

## Biden appeals for tougher gun laws

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — “Enough, enough,” President Joe Biden exclaimed over and over as he delivered an impassioned address to the nation imploring Congress to take action against gun violence after mass shootings he said had turned schools, supermarkets and other everyday places into “killing fields.”

If legislators fail to act, he warned, voters should use their “outrage” to turn it into a central issue in November’s midterm elections.

Speaking at the White House on Thursday night, Biden acknowledged the stiff political headwinds as he sought to drive up pressure on Congress to pass stricter gun limits after such efforts failed following past attacks.

He repeated calls to restore a ban on the sale of assault-style weapons and high-capacity magazines — and said if Congress won’t embrace all of his proposals, it must at least find compromises like keeping firearms from those with mental health issues or raising the age to buy assault-style weapons from 18 to 21.

“How much more carnage are we willing to accept?” Biden asked after last week’s shootings by an 18-year-old gunman, who killed 19 students and two teachers at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, and another attack Wednesday in Tulsa, Okla., where a

gunman shot and killed four people and himself at a medical office. “Don’t tell me raising the age won’t make a difference,” he said.

The most recent shootings came close on the heels of the May 14 assault in Buffalo, N.Y., where a white 18-year-old wearing military gear and livestreaming with a helmet camera opened fire with a rifle at a supermarket in a predominantly Black neighborhood, killing 10 people and wounding three others in what authorities described as “racially motivated violent extremism.”

“This time we have to take the time to do something,” Biden said, calling out the Senate, where 10 Republican votes would be needed to pass legislation.

For all the passion of Biden’s address, and for all his big asks and smaller fallback alternatives, any major action by Congress is still a long shot.

“I know how hard it is, but I’ll never give up, and if Congress fails, I believe this time a majority of the American people won’t give up either,” he added. “I believe the majority of you will act to turn your outrage into making this issue central to your vote.”

Adding a stark perspective to young people’s deaths, he noted that Centers for Disease Control data shows “guns are the number one killer of children in the United States of America,” ahead of car crashes.

“Over the last two decades, more school-

age children have died from guns than on-duty police officers and active-duty military — combined,” he said.

Aware of persistent criticism from gun-rights advocates, Biden insisted his appeal wasn’t about “vilifying gun owners” or “taking away anybody’s guns.”

“We should be treating responsible gun owners as an example of how every gun owner should behave,” Biden said. “This isn’t about taking away anyone’s rights, it’s about protecting children, it’s about protecting families.”

He called on Congress to end “outrageous” protections for gun manufacturers, which severely limit their liability over how their firearms are used, comparing it to the tobacco industry, which has faced repeated litigation over its products’ role in causing cancer and other diseases.

“Imagine if the tobacco industry had been immune from being sued, where we’d be today,” Biden said.

Earlier Thursday, Vice President Kamala Harris spoke about the Oklahoma shooting, saying, “All of us hold the people of Tulsa in our hearts, but we also reaffirm our commitment to passing commonsense gun safety laws.”

“No more excuses. Thoughts and prayers are important, but not enough,” Harris said. “We need Congress to act.”

## Images suggest new Chinese carrier close to launch

*Associated Press*

BANGKOK — China’s most advanced aircraft carrier to date appears to be nearing completion, satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press showed Friday, as experts suggested the vessel could be launched soon.

The newly developed Type 003 carrier has been under construction at the Jiangnan Shipyard northeast of Shanghai since 2018. Satellite images taken by Planet Labs PBC on May 31 suggest work on the vessel is close to done.

The launch has been long anticipated, and constitutes what the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank called a

“seminal moment in China’s ongoing modernization efforts and a symbol of the country’s growing military might.”

CSIS noted in a report that China often pairs military milestones with existing holidays and anniversaries. It suggested that the vessel could be launched as soon as Friday to coincide with the national Dragon Boat Festival, as well as the 157th anniversary of the founding of the Jiangnan Shipyard.

In the satellite images, the carrier’s deck can be clearly seen. In an image taken Tuesday through wispy clouds, equipment behind the carrier appears to have been removed, a step toward flooding the entire drydock and floating the vessel. Pictures

earlier this month showed work ongoing.

