

## Russian jet damages US drone over Syria

By J.P. LAWRENCE  
*Stars and Stripes*

A Russian fighter jet in Syria flying at close range fired flares at a U.S. drone and “severely damaged” its propeller, the Air Force said in a statement Tuesday.

The Reaper MQ-9 aircraft was able to be flown back to its base following the harassment early Sunday morning, the U.S. Air Forces Central statement said.

Footage released Tuesday by the Air Force appears to show a Su-35 Russian fighter jet approaching the drone before flying ahead of it and releasing several flares.

The chief U.S. Air Force commander for the Middle East on Tuesday accused Russian forces of “blatant disregard,” echoing complaints over the last year of harassment of U.S. aircraft in the region.

“We call upon the Russian forces in Syria to put an immediate end to this reckless, unprovoked and unprofessional behavior,” Lt. Gen. Alex Grynkeiwich, head of U.S. Air Forces Central, said Tuesday.

Since late February, fighter jets and sur-

veillance drones from Russia have buzzed U.S. bases in Syria and violated protocols that were developed to prevent fighting between American and Russian forces, Grynkeiwich told Stars and Stripes in June.

These flights risk “unintended escalation and miscalculation,” said Army Gen. Michael Kurilla, head of Central Command, on Tuesday.

Russian and U.S. forces are in Syria with the declared mission to fight the Islamic State group. Their backing of opposing armed groups in Syria has led to deconfliction protocols meant to avoid a direct conflict.

Under the protocols, Russian and U.S. troops are supposed to notify each other prior to transiting certain areas. U.S. complaints about violations by Russia have been increasingly ignored, Grynkeiwich said in June.

Russian military leaders, meanwhile, accuse U.S. pilots of violating agreements that separate Syria’s airspace, the Saudi Arabia-based Al Arabiya English reported June 1.

The Pentagon in June accused Russia of 85 protocol violations since March 1, including 26 flights over U.S. bases by armed and loaded aircraft.

Last week, the Air Force said a Russian Su-35 fighter jet had cut in front of a U.S. MC-12 turboprop surveillance plane, risking the lives of the four crew members, who were forced to fly through the jet’s turbulent wake.

Grynkeiwich in June attributed the uptick in aerial aggression to the personal motivations of some Russian officers. He noted that Moscow gave awards to the pilots of a Su-27 fighter jet that caused a U.S. MQ-9 Reaper drone to crash into the Black Sea in March.

The U.S. has roughly 900 troops in Syria, according to the Pentagon.

These troops, along with contractors, work with Kurdish fighters to battle the remnants of ISIS.

Russia is a staunch backer of Syrian President Bashar Assad and a partner with Iran. Both countries seek to drive U.S. troops from the region, analysts have said.

## Navy commissions warship in Australia for 1st time

By SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

A star-spangled kangaroo adorned an Independence-class littoral combat ship when it became the first U.S. Navy vessel to be commissioned in Australia.

The USS Canberra was commissioned Saturday at the Australian navy’s Fleet Base East in Sydney. The dockside ceremony coincided with the start of the biennial, multinational Talisman Sabre drills, involving more than 30,000 personnel training Down Under until Aug. 4.

Video posted online by the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service showed Canberra’s commanding officer, Cmdr. Will Ashley, reporting the ship ready, and ship sponsor Marise Payne, a former Australian foreign affairs minister, giving the order to officers and crew to “man our ship and bring her to life.”

The warship is destined to serve throughout the Indo-Pacific with one of America’s

closest allies, U.S. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro said at the ceremony. Guests included U.S. Ambassador to Australia Caroline Kennedy, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Richard Marles and U.S. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday.

“I am confident that wherever USS Canberra is sailing, and whatever challenges her crew may face, they are ready, as reinforced by this warship’s motto: ‘Can Do,’” del Toro said.

Canberra departed Naval Base San Diego, its homeport, on June 13, visiting American Samoa and Fiji before arriving in Sydney, U.S. Pacific Fleet said in a statement Saturday.

The Independence-class littoral combat ships USS Jackson, USS Manchester, USS Oakland and USS Mobile are also operating in the Indo-Pacific, according to the statement.

“Today marks a proud moment which our

Royal Australian Navy is privileged to share alongside our allies and friends in the United States Navy,” Australian navy Vice Adm. Mark Hammond said at the commissioning. “The connection between our navies, forged in battle during the Second World War, is reflected in the name USS Canberra.”

Canberra is the second Navy ship named for Australia’s capital. The first, a Baltimore-class heavy cruiser, commissioned on Oct. 14, 1943, was named in honor of the Australian heavy cruiser HMAS Canberra, lost at the Battle of Savo Island in World War II.

Independence-class littoral combat ships are fast vessels that operate near shore and in open ocean to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence missions, according to the statement.

However, the ships have been criticized as outdated in a world where conflict with well-armed potential adversaries such as China and Russia is a growing concern.

