Calif.

Police reported collecting multiple computers, a cell-phone and hard drive, documents, a Vibe magazine that featured Shakur, "purported marijuana," several .40-caliber bullets, two "tubs containing photographs" and a copy of Davis' 2019 tell-all memoir, "Compton Street Legend."

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department confirmed it served a search warrant Monday in the neighboring city of Henderson. The department hasn't said whether investigators expect to make a first-ever arrest in the slaying of the rapper nearly 27 years ago.

Residents of the neighborhood said they saw officers detain two people outside the home Monday night.

## Hollywood strikes enter 2nd week; no deal in sight

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The combined strike by Hollywood actors and screenwriters is entering its second week with no sign that a swift ending will be achieved.

For a week, actors including household names like Tina Fey, Kevin Bacon and wife Kyra Sedgwick, Rosario Dawson, David Duchovny and other stars have joined working class performers and writers on picket lines outside studios and corporate offices of streaming giants Amazon, MAX and Netflix.

The actors' regular appearance on picket lines has provided additional stardom and voices on issues that are key to both groups — better pay and preserving established practices like residual payments, as

well as protection from the use of artificial intelligence. Roughly 65,000 actors — the vast majority of whom don't make enough from acting to qualify for health benefits through their guild — along with 11,500 screenwriters, are on strike.

While many of the picket lines are in Los Angeles and New York, film and television production happens throughout the country. Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago were among the major cities with strike events earlier this week.

There's no indication when negotiations with studios and streaming companies will resume. The group has said they've offered both writers and actors substantial pay increases and have tried to meet other demands.

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# Snyder fined \$60 million following NFL investigation

Associated Press

Washington Commanders owner Dan Snyder sexually harassed a team employee and oversaw team executives who deliberately withheld millions of dollars in revenue from other clubs, and he has agreed to pay a \$60 million fine, the league announced Thursday.

The NFL released a 23-page report detailing the findings of an independent investigation into Snyder's conduct just minutes after its owners unanimously approved the sale of the Commanders to Josh Harris for a record \$6.05 billion. The fine represents 1% of the sale price; Snyder bought the team, then known as the Redskins, for \$800 million.

The investigation was led by former Securities and Exchange Commission chair Mary Jo White and conducted by her law firm, Debevoise & Plimpton. The league had pledged to make the findings of the probe public.

Investigators concluded that Washington withheld \$11 million in revenue that should have been shared with other teams, an amount the report suggests may have been far greater. White's firm was unable to

reach a conclusion about tens of millions of additional dollars that may have been withheld in part because Snyder and the team did not cooperate fully with the investigation, according to the report.

The report concluded that Snyder sexually harassed former team employee Tiffani Johnston, allegations that Johnston first made last year in front of a House committee. Snyder placed his hand on Johnston's thigh at a team dinner and pushed her toward his car as they were leaving the restaurant, the report said.

"The findings do speak for themselves. In both cases, it's inappropriate, it's wrong, it doesn't match our values," Commissioner Roger Goodell said at a news conference in Minnesota after NFL owners voted.

Snyder has denied Johnston's allegations and repeated that denial in an interview with White's investigators. He only agreed to speak with investigators for one hour, the report said.

Investigators spoke with Johnston several times and "found her to be highly credi-

ble," the report said, and her account was corroborated by witnesses and other evidence. The investigation also substantiated claims by another former employee, Jason Friedman, who told the House about financial improprieties.

The report also concluded that a former team executive improperly took possession of a photograph of Johnston from a calendar shoot of the team's cheerleaders. Johnston was wearing lingerie in the photo, which had not been edited "to fully cover inadvertent exposures." Investigators found insufficient evidence to show Snyder was personally involved in that incident.

White's firm did not conclude whether Snyder was personally aware of the financial misdeeds, but witnesses told investigators that Snyder repeatedly pressured team employees to improve its financial performance, telling them, "every dollar matters."

Documents detailing how the team moved revenue into accounts that shielded the money from other teams were shared with Snyder on at least one occasion, the report said.

## Jets change minds about HBO series

Associated Press

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. — Robert Saleh and the New York Jets are fully tuned in now to their turn on "Hard Knocks."

After making it clear last month the Jets would prefer to not be on the HBO documentary series this summer, Saleh showed up to his first news conference of training camp Thursday decked out in a black long-sleeved T-shirt that displayed his change of heart.

"I (green heart) HK" was printed on the Jets coach's chest in white capital letters.

It's all lights, cameras, action — and no hard feelings — now.

