

Challenge to US military might

Expert says China and Russia annual naval exercise represents clear intentions in Pacific

BY BRIAN McELHINEY
AND KEISHI KOJA
Stars and Stripes

An annual exercise by the Chinese and Russian navies that began Monday represents a challenge this year to the international order upheld by the U.S. as its diplomatic and military prowess is in question, according to defense analysts.

The Joint Sea exercise is taking place in the Yellow Sea off Qingdao, a port city in eastern China, according to a Sunday news release from China's Ministry of National Defense.

After the exercise, the two navies "will conduct a joint maritime patrol in relevant areas of the Pacific Ocean," the release states.

The exercise represents an "implicit challenge to a free and open Indo-Pacific," according to Mark Davidson, an assistant professor of Asian studies and political science at Temple University Japan.

The Chinese and Russians

are signaling their combined strength as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan "have reason to question America's capabilities and resolve," he said Monday.

"The strategic quagmire of the American-Israeli war against Iran combined with the Trump administration's vacillations on aid to Ukraine and force drawdown in Europe have compromised America's diplomatic and military credibility," he said.

The drills were first conducted in 2012, according to a June 9 Congressional Research Service report on Russian military activities.

Taken as a whole, the annual drills "make it more likely the two regimes might decide to pull the trigger against the West and other free nations ... either individually or collectively," said Grant Newsham, a retired Marine colonel and senior researcher with the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies in Tokyo.

"China has been clear about its intentions in the Asia-Pacific — to dominate and control the region and drive the Americans out," Newsham said Monday. "Taking Taiwan is part of this strategy and Joint Sea-2026 is just one piece of the puzzle as China tightens the noose and expands its regional influence."

China has vowed to reunite self-governing Taiwan with the mainland, by force if necessary. The exercise runs through July 13, according to an article Sunday in Russian state-run media RIA.

Russian ships participating in the exercise include the cruiser Varyag, the corvette Rezkii, the diesel-electric submarine Ufa and the rescue vessel Igor Belousov.

Chinese missile destroyers Kaifeng and Anshan, the missile frigate Wuhu, the comprehensive supply ship Kekexilihu, the submarine rescue ship Yangchenghu and an unnamed submarine will participate, ac-

cording to a separate release Sunday on the China Defense Ministry's Chinese-language website.

The exercise will include courtesy meetings, joint planning sessions, professional exchanges, joint reconnaissance, air defense, missile defense and anti-ship strike exercises, according to that release.

The drills also appear to involve "cognitive warfare" to unsettle Japanese public opinion and disrupt strategic calculations by "introducing the Russian factor," according to Junjiro Shida, a senior associate professor of international studies at Meio University on Okinawa.

As Japan revises its three security documents focusing on a potential Taiwan contingency, it must "carefully consider the impact of traditional security challenges and threats — such as North Korea and Russia — that existed long before China's rise," he said Monday.

British F-35s intercept Russian aircraft near carrier

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The United Kingdom scrambled two F-35 fighters to intercept a Russian aircraft that was closely tracking a British aircraft carrier, the British defense ministry said in a statement Monday.

The incident happened on Thursday in the Norwegian Sea, where a Russian Bear-F maritime patrol aircraft repeatedly approached the HMS Prince of

Wales strike group, the ministry said.

The Bear-F "passed at low altitude and unnecessarily close" to the carrier, dropping "a large number" of sonobuoys nearby, the ministry said. Such buoys can be used for anti-submarine warfare operations.

The Russian maneuvers were deemed "unsafe and unprofessional," according to the statement, which said the Russian aircraft did not respond to U.K.

attempts to contact it.

The Russian aircraft was escorted away from the carrier by the two F-35 jets until it left the area, the ministry added.

The U.K. Carrier Strike Group is operating alongside other NATO allies as part of Arctic Sentry, a mission launched earlier this year to bolster the alliance's military presence in the Arctic and North Atlantic.

The mission was formed as

part of a response to concerns about increased Russian and Chinese activity in the High North, which President Donald Trump has cited as a reason the U.S. should take over Greenland.

Intercepts between NATO and Russian aircraft are fairly routine. Often they occur without incident, though sometimes Russian maneuvers are regarded as overly provocative and dangerous.

Pacific alarmed by Chinese missile test

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

China fired a nuclear-capable missile into the South Pacific Ocean on Monday, prompting complaints from Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

China's state-run Xinhua news agency announced a ballistic missile test that afternoon.

"The Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy on Monday successfully conducted the test launch of a strategic missile by a submarine," Xinhua reported.

The missile, carrying a simulated training warhead, fell in the designated area in the Pacific Ocean. Relevant countries were informed in advance of the launch, which was routine annual training and not directed

against any specific country or target, the agency reported.

The missile test occurred hours after Australia and Fiji committed to a new defense pact in which each pledged mutual aid in the event they are attacked.

Government officials in Australia and New Zealand told local media about the missile test before it happened.

"Australia has been clear with China that we regard this as destabilizing to the region," Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong told reporters in Fiji ahead of the launch, according to a report in the Sydney Morning Herald. "Australia has been clear that this proposed test is in the context of a rapid

military build-up by China, which is lacking in the transparency and reassurance as to intent that the region expects."

"Pacific leaders have made clear they want the Pacific to be an Ocean of Peace. We believe this test is inconsistent with that objective," she said, according to the report.