## US sending up to \$400M more in aid to Ukraine

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is sending up to \$400 million in additional military aid to Ukraine, including a variety of munitions for advanced air defense systems and a number of small surveillance drones, the Department of Defense announced Tuesday, as attacks in the war escalated to include strikes in Moscow and Crimea.

The package includes an array of ammunition — ranging from missiles for the High-Mobility Artillery Rocket System and the National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System to Stingers and Javelins. The weapons are being provided through presidential drawdown authority, which allows the Pentagon to quickly take items from its own stocks and deliver them to Ukraine, often within days.

The United States is also sending howitzer artillery rounds and 32 Stryker armored vehicles, along with demolition equipment, mortars, Hydra-70 rockets and 28 million rounds of small-arms ammunition. The Hornets are tiny nano-drones used largely for intelligence gathering. Ukraine has also gotten them in the past from other Western allies.

Overall, the U.S. has provided more than \$41 billion in military aid to Ukraine since Russia invaded in February 2022. The latest package of weapons comes as a Ukrainian drone struck an ammunition depot in Russian-annexed Crimea and Russia accused Ukraine of launching a drone attack on Moscow.

Ukrainian authorities didn't immediately claim responsibility for the strike, which was the second drone attack on the Russian capital this month.

# UN watchdog reports seeing mines at Ukraine nuke plant

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — The U.N. atomic watchdog said its monitors at the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant reported seeing anti-personnel mines around the site as Ukraine's military pursues a counteroffensive against the Kremlin's entrenched forces after 17 months of war.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said its team observed the mines Sunday in a restricted area off-limits to the plant's Ukrainian staff. The agency did not directly attribute the placement of the mines to the Russians, but said its experts were told "it is a military decision, and in an area controlled by military."

"Having such explosives on the site is inconsistent with the IAEA safety standards and nuclear security guidance and creates additional psychological pressure on

plant staff," Rafael Mariano Grossi, the agency's director general, said in a statement late Monday.

However, any detonation of the mines, which were facing away from the plant and located between its internal and external perimeter barriers, "should not affect the site's nuclear safety and security systems," the statement said.

The IAEA has repeatedly expressed concern that the war could cause a potential radiation leak from the facility, which is one of the world's 10 biggest nuclear power stations. The plant's six reactors have been shut down for months, but it still needs power and qualified staff to operate crucial cooling systems and other safety features.

Ukraine's military intelligence said last month without providing evidence that Russia is planning a

"large-scale provocation" at the nuclear power plant in the south-east of the country and had placed suspected explosives on the roof. Russia, in turn, has alleged without offering evidence that Ukraine was planning a false flag attack involving radioactive materials.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian authorities said Tuesday that air defenses intercepted Iranian-made drones that Russia fired at Kyiv overnight. No casualties or damage were reported, according to Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv regional military administration.

The Russian Defense Ministry said a Russian patrol ship destroyed two Ukrainian sea drones that attacked it in the Black Sea early Tuesday. It said the crew of the Sergey Kotov wasn't hurt in the attack 200 nautical miles southwest of the Crimean port of Sevastopol.

## Navy, Marines gear up for global drill

BY MATTHEW ADAMS  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy and Marine Corps are gearing up for a global training exercise in August, service officials said Monday.

"In the post-Cold War era and during the Global War on Terrorism, the seas were relatively uncontested," Navy Capt. Chris Narducci said. "We were able to operate where we wanted to. A lot of times we did so statically, remaining in the same location and conducting the same operations day in and day out. We were not threatened. However, times have changed."

Large Scale Exercise 2023 is the second time since 2021 that

training has been conducted between the two service branches, Adm. Daryl Caudle, head of U.S. Fleet Forces Command, said during a discussion with reporters. He said the exercise builds on things the Navy has been working on for the last five years, focusing on local and tactical testing of new capabilities and then packaging them for U.S. Fleet Forces and Pacific Fleet Commands.

"The amount of military capacity and capability will be strained in any conflict with a competitor. The ability to synchronize is extremely important," Caudle said.

The Defense Department released its National Defense Strategy in October, the first time in four years. The strategy identifies

China, Russia, North Korea, Iran — and climate change — as some of the top threats for which the U.S. military is preparing.

Narducci, lead planner for the exercise, said the training will take place with live, virtual and constructive components across 22 time zones. It will include six combatant command centers — Indo-Pacific, Northern Command, Southern Command, Europe, Africa and some of Central Command in the Middle East.

More than 25,000 sailors and Marines will participate, along with 1,080 personnel running control scenarios. The Naval Warfare Development Center at Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Va., will be the exercise center, Narducci said.

# Till family says proclamation is vital

*Associated Press*

As President Joe Biden signed a proclamation on Tuesday establishing a national monument honoring Emmett Till and his mother, Mamie Till-Mobley, it marked the fulfillment of a promise Till's relatives made after his death 68 years ago.

The Black teenager from Chicago, whose abduction, torture and killing in Mississippi in 1955 helped propel the civil rights movement, will be seen as more than just a cause of that movement, said Till's cousin, the Rev. Wheeler Parker Jr.