"Just talking with 'Hard Knocks,' they've got a great group of people working with us," Saleh said after practice Thursday. "We expressed some of our concerns and they answered it. And, you know, it's going to be fine."

When the Jets were being discussed last month as the potential team to be featured on the series produced by HBO and NFL Films, Saleh and the Jets openly rooted against it.

The Jets reportedly discussed tweaking some of the access, including not showing players being cut — a popular segment every summer in the series.

## NFL owners unanimously OK Commanders sale

Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — NFL owners unanimously approved the sale of the Washington Commanders on Thursday from Dan Snyder to a group led by Josh Harris and including Magic Johnson for a record \$6.05 billion, right before the league announced a \$60 million fine for Snyder for improprieties corroborated by its investigation into workplace culture

and business dealings.

"We are humbled and awed by the level of responsibility that we have to take care of the city, to win championships and really excite the fans again," Harris said in a news conference after the vote.

The purchase by Harris Blitz-er Sports and Entertainment is the highest price paid for a North American professional sports club. Harris, like Snyder

and Commissioner Roger Goodell, grew up in the Washington metro area as an avid fan of the team.

"He has a remarkable business record, not just in finance but also now in sports, and I think he's a person who cares deeply about not just his assets but at least more importantly his communities," Goodell said.

Snyder had owned his favorite boyhood team since 1999,

when he bought it for \$800 million. Success was fleeting, both on and off the field. With Snyder in charge, the team made the playoffs just six times in 24 years, only twice won a postseason game and went 166-226-2 overall. The franchise has lost a significant amount of luster from the glory days under coach Joe Gibbs, who won three Super Bowls in his 12-year run from 1981-92.



# Orioles top Rays in series opener

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Colton Cowser hit a sacrifice fly in the 10th inning, and the AL East-leading Baltimore Orioles beat the Tampa Bay Rays 4-3 on Thursday night in the opener of a four-game series between the American League's top teams.

Baltimore started the day in first place for the first time after the All-Star break since Aug. 15, 2016. The Orioles, who were 6½ games back at the start of July, now have a one-game lead.

Aaron Hicks opened the 10th at second as the automatic runner. He advanced on pinch-hitter Adam Frazier's sacrifice bunt and scampered home on Cowser's fly ball to left against Robert Stephenson (1-4).

Félix Bautista (5-1) worked a perfect ninth for Baltimore and then stayed on for the 10th. He hit Luke Raley and struck out Randy Arozarena before Brandon Lowe bounced into a game-ending double play.

Tampa Bay has lost five in a row. It is tied with Pittsburgh for the majors' worst July record at 3-12.

**Braves 7, Diamondbacks 5:** Austin Riley hit a three-run homer off Miguel Castro in the eighth inning, and host Atlanta stopped a four-game skid.

Matt Olson hit two more homers for the Braves, raising his NL-best total to 32. Orlando Arcia also connected.

Riley followed Michael Harris II's double and Ozzie Albies' walk with his fourth homer of the three-game series and 20th of the season, putting Atlanta ahead 6-5.

Dominic Canzone and Emmanuel Rivera hit back-to-back homers for Arizona in the seventh against Spencer Strider. Corbin Carroll added his 19th homer in the eighth.

Kirby Yates (4-0) got the win, and Raisel Iglesias earned his 17th save in 19 chances. Castro (5-4) was charged with the loss.

**Brewers 4, Phillies 0:** Corbin

Burnes struck out 10 in eight innings, leading Milwaukee to the victory over host Philadelphia.

Christian Yelich hit a three-run homer as Milwaukee closed out a 5-1 trip through Cincinnati and Philadelphia. Andruw Monasterio had two hits and scored two runs for the NL Central leaders.

Burnes (9-5) allowed two hits and walked one. The 2021 NL Cy Young Award winner improved to 4-0 with a 1.33 ERA in four July starts.

Philadelphia starter Taijuan Walker (11-4) allowed four runs and six hits in six innings in his first loss since June 1.

**Mariners 5, Twins 0:** George Kirby matched his career high with 10 strikeouts over seven innings, helping host Seattle to the victory

Teoscar Hernández and Mike Ford homered as Seattle earned a split of the four-game set after it learned starting outfielder Jarred Kelenic will be out for an extended period after breaking a bone in his left foot.

Kirby (9-8) allowed four hits, and the 10 strikeouts matched his outing against Miami last month.

Minnesota's Pablo López (5-6) struck out seven and gave up two runs in five innings.

**Reds 5, Giants 1:** Andrew Abbott pitched a career-high eight innings and Luke Maile homered, sending host Cincinnati to its second straight win and a split of the four-game series.