China warned Japan's coast guard of "falling space debris" ahead of the launch, according to a joint statement from several Japanese ministries Monday.

"Japan conveyed its serious concern regarding the intensification of China's military activities and strongly urged China to reconsider its plans," according to the statement.

New Zealand Foreign Minis-

ter Winston Peters called the test an "unwelcome and concerning" development.

"We as a region should not sit by and allow such tests to become normalized or routine. New Zealand will continue monitoring the situation in close coordination with regional partners," he told national broadcaster Television New Zealand.

China launched an intercontinental ballistic missile carrying a dummy warhead into the South Pacific in September 2024.

In February last year, a Chinese naval flotilla held live-fire drills in the Tasman Sea for the first time, disrupting civilian flights between Australia and New Zealand.

US to press NATO on more defense funds at summit

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

NATO's summit this week will serve as a double test for allies, with Washington pressing members to boost defense spending while seeking fewer restrictions on how U.S. forces operate from their territory.

President Donald Trump will arrive at the NATO gathering in Ankara, Turkey, on Tuesday with many allies on edge after ramping up his criticism of the alliance in recent weeks.

Last month, the Pentagon launched a review of the U.S. military's mission in Europe that could overhaul where American troops are based. U.S. officials have warned of consequences for NATO members who have not made enough progress on meeting a new allied benchmark calling for spending 5% of gross domestic product on defense.

Speaking ahead of the two-day summit that begins Tuesday, U.S. Ambassador to NATO Matthew Whitaker said report cards will

be handed out during the event. When asked during a call with reporters if the United States was preparing measures to punish those who fall short, Whitaker answered: "Yes, but nothing I'm going to talk about on this call."

Annual meetings of NATO leaders have traditionally been mundane, with communiques worked out well in advance that highlight unity among the bloc's members. Trump, however, has brought unpredictability to past meetings, demonstrating a willingness to call out allies and at times even question whether the alliance advances American interests.

In 2017, Trump publicly dressed down NATO's then leader Jens Stoltenberg and warned members he was prepared to pull the U.S. out of the pact over disagreements on defense spending.

Many members have since come around to Trump's demands. At last year's summit in The Hague, NATO nations

agreed to dedicate 5% of GDP to defense. Many allies are on path to reach that target. That includes the Baltic states, Poland and Germany — countries Whitaker praised as leading the way on military expenditures.

Spending likely won't be the only criteria Trump uses to judge the alliance's 32 members during the Ankara summit.

Trump arrives in Turkey still fuming at various NATO countries' response to the war in Iran. Spain, home to a major U.S. Navy base, refused to allow military bases and airspace in the country to be used for missions related to the conflict. Italy also enforced some restrictions on U.S. war-related operations, a situation that sparked a war of words between Trump and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

Whitaker indicated that the U.S. ability to use bases in future contingencies would factor into the force posture review.

"We will also have conversations with our allies about access,

basing, overflight and make sure that we are in agreement as to how bases can be used," he said, adding that the issue needs "to be hammered out with those allies."

Beyond basing issues, Trump has also taken issue with statements by leaders, such as German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who were critical of the U.S.-led bombing campaign in Iran. At one point during the conflict, Merz said the U.S. was being humiliated by Iran.

"The President has expressed disappointment in a couple of our allies' unwillingness to support us using our bases in their countries, and as importantly, he's also incredibly disappointed in the political statements that came out around the time of the launch of Epic Fury," Whitaker said.

The task of making sure tensions don't overshadow events in Turkey will fall to NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, who is seen as having a good relationship with Trump dating back to the president's first term.

New evacuations over fire near Aspen

The Denver Post

New mandatory evacuations were ordered Sunday morning for a nearly 4,000-acre wildfire burning near Leadville in Lake County, and a large swath of residents was placed on pre-evacuation.

The Willow fire is one of four active fires in Colorado that together have consumed more than 160,000 acres, forced thousands of evacuations and destroyed hundreds of buildings, including homes.

The combined burn area of the Willow, Aspen Acres, Gold Mountain and Ferris fires is roughly 250 square miles.

As of Sunday morning, the

Snyder fire burning along the Colorado-Utah border was nearly contained, according to fire officials.

The wildfire killed three firefighters and consumed roughly 30,200 acres — or 47 square miles — west of Grand Junction after it sparked on June 27. It was estimated to be 95% contained on Sunday.

Together, the five wildfires have scorched more than 190,000 acres, or 297 square miles. That's nearly twice the size of Denver.

Colorado's largest active wildfire, which sparked last Monday near the Aspen Acres campground, has destroyed hundreds

of homes and evacuated thousands of residents.

As of Saturday, the Aspen Acres fire had consumed 86,983 acres, or 136 square miles, and was 13% contained, according to fire officials.

At that time, it was the eighth-largest wildfire in Colorado history, roughly 300 acres behind the 2012 High Park fire, according to records from the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control.

The High Park fire destroyed 259 homes and killed one person.

Fire officials said the infrared flight was unable to map the Aspen Acres fire overnight be-

cause of thunderstorms, so no updated acreage was available Sunday morning.

Pueblo County officials estimated Saturday that the Aspen Acres fire had destroyed more than 200 homes between Pueblo and Custer counties, but damage assessment teams haven't been able to assess the full burn area because of the active fire. More than 800 personnel were on scene Sunday morning to fight the fire.