"We are resolute that it now becomes an American story and not just a civil rights story," Parker told The Associated Press, ahead of a proclamation signing ceremony at the White House attended by dozens, including other family members, members of Congress and civil rights leaders.

With the stroke of Biden's pen, the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, located across three sites in two states, became federally protected places. But Till's family members, along with a national organization seeking to preserve Black cultural heritage sites, said their work protecting the Till legacy continues.

They hope to raise money to restore the

sites and develop educational programming to support their inclusion in the National Park System.

The Biden administration "will continue to speak out against hateful attempts to rewrite our history and strongly oppose any actions that threaten to divide us and take our country backwards," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said.

Brent Leggs, executive director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said the federal designation is a milestone in a yearslong effort to preserve and protect places tied to events that have shaped the nation.

"We believe that not until Black history matters will Black lives and Black bodies matter," he said. "Through reckoning with America's racist past, we have the opportunity to heal."

Biden's proclamation protects places that are central to the story of Emmett Till's life and death at age 14, the acquittal of his white killers by an all-white jury and his late mother's activism.

In the summer of 1955, Mamie Till-Mobley put her son Emmett on a train to her native Mississippi, where he was to spend

time with his uncle and his cousins. In the overnight hours of Aug. 28, 1955, Emmett was taken from his uncle's home at gunpoint by two vengeful white men.

Emmett's alleged crime? Flirting with the wife of one of his kidnappers.

Three days later, a fisherman on the Tallahatchie River discovered the teenager's bloated corpse — one of his eyes was detached, an ear was missing, his head was shot and bashed in.

Till-Mobley demanded that Emmett's remains be taken back to Chicago for a public, open casket funeral that was attended by tens of thousands of people. Graphic images taken of Emmett's remains, sanctioned by his mother, were published by Jet magazine and propelled the civil rights movement.

Altogether, the Till national monument will include 5.7 acres of land and two historic buildings. The Mississippi sites are Grabb Landing, the spot where Emmett's body was pulled from the river just outside of Glendora, and the Tallahatchie County Second District Courthouse in Sumner, where Emmett's killers were tried.

The Illinois site is Roberts Temple Church of God in Christ in Chicago, where Emmett's funeral was held.

## DeSantis unhurt in wreck on campaign trail in Tenn.

*Associated Press*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis was involved in a multi-car accident on Tuesday in Tennessee, but was uninjured as he traveled in a motorcade to a campaign stop for his 2024 presidential bid.

The crash happened before 8:15 a.m. when traffic slowed on Interstate 75 in Chattanooga, causing four cars in the motorcade to hit each other, police said. All the vehicles involved in the crash were government vehicles taking DeSantis and his team to his scheduled event, police said.

The Republican White House hopeful was not hurt, police and DeSantis press secretary Bryan Griffin said. A female DeSantis staff member suffered a minor

injury and was later treated at the campaign event, police said.

Representatives for DeSantis' campaign did not answer questions about who was driving the governor or reveal details about the accident. DeSantis was continuing on to his event, spokesperson Andrew Romeo said. A spokesperson for the Florida governor's office deferred questions about the accident to the campaign.

DeSantis was scheduled to hold events throughout central and eastern Tennessee as he prioritizes Super Tuesday states in his campaigning. Super Tuesday, held on March 5 next year, is when the largest number of delegates are up for grabs of any day in the primary cycle.

## Prosecutor in Hunter Biden case will be able to testify

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The lead prosecutor in the case against President Joe Biden's son Hunter said he is willing to testify publicly this fall, setting up a clash with House Republicans who have demanded he come in soon for a closed-door interview.

In a two-page letter to Rep. Jim Jordan on Monday, the Justice Department offered to make U.S. Attorney David Weiss of Delaware available before the House Judiciary Committee for a public hearing after the August break as Republicans have continued to escalate their ongoing investigation into his handling of the probe into Hunter Biden.

"The Department believes it

is strongly in the public interest for the American people and for Congress to hear directly from U.S. Attorney Weiss on these assertions and questions about his authority at a public hearing," Assistant Attorney General Carlos Uriarte wrote to Jordan.

House Republicans, led by Jordan — chair of the Judiciary Committee — had requested last month for Weiss and nearly a dozen other officials to come in for transcribed interviews with the committee as part of its investigation into claims the Justice Department improperly interfered in the case into Hunter Biden's financial dealings.

Weiss' probe ended last month with a plea deal that will likely spare Biden from time behind bars.



# IRS ending unplanned visits to taxpayers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service said Monday it is ending its decades-old policy of making unannounced home and business visits, in an effort to help keep its workers safe and to combat scammers who pose as IRS agents.

Effective immediately, revenue agents will no longer make unplanned visits to taxpayers' homes and businesses "except in a few unique circumstances," the Treasury Department said in a statement. The agency will instead mail letters to people to schedule meetings.