Abbott (5-2) allowed one hit, struck out six and walked two in his ninth big-league start. Derek Law finished the two-hitter, surrendering Wilmer Flores' 12th homer in the ninth.

San Francisco right-hander Alex Cobb (6-3) gave up five runs, a season-high nine hits and four walks in 4½ innings.

The Giants (54-43) remain tied with Arizona for second in the NL West, two games behind the Dodgers.

**Blue Jays 4, Padres 0:** Chris Bassitt combined with three relievers on a six-hitter, and host Toronto avoided a three-game sweep.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Alejandro Kirk homered for Toronto, which managed just one run in the first two games of the series. Kirk went 3 for 3, and Whit Merrifield and Jordan Luplow each had two hits.

Bassitt (10-5) allowed four hits — all singles — in six innings. He has won his last three decisions.

It was Toronto's 11th shutout of the season.

Padres left-hander Blake Snell (6-8), a possible trade target ahead of the Aug. 1 deadline, allowed one run in five innings. He struck out four and walked seven.

**Cardinals 7, Cubs 2:** Jordan Walker and Paul DeJong each hit a two-run homer, and visiting St. Louis earned its sixth straight victory.

Nolan Arenado drove in two runs and Steven Matz pitched five effective innings as the Cardinals won for the ninth time in 11 games overall. Paul Goldschmidt had two hits and scored two runs.

Marcus Stroman (10-7) pitched 3⅓ innings in possibly his final home start for the Cubs. The right-hander was charged with five runs — four earned — and seven hits.

Chicago (45-51) dropped to 7-9 in July, and Stroman could be one of the top pitchers on the market at the trade deadline.

Matz (1-7) allowed a run and three hits in his first win since Sept. 17 against Cincinnati.

**White Sox 6, Mets 2:** Yasmán Grandal started a four-run sixth inning with a two-run double that followed Pete Alonso's error, and visiting Chicago spoiled José Quintana's New York debut.

Grandal doubled to the warning track in right after the White Sox loaded the bases against

Drew Smith.

The inning started when Alonso backed up on a grounder by Luis Robert Jr. that bounced off his glove. The first baseman expressed his frustration by putting his head in his hands.

Quintana (0-1), a 34-year-old left-hander who pitched for the White Sox from 2012-17, signed a \$26 million, two-year contract with the Mets as a free agent, then fractured a rib during spring training. He allowed two runs and six hits in five innings.

Michael Kopech (4-8) allowed two hits in 5⅓ innings, both to Omar Narváez, and got his first win since May 24.

**Tigers 3, Royals 0:** Michael Lorenzen tossed seven innings of three-hit ball, and visiting Detroit wrapped up another series win against its AL Central rival.

Lorenzen (5-6) increased his scoreless streak to 23⅓ innings dating to June 30 at Colorado.

Tyler Holton worked a perfect eighth. Jason Foley handled the ninth for his fourth save.

Spencer Torkelson, Andy Ibañez and Eric Haase drove in runs for Detroit, which took three of four from the Royals for its fifth consecutive series win against them.

The Tigers scored twice off Zack Greinke (1-10) in the second before adding another run in the fifth, after the veteran right-hander had been removed from the game.

**Astros 3, Athletics 1:** Rookie J.P. France struck out five while pitching into the eighth inning for the first time this season to win his third straight decision, Kyle Tucker hit a go-ahead two-run double in the sixth, and visiting Houston beat Oakland.

Alex Bregman homered in the ninth to help secure the win for France (5-3).

The right-hander walked one and allowed one run on six hits for the Astros.

Ryan Pressly earned his 22nd save of the season and the 99th of his career.

# Rapinoe's farewell begins with US-Vietnam

Associated Press

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Megan Rapinoe's final run on the global stage begins Saturday when the United States opens its quest to win an unprecedented third consecutive Women's World Cup title.

The 38-year-old American said this month she will retire after the tournament — an announcement timed to help the squad avoid distracting questions about Rapinoe's future.

"I'm just grateful to be able to do it in this way," Rapinoe said. "I understand that it is incredibly rare for athletes of any stature to be able to go out in their own way, on their own terms, at the time that they want, in a way that feels really peaceful and settled for them."

Her final World Cup begins Saturday when the U.S. plays Vietnam in Auckland. Although it was Rapinoe's desire to help her teammates focus on the tournament and not her future, her looming sendoff has still weighed heavily on the squad.

Kelley O'Hara nearly broke down in tears this week when asked what Rapinoe has meant to the team, and to the game of

soccer.