Thousands of people remained under evacuation orders in Pueblo and Custer counties on Sunday, and pre-evacuation warnings were in place in Fremont and Huerfano counties.

400 arrested after chaos erupts at July 4 event in Newport Beach

Los Angeles Times

A Fourth of July celebration erupted into chaos in Newport Beach, Calif., leading to over 400 arrests by local law enforcement.

Officers were dispatched to the Newport Peninsula about 7 p.m. Saturday following reports that large crowds were lighting fireworks and fighting, per City News Service.

Digital footage obtained by The Times showed large aerial fireworks lighted at close range, while another video showed fireworks being thrown by an unknown individual into the crowd. In another clip obtained by The Times, one individual with a Spider-Man mask was seen climbing a traffic light before leading the crowd in a chant: "USA, USA, USA."

Other videos uploaded to social media showed individuals carrying broken street signs and looting at the nearby Pavilions grocery store on West Balboa Boulevard.

Mia Meyers, 19, was closing up shop at Sancho's Tacos, which is located near Pavilions, around 5 p.m. when she witnessed swarms of people pounding on the business' windows.

"There was just a lot of chaos with underage drinking and yelling at the workers, including myself," Meyers said.

By Sunday, local volunteers had taken to the beach to help clean up the remnants of the night before.

"I only saw that one video of the [Pavilions] parking lot. Thankfully, all of the locals around here helped pick up," Meyers said. "All of the people that live around here like to keep Newport [Beach] a clean and beautiful environment, so they all worked together to help pick it up. When I came here this morning to work, I didn't see any of it."

The city launched its "Not in Newport" campaign across social media this summer to remind visitors that officials would have zero tolerance for public intoxication, illegal fireworks and other rowdy behavior.

"We always have an influx of visitors to the city for the Fourth of July. It's been like that for many years, and there's always kind of a big youth movement that has kind of ebbed and flowed," said Newport Beach Mayor Lauren Kleiman. "The last couple of years we've definitely seen an uptick, in particular kids from out of state. [It's] not atypical, but I think that social media has really changed things."

The Newport Beach Police Association took to social media to applaud the efforts of authorities, who according to their statement were outnumbered 500 to 1.

Treasury rolls out new currency signed by Trump

Bloomberg News

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced that U.S. dollar-denominated bills featuring President Donald Trump's signature were being introduced to commemorate the nation's 250th birthday.

Bessent reposted a social-media message on Saturday by the president with an image of a \$100 bill bearing Trump's familiar signature to confirm the move.

"There is no more powerful way to recognize the historic achievements of our great country and President Donald J. Trump than U.S. dollar bills bearing his signature, and it is only appropriate that this historic currency be issued at the semiquincentennial," Bessent wrote.

Traditionally U.S. paper currency contains the signature of the treasury secretary and the U.S. treasurer, not the president.

Trump has been eager to put his stamp — and his name — on institutions throughout Washington and the country.

The administration added Trump's name to the U.S. Institute of Peace last year, as well as to the board of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, which he took over at the start of his second term. A judge later ruled that his name be taken down from the arts complex. Palm Beach International Airport in Florida is also being renamed for the president.

Strike exposes Ukraine air defense gap

Bloomberg News

A deadly overnight attack on the eve of the NATO summit highlighted Kyiv's growing vulnerability as shortages of U.S.-made Patriot air defenses become acute and peace talks remain stalled.

Eleven people were killed and 60 injured in the overnight strikes on Kyiv that caused destruction in several districts of the city, damaging multiple residential buildings, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on X Monday. Three others were killed in the surrounding capital region, Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said on Telegram.

Ukraine didn't shoot down any of the 23 Iskander-M ballis-

tic missiles or the six high-speed Zircon and Oniks missiles launched by Russia, according to a Ukrainian Air Force tally published on Telegram. It had more success with slower-flying cruise missiles.

"As long as Patriot missiles remain in our allies' stockpiles, Russia is only encouraged to keep 'vanquishing' residential buildings," Zelenskyy said. "The United States and Europe have enough strength to stop this terror."

The attack followed days after 30 people died and nearly 100 were injured in the deadliest Russian missile and drone assault on Kyiv in almost a year.

Ukraine had previously inter-

cepted roughly one-third of the ballistic missiles fired in Russia's large-scale barrages, and sometimes even more. The rate fell below 20% in last week's strike on Kyiv before dropping to zero on Thursday, highlighting Kyiv's growing shortage of PAC-3 interceptor missiles for U.S.-made Patriot systems, the only air-defense weapon in its arsenal capable of reliably countering ballistic threats.

"As for ballistic missiles, the situation is still not very encouraging," air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said on 1+1 TV on Monday. "Russians are apparently using the factor of some serious deficit of PAC-2 as well as PAC-3 missiles in Ukraine as

well as in the world, so they are concentrating on ballistic strikes."

Ukraine's persistent interceptor deficit may prompt Russia to focus on ramping up production of ballistic missiles, even if their production takes longer and is more complicated than for cruise varieties, Ihnat said. The significant destruction in the capital overnight was mainly caused by Russian ballistic missiles, he said.

Zelenskyy is set to make another push for Washington to help provide essential weapons when he meets President Donald Trump in Ankara during the NATO summit that begins on Tuesday.