"Today's announcement is the right thing to do, at the right time," new IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel told reporters on a call Monday.

The change ends "an era at the IRS," he said, reversing a

practice by revenue officers whose duties include visiting homes and firms to resolve taxpayers' liabilities by collecting unpaid taxes and unfiled tax returns.

The agency in recent years has experienced more threats, in part tied to conspiracy theories that agents were going to target middle-income taxpayers more aggressively after the passage of a climate, health care and tax bill that provided \$80 billion to step up tax collections.

In response, the agency last August announced a comprehensive review of safety at its facilities. And in May, the agency said it would begin limiting workers' personal identifying information on communications with taxpayers.

The Treasury Department's

inspector general for tax administration said in a report that it was "concerned that taxpayers and anti-government or anti-tax groups with malevolent intent may use the Internet or social media to track down and identify IRS employees, their families, their homes, and personal information to threaten, intimidate, or locate them for physical violence."

The National Treasury Employees Union, which represents IRS workers, commended the agency for ending unannounced visits.

"The officers we represent will continue to efficiently and effectively carry out their mission of helping taxpayers meet their lawful tax obligations through other means of communication," union leader Tony Reardon said in an emailed

statement.

The issue of home visits has been politically contentious this year.

Ohio House Republican Jim Jordan sent a letter to Werfel and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in March, asking why journalist Matt Taibbi received an unannounced home visit from an IRS agent shortly he gave testimony on Capitol Hill regarding his research into Twitter records.

Werfel said he thinks "the issues raised by unannounced visits, including ones that have been raised to us by the U.S. Congress, will be significantly mitigated" by the policy change.

The agency said an increase in scam artists posing as IRS agents also had created confusion about unannounced home visits.

## Buyer confidence at 2-year high as inflation eases

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. consumer confidence shot to the highest level in two years this month as inflationary pressures eased and the American economy continued to show resilience in the face of dramatically higher interest rates.

The Conference Board, a business research group, said its consumer confidence index rose to 117 in July from a revised 110.1 in June. The gauge beat the 110.5 that economists had expected and was the highest since July 2021.

The index measures both Americans' assessment of current economic conditions and their outlook for the next six months. Both improved in July. The future expectations index rose to 88.3 in July, clearing the recession threshold of 80 recorded in June.

Economists closely monitor Americans' spirits because consumer spending accounts for around 70% of U.S. economic activity. The Conference Board index fell more or less steadily from mid-2021 to mid-2022 as surging prices ate into household budgets.

But confidence has come back, in fits and starts, over the past year as inflation eased in the face of 10 interest-rate hikes by the Federal Reserve. Fed policymakers are expected to raise their benchmark rate again Wednesday to the highest level in 22 years.

The U.S. economy — the world's largest — has proved surprisingly resilient in the face of sharply higher borrowing costs. Employers are adding a strong 278,000 jobs a month so far this year; and at 3.6% in June, the unemployment rate is not far off a half-century low.

## Israeli doctors walk out in protest of judicial changes

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Thousands of Israeli doctors walked out of work, labor leaders threatened a general strike and senior justices rushed home from a trip abroad Tuesday, a day after the government approved a law weakening the country's supreme court that critics have said will erode the system of checks and balances. Four leading Israeli newspapers covered their front pages in black ink — an ominous image paid for by an alliance of high-tech companies. The on-

ly words on the pages were at the bottom: "A black day for Israeli democracy."

Monday's vote — on the first of a series of measures that make up Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's divisive judicial overhaul — reverberated across the country. It came despite seven months of fierce popular resistance, Netanyahu's promises of an eventual compromise and a rare warning against the overhaul from Israel's closest ally, the United States.

The bill was unanimously passed by the

governing coalition, which includes ultranationalist and ultra-religious parties, after the opposition stormed out of the hall shouting "Shame!"

Hundreds of thousands of people fanned out in Tel Aviv, burning tires, setting off fireworks and waving national flags. In central Jerusalem, police mounted on horses unleashed water cannons and a foul-smelling spray at protesters, arresting nearly 40 people. At least 10 officers were assaulted and injured, they said.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Bear traps set after grizzly kills woman

**MT** BILLINGS — Wildlife workers put out bear traps for a third night Monday as they try to capture a grizzly bear that killed a woman who was traveling alone on a forest trail near Yellowstone National Park.

Amie Adamson, 48, Derby, Kan., died in Saturday's fatal mauling near the Montana-Idaho border, the Gallatin County Coroner's Office said. The victim was a marathon runner, and officials said she was likely running or walking at the time of the attack.

Officials ruled out a rare predatory attack, which suggests Adamson instead died following a chance bear encounter as she traveled by herself in a wooded area frequented by grizzly and black bears.

She was killed a few hundred yards from a trailhead and a private campground, said Morgan Jacobsen with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The bear was traveling with one or more cubs, and there were no indications that it tried to eat the victim.

## Hate speech posted on site traced to universities

**DC** WASHINGTON — Anonymous comments with racist, sexist and abusive messages that were posted for years on a jobs-related website for economists originated from numerous leading U.S. universities, according to recently released research.