Cloud cover blocked Planet Labs satellites from capturing images of the shipyard from Wednesday to Friday.

China’s Ministry of National Defense did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Though no launch was announced, the state-run Global Times newspaper on Tuesday ran a story quoting reports that it “could be launched soon.”

It added that the Chinese navy in April had released a promotional video on the country’s carrier program “in which it implied that the country’s third aircraft carrier will be officially revealed soon.”

# Ukraine marks its 100 days of war

*Associated Press*

When Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine in late February, the Russian president vowed his forces would not occupy the country. But as the invasion reached its 100th day Friday, Moscow seemed increasingly unlikely to relinquish the territory it has taken in the war.

The ruble is now an official currency in the southern Kherson region, alongside the Ukrainian hryvnia. Residents there and in Russia-controlled parts of the Zaporizhzhia region are being offered expedited Russian passports. The Kremlin-installed administrations in both regions have talked about plans to become part of Russia.

The Moscow-backed leaders of separatist areas in eastern Ukraine's Donbas region, which is mostly Russian-speaking, have expressed similar intentions. Putin recognized the separatists' self-proclaimed republics as independent two days before launching the invasion, and fierce fighting has been underway in the east for weeks as Russia seeks to "liberate" all of the Donbas.

The Kremlin has largely kept mum about its plans for the cities, towns and villages it has bombarded, encircled and finally captured. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said it will be up to the people living in seized areas to decide their status.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said this week that enemy forces now control almost one-fifth of the country's territory. But in a video message marking the war's first 100 days, he made it clear Ukraine will not submit easily.

"We have defended Ukraine for 100 days already. Victory will be ours," he said.

Initially, at least, annexing

more land from Ukraine was not believed to be the main goal of the invasion. It was widely thought that the Kremlin intended to install a pro-Moscow government in Kyiv that would prevent Ukraine from joining NATO and pulling further away from Russia's influence.

But now, Moscow is unlikely to let go of its military gains, according to political analysts.

"Of course (Russia) intends to stay," said Andrei Kolesnikov, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. To Russia, "it's a pity to give away what has been occupied, even if it was not part of the original plan."

Russian forces captured much of Kherson and neighboring Zaporizhzhia early in the war, gaining control over most of Ukraine's Sea of Azov coast and securing a partial land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. They completed the takeover last month with the capture of the port city of Mariupol following a three-month siege.

Residents of the cities of Kherson and Melitopol took to the streets to protest the occupation, facing off with Russian soldiers in plazas. Ukrainian officials warned that Russia might stage a referendum in Kherson to declare the region an independent state.

Petro Kobernyk, 31, an activist with a nongovernmental organization who fled Kherson with his wife, said Russian security forces are cracking down on pro-Ukrainian activists.

"Hundreds of pro-Ukrainian activists, including my friends, are being held in the basements of security services," Kobernyk said by phone. "Those who express their position are kidnapped and tortured, threatened and forced out of the region."

Russian forces keep people in an "information vacuum," with Ukrainian websites no longer available, Kobernyk said.

His claims could not be independently verified.

But some in captured areas of Ukraine have welcomed a Russian takeover.

"I've wanted to live in Russia since I was little, and now I realize I don't even have to move anywhere," said Vadim Romanova, a 17-year-old from Mariupol.

In Russian-occupied cities in southern Ukraine, people with pro-Kremlin views replaced mayors and other local leaders who disappeared in what Ukrainian officials and media said were kidnappings. Russian flags were raised, and Russian state broadcasts that promoted the Kremlin's version of the invasion supplanted Ukrainian TV channels.

The Russian ruble was introduced as the second official currency in both the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions — at least in the parts under Russian control — and pro-Russian administrations started offering a "one-time social payment" of roughly \$163 to local residents.

An office of Russia's migration services opened in Melitopol, taking applications for Russian citizenship from residents of the captured southern regions through a fast-track procedure. The procedure was first implemented in 2019 in the rebel-controlled areas of the Donbas, where more than 700,000 people have received Russian passports.

Top Russian officials started touring the regions, touting the territories' prospects for being integrated into Russia. Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin visited Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in mid-May and indicat-

ed they could become part of "our Russian family."