Ukrainian missiles have half of Russia within reach

Bloomberg News

Ukraine has expanded the range and intensity of its missile strikes inside Russia, triggering alerts across nearly half of the regions in the world's largest country so far this year.

In one recent week, missile threats were declared in at least five regions of the Volga Federal District southeast of Moscow, as well as in the southern Astrakhan region and at least four regions in the North Caucasus. Similar warnings were also issued in the Moscow, Vladimir, Tambov, Orel and Lipetsk regions of central Russia.

Ukraine has struck the Ufa oil refinery more than 800 miles from the front line, as well as a military-industrial facility in the Penza region that produces missile components.

The scale and geographic reach of the attacks highlight how Ukraine's tactics and long range strike capabilities have evolved as it attempts to bring the war closer to home for Russians. Kyiv is stepping up pressure on President Vladimir Putin to enter peace talks after more than four years of fighting.

This year, the areas that are home to more than 70% of the country's population have sounded the alarm at least once, according to a Bloomberg analysis of statements by regional authorities.

Omsk region in western Siberia, nearly 1,800 miles east of the Ukrainian border recorded its first missile alert in June, as did the entire Ural region.

Ukraine is increasingly relying on domestically developed long range cruise missiles to complement its expanding fleet of attack drones, giving Kyiv the ability to strike military and industrial targets over greater distances inside Russia.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in May that Flamingo cruise missiles had flown more than 900 miles for the first time to strike a defense plant that manufactures navigation components in Cheboksary, the capital of Russia's Chuvash Republic in the Volga region.

"This marks a significant evolution in Ukraine's long range strike campaign," said Douglas Barrie, a senior fellow for military aerospace at the Interna-

tional Institute for Strategic Studies. "Flamingo offers the ability to strike deep into Russia with a large warhead."

The ability to strike Russian critical national infrastructure with long-range attack drones and cruise missiles "is having the effect of damaging elements of the Russian industrial war effort, hitting the economy, and underscoring to the Russian public that the war on Ukraine has a cost," Barrie said.

This should translate into greater pressure on the Kremlin, but whether Putin will become more willing to negotiate is another question, he added.

Almost every Russian region reported either fuel rationing or disruptions to gasoline supplies by the end of June following Ukrainian drone strikes in recent weeks that targeted key oil refineries, temporarily halting operations at some of them.

A fire at an oil refinery in Slavyansk-on-Kuban in Russia's Krasnodar region was burning for a second day after a large-scale Ukrainian drone and missile attack on Sunday, local authorities said. The strike involv-

ing 110 drones and five Flamingo cruise missiles on the district that hosts the refinery was the largest since the start of the war, killing one person and injuring six.

Ukraine's Defense Ministry declined to comment on its missile production program.

Ukraine began producing the Flamingo last year and claims the missile has a range of up to 1,800 miles, potentially allowing it to hit targets across most of European Russia and, in theory, beyond the Ural Mountains.

Neptune, Ukraine's first home-grown long range cruise missile, was originally developed as an anti-ship weapon and used to sink the Moskva cruiser that was the flagship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in 2022.

The repurposed missile is capable of hitting land targets over a distance of as much as 1,000 kilometers.

Ukraine has fired Neptunes against targets in Crimea and Sevastopol since 2022, as well as in regions of Russia.

The Russian Defense Ministry first reported intercepting a Neptune missile in August 2023.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Central Park temps hit 100 for first time in years

NY NEW YORK — Temperatures in Central Park reached 100 degrees for the first time in nearly 14 years.

The National Weather Service New York reported last week that the mercury hit triple digits for the first time since July 18, 2012. And it felt even hotter, with a heat index of up to 106 degrees.

Emergency Management officials reminded New Yorkers that an “Extreme Heat Warning” is in effect citywide as long as dangerous conditions continue.

“The single most important thing you can do is stay in an air-conditioned space,” the Emergency Management department posted on social media. “If you have AC, use it.”

New Yorkers without access to air conditioning are advised to find a cooling center online or call 311 for assistance.

Forest Service OKs N95 masks for more work

CA LOS ANGELES — Last week, the U.S. Forest Service and Department of the Interior expanded the situations in which their firefighters are allowed to wear N95 masks.

Starting in September, the federal government began allowing firefighters to wear the masks, but not when they were working on the fire line, only at times such as in camp and sitting in vehicles.

Now they’ll be allowed to wear them during some work battling wildfires, including patrolling for areas where the

blaze has jumped past fire lines and putting out smoldering remains.

Research has linked wildfire smoke to a range of long-term health issues, including respiratory problems, cardiovascular diseases and cancers.

Even as scientists and fire officials came to terms with the very real long-term health risks, some firefighters still had concerns that masks could muffle communication, make it hard to breathe and interfere with other equipment. That slowed adoption.

Police crack down on illegal striped bass fishing

MA BOSTON — Stop overfishing for striped bass!

That’s the message from Massachusetts Environmental Police, who are cracking down on people illegally fishing for striped bass as officers make several arrests so far this season.

“With their population in a decline, enhanced management strategies have been put in place to aid in rebuilding the stock,” the agency said in a statement following a recent arrest for illegal fishing. “All laws pertaining to striped bass are a priority for MEP officers.”

The latest reported incident of illegal fishing was within a restricted area along the Merrimack River.