Some economists have long condemned the website, Economics Job Market Rumors, for

its toxic content. The site, known by its acronym EJMR, is run by an anonymous individual and is not connected to a university or other institution. That fact had fed speculation that those who posted hateful messages on it were mostly online cranks who might not be economists.

Yet the new research indicates that users of the website include individuals at top-tier colleges and universities, including Harvard, Stanford and the University of Chicago.

## 5 hate group members convicted of riot plan

**ID** COEUR D'ALENE — Five members of the white nationalist hate group Patriot Front were convicted of misdemeanor charges of conspiracy to riot at a Pride event.

A Kootenai County jury found Forrest Rankin, Devin Center, Derek Smith, James Michael Johnson and Robert Whitted guilty after about an hour of deliberation, news outlets reported.

A total of 31 Patriot Front members, including one identified as its founder, were arrested June 11, 2022, after someone reported seeing people loading into a U-Haul van like "a little army" at a hotel parking lot in Coeur d'Alene, police have said.

Police found riot gear, a smoke grenade, shin guards and shields inside the van after pulling it over near where the North Idaho Pride Alliance was holding a Pride in the Park event, Coeur d'Alene Police Chief Lee White has said.

Documents found with the group reportedly outlined a plan to form a column outside

City Park and proceed inward, "until barriers to approach are met." Once "an appropriate amount of confrontational dynamic had been established," the column would disengage and head down Sherman Avenue.

## Judge blocks ban on trans athletes on girls' teams

**AZ** TUCSON — A federal judge temporarily blocked Arizona from enforcing a law banning transgender girls from playing on girls' school sports teams.

The judge in Tucson granted a preliminary injunction to allow processing of a lawsuit filed on behalf of two transgender girls against the state's "Save Women's Sports Act," which was passed by the Republican-controlled Legislature last year.

The lawsuit argues the law violates federal Title IX, the law barring sex discrimination in schools receiving federal funds, and the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne, who is a defendant in the case, said the decision will be appealed.

"This will ultimately be decided by the United States Supreme Court, and they will rule in our favor," Horne said in a statement.

## State eyes ban on cash prize contests for hunting

**NY** ALBANY — The contests have names such as Predator Slam, Squirrel Scramble and Final Fling for Fox, sometimes challenging hunters to bag the heaviest coyote or the heaviest bunch of

squirrels to win a cash prize.

While participants seek prey in the name of fundraising, animal rights advocates are training their sights on contests they see as senseless slaughters. With bans in eight states, activists are now looking to New York, where Gov. Kathy Hochul is considering a proposal recently approved by the Legislature.

Opponents want to put an end to annual events held around upstate New York that target wildlife like coyotes, rabbits, raccoons and foxes.

David Leibig, a rural upstate resident and executive director of the New York State Trappers Association, said the events draw families and raise money for fire departments and other community groups. He bristles at the charge that they're "just a blood fest."

## Mountain lion sighting prompts warnings

**SD** HOWARD — A sheriff's office in South Dakota is urging residents to keep an eye out for mountain lions after one was seen lurking near a golf course.

The Miner County Sheriff's Office said in a Facebook post the animal was seen on the edge of the town of Howard, a community of about 850 people on the eastern side of the state. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks officials are investigating.

The sheriff's office urged people to keep their children and animals out of harm's way and to be aware of their surroundings, especially from evening to early morning.

— From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# US, Netherlands set for 2019 rematch

Associated Press

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Now that the U.S. women have won equal pay with their male counterparts, there's no need for their supporters to again chant for fairness when the Americans play the Netherlands on Thursday in their rematch of the 2019 Women's World Cup final.

The Americans defeated the Netherlands 2-0 in France for their second straight World Cup trophy, and fourth overall. They were in the midst of a lawsuit and a contract battle at the time over pay with U.S. Soccer, and the players were fêted with shouts of "Equal Pay!" from the fans.

The team's pursuit for equal pay was finally resolved last year, when a deal was struck that paid the women the same as the U.S. men's team and, importantly, evenly split the tournament prize money earned by both teams.

"Everything where we were in 2019 to where we are now is almost the same but couldn't be more different," Alex Morgan said. "We were fighting a legal battle off the field and trying to also win over the world on the field."

The trophy isn't on the line for this match as it was in 2019, and both teams are already in good position to advance to the knockout round. But the game remains important for the final group standings: the winner has an easier path to advance in the next stage.

The Netherlands has won just one of its 10 matches against the United States, although only one of those matches was in a World Cup — that 2019 final. The only Dutch victory in the series came in the first meeting in 1991.

The two teams also met in the quarterfinals at the Tokyo Olympics, with the Americans advancing on penalties after a 2-2 draw.

"Super excited for that game," forward Megan Rapinoe said in looking ahead to the matchup. "Obviously we've seen them a number of times in big tournaments over the last few years. Ready for a good one."