"I know that the world sees the Megan Rapinoe that the world sees, but we get to see her up close and personal, and the 'Pino' that the world sees is an incredible person and human and that is her. She brings a sense of humor and lightness, but intensity and empathy," O'Hara said. "She's one of a kind. There's never been one like her, there's probably never going to be one close to her."

"It's sad to think about this being her last, but she's done such incredible things for this team and for the world," O'Hara continued. "I hope that we all send her out on a high."

And midfielder Andi Sullivan said she's yet to accept that there will be a U.S. team that doesn't include Rapinoe whenever the Americans end the tournament.

"I don't really think about the team without her, and even as she announced it, she did it with such grace and humor and joy and light," Sullivan said. "We're trying to just soak up as much 'Pino' as we can."

Rapinoe isn't expected to have a major role for the Amer-

icans, and Vietnam should not be a tough challenge in its World Cup debut. Vietnam is one of eight nations making its first appearance at the tournament and has never played the United States.

The U.S., meanwhile, has never lost to an Asian nation in the World Cup.

Vietnam prepared for the tournament with a respectable 2-1 loss to Germany, but then lost to co-host New Zealand 2-0 and was routed by Spain 9-0.

## England-Haiti

One of the tournament favorites faces a Women's World Cup newcomer when England plays Haiti in a Group D match in Brisbane, Australia.

England is the reigning European champion and trying to join Germany as the only teams to win the World Cup while holding that continental title. Germany did it in 2003 and '07.

Haiti is another one of eight teams making its World Cup debut and qualified by beating Senegal and Chile in the inter-confederation playoffs. Haiti is led by Daelle Dumornay, who is also known as "Corventina." She

scored both goals in Haiti's win over Chile.

## Zambia-Japan

Zambia makes its Women's World Cup debut against Japan as a questionable participant in the elite tournament.

The Copper Queens qualified because of Africa's qualifying format. Because they are ranked 77th in the world, critics have questioned if the team would be here if it had competed for any other continental confederation.

But then Zambia surprised in a three-match tour through Europe, leading in every match while drawing against Switzerland before notching an upset win over Germany.

## Denmark-China

China is making its third consecutive appearance at the Women's World Cup and opens with a Group D match in Perth, Australia, against Denmark, which is back in the tournament for the first time since 2007.

Denmark ended its 16-year absence by winning all eight of its qualifying games behind an impressive 40 goals scored.

# Crowd favorite Fleetwood shares British Open lead

Associated Press

HOYLAKES, England — The British Open showed again Thursday that even after 163 years, golf's oldest championship can still deliver surprises.

It started with Christo Lamprecht, the South African amateur as tall as a flag stick and almost as thin, making three birdies in his last six holes and posting a 5-under 66 to become the first amateur in 12 years to share the 18-hole lead.

Curiosity about the 22-year-old amateur turned to glee at the site of the local hero, Tommy Fleetwood, running off three straight birdies on the back nine at Royal Liverpool to join him

atop the leaderboard. Emiliano Grillo of Argentina became the third to post 66 by holing a birdie putt from 50 feet on the last hole.

Not to be overlooked was Jordan Spieth hitting a shank; Rory McIlroy missing a 3-foot putt; Justin Thomas going bunker-to-bunker-to-rough — each shot farther away from the flag than the previous one — in making a 9 on the 18th hole to post his highest round in a major at 82.

McIlroy, trying desperately to end his nine-year drought in the majors, was happy to get away with a 71. He risked the round getting away from him until making up for that wee-

miss on the eighth hole with a 40-foot birdie on the 14th that sparked him.

Then it almost got away from him in the end — just like the bunkers on the 18th ruined so many other rounds — when he left one in the pot bunker and expertly got out the second time and made a 10-foot par.

Scottie Scheffler, the world's No. 1 player, got around in 70 in the morning before the breeze turned into a stiff wind.

Masters champion Jon Rahm reached a point where he felt nothing was going his way, and it wasn't.

Rahm hit what he thought

was a good shot into the 18th only for it to find a bunker, forcing him to play back to the fairway and turning a birdie chance into bogey. Rahm opened with a 74.

Fleetwood raised hopes of becoming the first English winner of a British Open in England since Tony Jacklin in 1969. He kept his own hopes measured, fully aware of gallery support for the long-haired lad raised about an hour up the coast.

"First day, so this was a pretty good one," Fleetwood said. "All I want to do is keep working hard, keep playing, and keep putting myself in position. And obviously, it'll be my turn soon."