Environmental Police officers responded to the scene, but the fisherman had left before officers arrived. An officer then worked with Lawrence Police to help find the vehicle involved in the alleged illegal fishing.

Environmental Police officers ended up finding the fish-

erman, who was arrested for multiple fishing violations.

So far this season, there have been 13 arrests at the Lawrence Dam for fisheries related violations.

Two types of fireworks recalled around the US

MO GRANDVIEW — The very nature of fireworks makes them dangerous, so what can make fireworks so dangerous that they get recalled two days before the biggest fireworks day of all, July 4, Independence Day?

For an answer, check out Thursday’s recalls by Winco Fireworks International, based in the Kansas City suburb of Grandview, Mo.

Winco recalled about 87,120 Unity 7 Shot 200 Gram Aerial Cake Firework Devices because, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recall notice said: “The recalled fireworks can tip over, posing a risk of serious injury from explosion and burn hazards.”

This affects devices with model No. MEF6096 with date codes between 03.16.2026 and 05.18.2026.

Winco also yanked about 13,500 Roman Candles 8 Shot 3-Pack Firework Devices.

Zapp’s, Dirty potato chip recall at highest risk level

DC WASHINGTON — A recall involving certain potato chips sold under the Zapp’s and Dirty brands has been upgraded to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s highest-risk classification because of potential salmonella contamination.

The recall itself was announced on May 4, but on June 24, the FDA upgraded it to a Class I recall, meaning there is a probability that using or exposure to the product could cause serious adverse health consequences or death.

According to the FDA, Utz Quality Foods voluntarily recalled certain Zapp’s and Dirty brand potato chips because a seasoning ingredient containing dry milk powder may have been contaminated with salmonella.

Consumers who have the recalled products should not eat them and should discard them or return them to the place of purchase for a refund, according to the FDA and Utz.

Court sides with city on police vaccine mandate

IL CHICAGO — The latest chapter in a years-long legal scuffle between the city of Chicago and two of its main police unions over COVID-19 vaccine mandates has ended with a city victory, though the fight could continue.

A three-judge appellate court panel reversed a decision by the Illinois Labor Relations Board, finding the board “abused its discretion” by siding with the union during a dispute about then-Mayor Lori Lightfoot’s requirement that Police Department employees either receive the COVID vaccination or pay for their own testing twice a week. Employees who didn’t do so risked being placed on no-pay status.

Attorneys for the union could not immediately be reached for comment Thursday on whether they plan to appeal.

— From wire reports

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Kane converts PK; England holds off Mexico

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Jude Bellingham and Harry Kane carried England to the World Cup quarterfinals, overcoming a raucous crowd, the elevation of Estadio Azteca and a man disadvantage in the second half to beat Mexico in a 3-2 thriller Sunday night.

In the same stadium where England fell victim to Diego Maradona's Hand of God goal in the 1986 World Cup against Argentina, it was the foot of Kane that gave the nation redemption 40 years later.

"I am just proud of the mentality and the attitude ... round of 16 it is a moment in tournaments when you find a way to win and we did it with pure mentality and heart," England coach Thomas Tuchel said. "We overcame every obstacle that was thrown our way."

Bellingham scored two goals 98 seconds apart in the first half. And six minutes after Jarell Quansah was sent off, Kane converted a penalty to restore England's two-goal lead.

England moves on to face Nor-

way on Saturday in Miami Gardens, Fla., for a spot in the semi-finals.

"It was a crazy game. We had to fight," Kane said, his voice hoarse. "I can't really talk, but the occasion, the team, everything against us, we found a way."

Bellingham stunned the crowd of 80,824 at a venue where Mexico was unbeaten in 10 World Cup matches, including three this tournament, when he scored on a header in the 36th minute and again in the 38th on a pass from Kane.

"We've done something incredible tonight, no doubt about it, and we'll enjoy it. And we'll sing songs until we lose our voices on the plane and whatnot, but we'll have a couple of days recovering, then it's straight back to business in terms of facing Norway," Bellingham said.

Julián Quiñones scored for El Tri in the 42nd minute, and the game appeared to turn in Mexico's favor when Quansah was shown a red card in the 54th for a dangerous foul on Jesús Gallardo.

But England was awarded a penalty for a challenge by Mexico goalkeeper Raúl Rangel, and Kane converted for his sixth goal of this tournament and 14th of his World Cup career, matching Gerd Müller of West Germany for fifth on the scoring list. Kane sits one behind Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé and Erling Haaland in the Golden Boot race.

Kane then committed a foul that made him the first player since at least 1966 to score and concede a penalty in a World Cup game. Raúl Jiménez converted the kick with a stutter-step approach to move El Tri within 3-2.

"Forty, 50 minutes with 10 men — even on sea level it's almost impossible to overcome but we did it. We did it in altitude," Tuchel said. "They're almost too exhausted to celebrate. It's just beautiful that players on that kind of level just give everything for the win and for the country and for that shirt."

Mexico attacked relentlessly over the final 21 minutes, plus 11 minutes of stoppage time, but

goalkeeper Jordan Pickford and England's defenders held steady.

"This is probably one of the biggest England wins in a while, probably the biggest one I can remember as a fan or player," Bellingham said. "The best night of my England career."