The U.S. is coming off a 3-0 victory over Vietnam in the team's tournament opener in Auckland. Sophia Smith scored a pair of goals, with captain Lindsey Horan contributing the

other. Smith also had an assist.

U.S. coach Vlatko Andonovski rolled out a somewhat surprising lineup for the first match, moving midfielder Julie Ertz to center back and starting Savannah DeMelo at midfield. She made her first start in just her second appearance with the team.

Ertz returned to the team earlier this year after the birth of her son. She had not played for the U.S. for more than 600 days but was able to ramp up while playing for her club team, Angel City.

While Ertz has some experience on the backline from earlier in her national team career, the recent move was prompted by the loss of captain Becky Sauerbrunn, who injured her foot and could not play in the World Cup.

"When we knew that Becky was not going to be able to make it, that's something that we started looking into even deeper. We had a conversation with Julie before we tried it, did a lot of work before we even got in camp in terms of video analysis on both sides. We were helping her out but also she wanted to get adjust-

ed, committed as soon as possible," Andonovski said.

The U.S. will need to shore up its attack for the Netherlands, which beat Portugal 1-0 in its tournament opener. Stefanie van der Gragt scored in the 13th minute.

"I think if there's one thing we need to do better besides finishing the opportunities, it is just how can we help the players that are in the position to finish those opportunities and give them a little better service," Andonovski said.

At least there's not the drama of the past impacting the team's preparation.

"Any time you take your focus off of playing, off of what's in front of you and what your job is, of course that's taking your focus away from what you need to be doing. That's distractions that are unnecessary," Morgan said. "So not having distractions like that, like having to fight for equal pay, equal working conditions moving forward at all, ever again, it feels really good."

"And I hope that will soon be the case for all of the players around the world on the international level."

## Debutante Philippines shocks co-host New Zealand

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Philippines made history at its first Women's World Cup with its first goal and first win Tuesday, holding on under pressure to upset co-host New Zealand.

The New Zealanders only five days earlier had celebrated their first win in six trips to the Women's World Cup.

Sarina Bolden, born in Santa Clara, Calif., scored the historic match-winner in the 24th minute and goalkeeper Olivia McDaniel — another of the 18 U.S.-born or based players on the Philippines squad — produced a tireless performance to frustrate New Zealand as it desperately tried to rally.

A victory over Philippines would have meant New Zealand, which beat Norway in its opener, was the first of 32 teams at this

World Cup to advance beyond the group stage.

New Zealand had enjoyed 80% of possession before Bolden, who spent her early sporting years playing for American academies, scored on the Philippines' first shot on goal. The co-hosts were unable to recover.

New Zealand ended with 67% of possession and 14 shots on goal to the Philippines' three, but couldn't find an equalizer, let alone a winner.

Hannah Wilkinson went close on a couple of occasions and Jacqui Hand hit the post in the 64th.

The closest call came when Wilkinson crossed in the 68th to Hand, who headed into the net for what appeared to be goal. But a review showed Wilkinson was offside

and the goal was disallowed. For the rest of the match, McDaniel was a sentinel in front of the Philippines' goal.

"I've got everyone else's tears all over my eyes, it's so emotional," Philippines coach Alen Stajcic said. "You saw how long New Zealand had to wait for its first win — six World Cups — and (for Philippines) to get it today was incredible."

"We made our own luck but we also had a lot of luck. New Zealand were on the front foot the whole game and deserved something. But football is cruel sometimes."

"We were dominating the game tonight, we were keeping the ball," New Zealand coach Jitka Klimkova said. "There were too many unforced turnovers. We didn't see those turnovers in our game against Norway."



# Brewers come back to walk off on Reds

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Christian Yelich hit a game-winning single, Sal Frelick launched his first major league home run and the Milwaukee Brewers beat the Cincinnati Reds 3-2 on Monday night in their NL Central showdown.

Milwaukee overcame a colossal two-run homer by Elly De La Cruz, who was robbed of a home run earlier on a leaping catch by center fielder Joey Wiemer.

Despite going 2 for 16 with runners in scoring position, the first-place Brewers moved 1½ games ahead of Cincinnati, which had won five straight.

"We left a lot out there. They made some good pitches and we just couldn't cash in," Yelich said. "We just kept getting traffic, though. If you keep getting good's going to happen."

All-Star closer Alexis Díaz (3-2) entered in the bottom of the ninth inning and didn't get an out. He walked Blake Perkins and allowed a single to pinch-hitter Jesse Winker before Yelich drove in Perkins with a grounder into right field for the seventh walk-off hit of

his career.

Devin Williams (5-2) pitched a perfect ninth for Milwaukee, which has won six of the seven meetings between the teams since July 7.

The Reds took a 2-1 lead against starter Colin Rea in the second on De La Cruz's sixth homer of the season and second in two days. It left the rookie's bat at 114 mph and traveled 456 feet to right-center field, soaring over the stands.

De La Cruz hit the third pitch of the game 405 feet to center, where Wiemer made a leaping grab at the top of the wall.