Midfielder Jordan Henderson was taken to a hospital after the match with a wrist injury, Tuchel said. He was hurt when he tumbled over an advertising board during the postgame celebration.

Mexico has not reached the World Cup quarterfinals since hosting in 1986. Since then, it has lost in the round of 16 eight times, failed to advance past the group stage in 2022 and was disqualified from the 1990 tournament.

"Dreaming and falling like this hurts a lot, but the players should leave with their heads held high," Mexico coach Javier Aguirre said. "They left everything on the pitch, but today it just wasn't meant to be. The fans had high hopes, and we couldn't get the job done and give them another night of joy."

Haaland's 2 goals send Norway past Brazil to 1st quarterfinals

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Erling Haaland scored, and Andreas Schjelderup jumped on his teammate's back. Haaland scored again, and Schjelderup leapt up again.

Heading in the go-ahead goal in the 79th minute and scoring again before the end of regulation time, Haaland put Norway on his back and carried it into the World Cup quarterfinals for the first time with a 2-1 defeat of Brazil on Sunday that showcased the towering striker on soccer's biggest stage.

"Maybe this will write history in Norway," Haaland said. "Everyone just need to enjoy themselves. This is just an insane day. It's one of the most insane days in Norwegian history. Just enjoy it, embrace it and enjoy the moment."

After being a nonfactor for much of the afternoon and having limited touches, Haaland spoke at the second-half hydration break with coach Ståle Solbakken, who told him to drain his energy and go for it.

Haaland turned it on when it mattered most, getting the right side of his head on the ball after a perfect setup by Schjelderup, who entered at halftime.

Haaland scored again a little more than 10 minutes later for his seventh of the tournament, through Danilo's legs to tie Argentina's Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappé of France in the race for the Golden Boot.

"It felt it was a gift from God that it actually went into the net," Haaland said after scoring in a 14th consecutive competitive match internationally. He has 27 in that stretch and 62 in 54 with Norway.

At the other end, goalkeeper Ørjan Nyland was stellar. He made a crucial stop early, diving to his left to deny Bruno Guimarães' penalty kick in the 14th minute, then got his left hand on a shot by Endrick late when Norway was hanging on to a one-goal lead.

The only goal Nyland allowed was to Neymar on a penalty kick late in stoppage time, which changed just the final score. Neymar,

who is 34, said this was his final game playing for Brazil's national team.

Nyland, who at 35 is his team's oldest player, was a huge factor in a historic victory that ranks among the most significant in the country's history. Norway's women's team won the World Cup in 1995, but the men have only qualified four times and not since 1998. They had not gone further than the round of 16.

"I think that all Norwegian citizens are experiencing the night of a lifetime," Solbakken said. "Some people say that we have changed Norway forever. Probably, they will party for a week or so."

Norway next faces England on Saturday in Miami Gardens, Fla. Solbakken said he had more than a dozen friends already book travel to South Florida.

It was Brazil's seventh consecutive loss to European opponents in the knockout round at the World Cup, dating to beating Germany in the 2002 final.

Osaka overpowers top-ranked Sabalenka

Associated Press

LONDON — When power meets power, getting in the first blow can sometimes be the key.

In a matchup of two of the hardest hitters on tour, that was Naomi Osaka's strategy against top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka in the most highly awaited matchup of Wimbledon so far this year.

Sabalenka had beaten Osaka in all three of their previous matches this year — including at the same stage of the French Open last month.

"On the clay courts, I felt like she was pushing me back a lot. I just tried to do it to her first," Osaka said.

The tactics worked, and Osaka outslugged Sabalenka 6-2, 7-6 (2) to reach the quarterfinals at the All England Club for the first time Sunday.

Osaka's pace and flat groundstrokes overwhelmed Sabalenka.

"Obviously we're big ball strikers. It's not like I'm going to start running around the court trying to draw an error from her. I can only focus on my strengths," Osaka said. "I just

tried to serve really well, because it's grass. I also tried to get the upper hand in the rallies first."

Osaka's power had an even bigger impact than usual as her balls flew through the air faster on the warmest day of the tournament so far: The temperature during the match reached 82 degrees Fahrenheit.

"She overpowered me," Sabalenka said. "I felt like it was incredible level from her."

Besides Paris, Sabalenka also beat Osaka in Indian Wells, Calif., and Madrid this year.

"That really sucked," Osaka said. "So I wanted to turn it (around)."

When it was over, Osaka performed a few fist pumps, let out a brief smile and then placed her racket over her head and spun around in delight to celebrate her first career win on Centre Court.

"It's been a long time since I've had so much fun on the court," Osaka said. "And to do it here, it really means a lot."

It was Osaka's first win over a No. 1 player since beating Ash Barty in Beijing in 2019. That was before Osaka, a former No. 1 her-

self, took breaks from the tour to manage her mental health in 2021 and for maternity leave that resulted in her missing all of 2023.

Osaka's daughter turned 3 on Thursday.

After getting routed by Iga Swiatek at the Italian Open in May, Osaka said she "shut everyone out" on her team and "literally just got on a plane back home."

"It wasn't the most professional thing to do," she said. "I felt really ashamed about what I did. So then after that I just told myself, 'Hey, I'm nearing 30, I really got to enjoy the time that I have.' Also, obviously tennis is very, very important to me, but I have a life outside of that. I have to treasure tennis in the way that I can, which is not putting too much importance on it."

It's the second straight Grand Slam in which Sabalenka has failed to reach the latter stages. After a stunning meltdown against Diana Shnaider in the French Open quarterfinals last month, Sabalenka said she "just want to quit tennis."

This time, Sabalenka said she

wanted to "get completely drunk, forget about tennis and try to get in better shape."

Sabalenka and Osaka have each won four Grand Slam titles. All their major trophies have come on hard courts — at the Australian Open and U.S. Open.

Osaka is coming off her first grass-court final. She had to retire against Karolina Muchova in Bad Homburg, Germany, last weekend because of a foot injury.

She'll now get a rematch with Muchova, who beat 2024 Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejčíková 7-5, 5-7, 6-3.

Aces and winners

Osaka saved the only two break points she faced and put 87% of her first serves in play — compared to 69% for Sabalenka.

Osaka also led 8-5 in aces and 21-15 in winners in the match, which lasted less than 1½ hours.

"What could I do if the person is aces and hitting the lines, just going for her shots without any fear?" Sabalenka said. "She was just going for it."

"Level-wise, today," Sabalenka added, "I wasn't world No. 1."

Chicagoland Speedway return sees Briscoe holding off Bell

Associated Press

JOLIET, Ill. — Chase Briscoe was on an off-season bonding trip to the United Kingdom with crew chief James Small when the NASCAR driver discovered chocolate buttons, a popular British treat. He bought some online after he returned to the U.S., but he said it wasn't the same.

Small purchased some on a return trip to the U.K., and he promised to share if Briscoe won on the crew chief's birthday. That made Sunday night's victory pretty sweet.

Briscoe held off Christopher Bell in NASCAR's return to Chicagoland Speedway, racing to his first Cup Series win of the season. And Small delivered the chocolates to Briscoe moments

after it was over.

"They were pretty dang good," Briscoe said.

Briscoe was followed closely by Bell in the final laps on the 1.5-mile oval about 50 miles southwest of downtown Chicago. But Bell was unable to run down his Joe Gibbs Racing teammate.

The 31-year-old Briscoe, an Indiana native, celebrated his sixth career win with a burnout before standing on his car and waving to the sellout crowd.

"This has been a place that I've always loved coming to, back when we used to, and I've missed it," Briscoe said. "It's always been one of my top-five tracks."

It was Bell's fourth runner-up finish this season. He was wearing a splint on his arm as he con-

tinues his recovery after breaking his left wrist in a crash at Michigan on June 7.

"I think he's handled that as well as you can handle it," team owner Joe Gibbs said. "He's got a burning desire to stay in there and win. I think he had, you know — he had a real good car tonight, too."

Denny Hamlin, who started on the pole, was third. William Byron, who won two stages while leading a race-high 94 laps, and Alex Bowman rounded out the top five.

NASCAR ran 19 Cup races in Joliet before pulling out after the 2019 season. It tried to build interest in the event in a crowded sports market, but the race struggled with attendance.

After racing on a street course in downtown Chicago each of the previous three years, NASCAR decided to go back to Chicagoland. Rain on Friday and Saturday caused some parking issues, but the racing was compelling.

Led by Briscoe, Bell and Hamlin, Toyota accounted for seven of the top 10 cars for the first time in a Cup Series race — continuing a strong season for the manufacturer.

Driving a "Space Jam"-themed car in honor of the 30th anniversary of the Looney Tunes movie, Bubba Wallace was sixth in his No. 23 Toyota Camry. Wallace is part of the 23XI Racing team that is co-owned by Michael Jordan, one of the stars of the 1996 movie.

Marlins hold off A's after Pérez perfect in 7

Associated Press

WEST SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Eury Pérez pitched seven perfect innings before getting lifted by Miami manager Clayton McCullough, and the Marlins nearly squandered an eight-run lead Sunday in a 9-8 victory over the Athletics.

Making his third start since returning from the injured list, Pérez (5-6) was lifted after throwing 92 pitches over seven perfect innings.

"I totally get it," McCullough said. "There was a part of my heartstrings pulling at his opportunity to keep on going, but I have to think about Eury and our organization, our team and what's best moving forward to give us a chance to continue to win games."

The move immediately backfired, as reliever Lake Bachar issued a leadoff walk to Lawrence Butler, the first baserunner for the A's. Joshua Kuroda-Grauer then dunked a pop-fly single into shallow right field for their first hit.

Carlos Cortes followed with an RBI double, Max Muncy walked and Jonah Heim launched a grand slam that shaved the Marlins' lead to 8-5.

Miami still scored enough to hold off the rally, as Heriberto Hernández homered twice. The surprising Marlins (49-42) have won nine of 12 overall after completing a three-game sweep. Leo Jiménez and All-Star shortstop Otto Lopez also went deep.

Mets 10, Braves 9: Juan Soto's two-run single in the second inning gave visiting New York the lead, Nolan McLean (6-5) gave up three runs, two earned, in six-plus innings and the Mets held off Atlanta's ninth-inning comeback attempt to beat the Braves in a rain-delayed game.

New York led 10-3 after a five-run ninth but still had to withstand a major scare. Huascar Brazobán gave up five runs, including Drake Baldwin's grand slam, in the bottom of the ninth. Mets closer Devin Williams gave

up another run before striking out Dominic Smith with runners on second and third for his 13th save.