"It's crazy how much one run, the very first play of the game, the difference that that can make," Reds manager David Bell said.

**Orioles 3, Phillies 2:** Rookie Colton Cowser hit a tiebreaking double in the ninth inning after helping to throw out the potential go-ahead run in the eighth, lifting surging Baltimore to a victory over host Philadelphia.

Ryan Mountcastle and Jordan Westburg homered for the AL-East leading Orioles, who have won 13 of 16 games and moved 2½ games ahead of idle

Tampa Bay.

**Astros 10, Rangers 9:** Chas McCormick homered and drove in a career-high six runs, and Yanier Díaz's game-ending RBI single in the ninth lifted host Houston over AL West rival Texas.

The Astros moved within two games of the division-leading Rangers.

**Blue Jays 6, Dodgers 3 (11):** Daulton Varsho hit a tiebreaking two-run double in visiting Toronto's three-run 11th inning against Los Angeles.

Matt Chapman homered in the eighth for the Blue Jays, who earned their 11th win in 16 games.

Toronto loaded the bases in the 11th on third baseman Chris Taylor's throwing error and Whit Merrifield's single before Varsho's low line drive to right was misplayed by Jason Heyward, who wasn't charged with an error.

**Cardinals 10, Diamondbacks 6:** Paul Goldschmidt hit a two-run homer and then a tying single in the ninth inning against his former team, leading visiting St. Louis over skidding Arizona.

**Royals 5, Guardians 3:** Salvador Perez became the 10th player in major league history to hit 200 homers as a catcher and Ryan Yarbrough allowed one run in six innings, lifting visiting Kansas City over Cleveland.

**Twins 4, Mariners 3 (10):** Carlos Correa's flare to right field evaded a sliding Teoscar Hernández and scored automatic runner Donovan Solano in the 10th as host Minnesota won its second straight game in extra innings.

**Rockies 10, Nationals 6:** Nolan Jones hit a two-run homer, Alan Trejo had a double and three singles and visiting Colorado beat Washington.

Karl Kauffman (1-3) pitched four-plus innings of one-run relief for his first major league win.

**Tigers 5, Giants 1:** Tarik Skubal struck out nine while recording his first victory in more than a year and host Detroit handed San Francisco its season-worst sixth straight loss.

**Pirates 8, Padres 4:** Carlos Santana hit a pair of two-run homers and visiting Pittsburgh went deep four times against Yu Darvish to beat San Diego.

## Bronny James in stable condition after cardiac arrest

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Bronny James, son of NBA superstar LeBron James, was hospitalized after going into cardiac arrest while participating in a practice at Southern California on Monday, a family spokesman said Tuesday.

The spokesman said medical staff treated the 18-year-old James on site and he was transported to a hospital, where he was in stable condition after leaving the intensive care unit.

"We ask for respect and privacy for the James family and we will update media when there is more information," the spokesman said. "LeBron and Savan-

nah wish to publicly send their deepest thanks and appreciation to the USC medical and athletic staff for their incredible work and dedication to the safety of their athletes."

### Brown, Celtics agree to 5-year supermax deal

BOSTON — The Boston Celtics have answered their most pressing question of the offseason. Jaylen Brown will be part of the franchise for the foreseeable future.

He agreed to terms on a five-year supermax contract extension that will pay him up to \$304 million, his agent said Tuesday.

It's the richest contract in NBA

history, surpassing the \$264M deal the Nuggets gave Nikola Jokic last summer.

### Bruins' Bergeron announces retirement

BOSTON — Patrice Bergeron, who in two decades with the Boston Bruins established himself as the NHL's dominant two-way forward and one of the most respected players in the game, announced Tuesday "with a full heart and a lot of gratitude" that he will retire.

"As I step away today, I have no regrets. I have only gratitude that I lived my dream, and excitement for what is next for my family and I," the Bruins captain

said in a statement posted on social media.

Bergeron won an unprecedented sixth Selke Trophy as the top defensive forward last season.

### Ledecky ties Phelps mark with gold in 1,500

FUKUOKA, Japan — Katie Ledecky won the 1,500-meter freestyle with ease on Tuesday at the World Aquatics Championships in a landmark victory which made her the most decorated female swimmer at the worlds with 20 golds overall, 15 of which have come in individual events.

That ties Michael Phelps' record for individual worlds golds.

# Stroud, Richardson agree to 4-year deals

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Rookie quarterbacks C.J. Stroud of the Houston Texans and Anthony Richardson of the Indianapolis Colts have both agreed to fully guaranteed, four-year contracts.

Stroud agreed to a \$36 million deal with Houston, a person familiar with the contract told The Associated Press. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the deal had not been announced.

Richardson, the fourth overall pick in the NFL Draft, agreed to a \$34 million contract.

Stroud, who was drafted second overall, is expected to replace Davis Mills, who struggled as the Texans' starter for

the last two seasons. Mills went 5-22-1 in 28 games, including 26 starts, as the Texans were among the NFL's worst teams.