Pirates 11, Nationals 5: Connor Griffin had a tiebreaking two-run single in the eighth inning, leading visiting Pittsburgh over Washington.

Brandon Lowe followed Griffin's key hit with a three-run homer off Brad Lord (5-2) to extend the lead.

Reds 4, Orioles 2: Spencer Steer broke up a scoreless game with his 14th home run this season, Nick Lodolo (3-2) pitched six innings of one-run ball and host Cincinnati beat Baltimore.

Rookie All-Star Sal Stewart doubled home Edwin Arroyo to knock Kyle Bradish (5-9) out of the game. Stewart has 61 RBI, tied for seventh in MLB and the most by a rookie this season. He is tied for 10th in baseball with 21 doubles, also the most by a rookie.

Twins 6, Yankees 1: Joe Ryan (6-5) scattered three hits and struck out nine in seven scoreless innings and visiting Minnesota won a series at Yankee Stadium for the first time since 2014 with a victory that sent New York to its ninth loss in 10 games.

Brooks Lee had three hits, including an RBI single in the fourth following a wild pitch by Ryan Weathers (3-7). Royce Lewis had a two-run single in the fifth off Paul Blackburn and the Twins scored two unearned runs off Camilo Doval following an error by Anthony Volpe at shortstop.

White Sox 7, Guardians 6: Colson Montgomery hit a two-run homer and Kyle Teel and Tristan Peters added solo shots as visiting Chicago beat Cleveland to split a four-game series between the AL Central's top teams.

The White Sox loaded the bases with none out in the sixth against Colin Holderman (4-2) and pushed across the go-ahead run on rookie Sam Antonacci's fielder's choice. The win moved them back into first place by one game.

Cubs 6, Cardinals 4: Nico Hoerner drove in two runs, Pete Crow-Armstrong had two hits and host Chicago rallied for four runs in the sixth inning against a sloppy St. Louis defense to top the Cardinals and avoid a series sweep.

Hoerner tied it 3-all with an RBI single off Matthew Liberatore (4-6) in the sixth. Michael Busch scored to make it 4-3 when third baseman José Fermin threw Dansby Swanson's double-play grounder wide of second and into right field.

Royals 5, Phillies 2: Salvador Perez drove in two runs, Luinder Avila (4-3) threw five innings of one-run ball and host Kansas City snapped a four-game losing streak with a win over Philadelphia.

The Royals scored a pair of runs in the first inning when Lane Thomas knocked a two-out double to right-center field. Michael Massey followed with an RBI single.

Astros 2, Rays 0: Christian Walker and Isaac Paredes hit solo home runs, four pitchers combined on a four-hit shutout and host Houston beat Tampa Bay.

Peter Lambert (7-5) struck out six while he allowed three hits and walked one over 5½ innings. He was removed with a runner on second base, but Steven Okert got pinch-hitter Ryan Vilade to fly out to end the threat. Okert, Bryan King and Josh Hader finished off the game with Hader getting his ninth save.

Tigers 6, Rangers 3: Riley Greene homered, tripled and drove in four runs for visiting Detroit in a win over Texas.

Casey Mize (4-5) allowed two runs on five hits in 6½ innings as the Tigers won the series rubber game to finish a 5-1 road trip.

Rockies 7, Giants 6: Kyle Karros hit a three-run homer to left field in the eighth inning to give visiting Colorado the lead in a victory over San Francisco.

Hunter Goodman and Troy Johnston added an RBI apiece for the Rockies, who won their ninth series of the season.

Brewers 3, Diamondbacks 2: Jake Bauers homered off Arizona All-Star Eduardo Rodríguez in the seventh inning and visiting Milwaukee defeated the Diamondbacks.

Joey Ortiz's single drove in a run later in the seventh against Kevin Ginkel to make it 3-1, and the Diamondbacks got that run back in their half when Gabriel Moreno beat the relay on a bases-loaded force play.

Mariners 4, Blue Jays 0: Emerson Hancock (6-4) and the Seattle bullpen extended the Mariners' scoreless streak to 24 innings, and Mitch Garver hit a two-run homer in a 4-0 win over visiting Toronto.

He followed Logan Gilbert on Saturday to become Seattle's first starting pitchers with consecutive outings of seven shutout innings since Bryan Woo and Bryce Miller 2024. Gabe Speier and Andrés Muñoz each threw an inning of relief for the Mariners.

Padres 5, Dodgers 2: Manny Machado hit a three-run homer, Jackson Merrill and Fernando Tatis Jr. added RBI singles, and visiting San Diego snapped its eight-game losing streak with a victory over Los Angeles.

JP Sears (2-1) threw five scoreless innings of one-hit ball as the Padres ended their longest skid since 2013 and avoided a four-game sweep at the hands of the back-to-back World Series champions with their first victory since June 26.

Red Sox 7, Angels 5: Jarren Duran and Willson Contreras homered, and five Boston pitchers combined to give up two runs over 6½ innings in relief of injured starter Ranger Suarez to lead the visiting Red Sox over Los Angeles.

Suarez was followed by Greg Weissert (1-2), Tyron Guerrero and Garrett Whitlock, who combined for 4½ hitless innings. Justin Slaten gave up a run in the eighth, and Aroldis Chapman allowed a solo homer to Zach Neto in the ninth before earning his 18th save.