Texans general manager Nick Caserio has said Stroud will enter camp competing for the starting job.

The Colts are counting on Richardson, the former Florida star, to provide some long-term stability at the sport's most important position. They drafted Richardson behind 2021 Heisman Trophy winner Bryce Young and Stroud but ahead of Kentucky's Will Levis.

The 6-foot-4, 232-pound Richardson posted the fastest 40-yard dash time (4.43 seconds) along with the best vertical jump (40½ inches) and broad jump (10

feet, 9 inches) of the 15 quarterbacks at the NFL combine.

He was a no-brainer for the Colts, who went 4-12-1 last season with three different starters. The question now is when Richardson will take over. A franchise that has had six different starters in as many seasons will choose between journeyman Gardner Minshew and Richardson during camp and the preseason.

The Colts are convinced Richardson can help them re-emerge as a playoff contender. They're also hoping he can become the long-term solution the franchise has sought since Andrew Luck's surprise retirement in 2019.

Richardson started just 13

games in college and completed only 53.8% of his passes in 2022.

Stroud was a two-year starter for Ohio State, where he threw for 8,123 yards with 85 touchdowns and just 12 interceptions as the Buckeyes went 21-4. His 85 touchdowns over two seasons broke a Big Ten record held by Drew Brees.

The 6-3, 218-pound Stroud is the third quarterback Houston has selected in the first round, joining Deshaun Watson, taken 12th in 2017 and David Carr, the team's first draft pick who was the top overall pick in 2002.

The Texans hired former player DeMeco Ryans as their coach this offseason. Houston has won just 11 games combined in the past three seasons.

## Contract disputes distract from NFL training camp start

Associated Press

NFL camps open this week with most of the focus on players who aren't showing up.

All-Pro defensive tackle Chris Jones skipped Sunday's first workout with the defending Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs over a contract dispute.

Veterans with the New York Giants and Las Vegas Raiders were scheduled to report Tuesday, with running back holdouts still in the spotlight. Saquon Barkley and the Giants agreed to a one-year, \$11 million contract Tuesday, while Josh Jacobs is expected to continue waiting because he didn't receive a long-term deal after getting the franchise tag. Jacobs would earn \$10.1 million this season under the tag.

Jacobs did not sign the franchise tender, which means he wouldn't be fined for missing practices. He'd lose \$560,611 per game if he sits out during the season.

Holdouts are nothing new in the NFL and they used to be more common decades ago. Jones is due to make \$19.5 million in base salary this season and carries a salary cap hit of almost \$28.3 million, so the Chiefs are motivated to get a new deal done. He faces a mandatory fine of \$50,000 per day.

"Look, we love Chris Jones and when he decides to report, we'll welcome him," Chiefs owner Clark Hunt said. "I don't want to get into speculating on when that'll happen, or if it'll happen."

Jacobs is a different story. He's angry and frustrated. He feels undervalued and underappreciated. So do many of his peers around the league, including Barkley before he re-signed.

"There's really nothing we can do," Cleveland Browns running back Nick Chubb said Sunday after he took part in a Zoom call with several backs around the league on Saturday. "We're kind of handcuffed with the situation."

It's expected Jacobs will eventually report. Missing games only costs him money he'll never regain. But there's no incentive for him to show up before September.

The biggest story line beyond holdout players surrounds Aaron Rodgers, the New York Jets and their appearance on HBO's "Hard Knocks." Rodgers and the Jets were already going to be under the microscope. Now, television cameras will be there to follow them every step of the way.

Jets coach Robert Saleh downplayed any added pressure to win because of Rodgers.

"What I've noticed in New York is that they really don't care," he said. "You're either winning or you're not, it doesn't matter who you've got. The expectation to win is constant in this league. You've always got that monkey on your back, like you've got to get that result. I've said it before — as important as the result is, if that's your only focus, you're going to skip on the process that

it takes to get that result that you want, so the pressure lies in how you handle the day, how you're getting better."

Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs reported last week, eager to get working on becoming the first team to repeat since the New England Patriots in 2003 and '04.

"It's hard to win the Super Bowl," Mahomes said. "I think I've noticed that from my first one to my second, you can do everything the right way and you don't win."

The Philadelphia Eagles, who report Tuesday, are aiming to become the first team since the 2018 Patriots and fourth ever to win a Super Bowl the year after losing one.

"This team has to find an identity for itself," Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts said.

Plenty of eyes in camp will be on rookie QBs Bryce Young in Carolina, C.J. Stroud in Houston and Anthony Richardson in Indianapolis.

Young, the No. 1 overall pick, already took over first-team reps in the offseason and appears headed to start Week 1. Stroud, the No. 2 pick, should get a similar opportunity with the Texans and first-year coach DeMeco Ryans. Richardson, who was picked fourth and didn't have much playing experience in college at Florida, probably won't start right away for the Colts but he's expected to supplant veteran Gardner Minshew at some point.