A senior official in the Kremlin's ruling United Russia party, Andrei Turchak put it even more bluntly in a meeting with residents of Kherson: "Russia is here forever."

Members of the pro-Kremlin administrations in both regions soon announced that the areas would seek to be incorporated into Russia. While it remains unclear when or if it will happen, Russia appears to be digging in.

Oleg Kryuchkov, an official in Russia-annexed Crimea, said this week that the two southern regions have switched to Russian internet providers. State media ran footage of people lining up to get Russian SIM cards for their cellphones. Kryuchkov also said that both regions are switching to the Russian country code, +7, from the Ukrainian +380.

Senior Russian lawmaker Leonid Slutsky, a member of the Russian delegation, in stalled peace talks with Ukraine, said that referendums on joining Russia could take place in the Donbas, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions as early as the beginning of July.

Kremlin spokesman Peskov was evasive when asked Friday whether Russian authorities planned to hold votes in those areas, saying that it would depend on the course of Russia's offensive.

Tatyana Stanovaya, founder and CEO of R.Politik, an independent think tank on Russian politics, said she believes Putin doesn't want to rush the referendums and run the risk of them being denounced as shams.

"He wants the referendum to be real, so that the West can see that, indeed, Russia was right — the people want to live with Russia," Stanovaya said.

# US employers add 390K jobs in May

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers added a healthy 390,000 jobs in May, extending a streak of solid hiring that has bolstered an economy under pressure from high inflation and interest rates.

Last month's gain reflects a still-healthy job market despite concerns that the economy will weaken in the coming months as the Federal Reserve steadily raises rates to fight inflation. The unemployment rate was unchanged at a low 3.6%, the Labor Department said Friday.

Businesses in many industries remain desperate to hire because their customers have kept spending freely despite intensifying concerns about high inflation. Americans' finances have been buoyed by rising pay and an unusually large pile of savings that were accumulated during the pandemic, particularly by higher-income households.

Workers, in general, are enjoying nearly

unprecedented bargaining power.

The number of people who are quitting jobs, typically for better positions at higher pay, has been at or near a record high for six months.

The strength of the job market is itself contributing to inflationary pressures. With wages rising across the economy, companies are passing on at least some of their increased labor costs to their customers in the form of higher prices. The costs of food, gas, rent and other items — which fall disproportionately on lower-income households — are accelerating at nearly the fastest pace in 40 years.

Inflation had begun surging last year as spiking demand for cars, furniture, electronic equipment and other physical goods collided with overwhelmed supply chains and parts shortages.

More recently, prices for such services as airline tickets, hotel rooms and restaurant meals have jumped as Americans have

shifted more of their spending to those areas.

The Fed's rapid rate hikes, which are on track to be the fastest in more than 30 years, could eventually weaken the economy. To try to cool spending and slow inflation, the central bank raised its short-term rate last month by a half-point, its biggest hike since 2000, to a range of 0.75% to 1%.

Two additional half-point rate increases are expected this month and in July. And some Fed officials have suggested in recent speeches that if inflation doesn't show signs of slowing, they could implement yet another half-point increase in September.

The Fed's moves have already sharply elevated mortgage rates and contributed to drops in sales of new and existing homes.

The rate hikes have also magnified borrowing costs for businesses, which may respond by reducing their investment in new buildings and equipment, slowing growth in the process.

## Police shoot Texas fugitive after he kills family of 5

*Associated Press*

A convicted murderer on the run since escaping a prison bus after stabbing its driver last month was fatally shot by law enforcement late Thursday after he killed a family of five and stole their truck from a rural weekend cabin, a Texas prison system spokesman said.

Gonzalo Lopez, 46, was killed about 10:30 p.m. Thursday in Jourdanton, Texas, about 35 miles south of San Antonio, said Jason Clark, spokesman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

"Law enforcement in Atascosa County located the stolen vehicle, disabled it with

spike strips, and gunfire ensued," Clark said in a statement. No officers were injured, he said.

Lopez was killed in an exchange of gunfire about 220 miles southwest of Centerville, Texas, where Clark earlier said Lopez had killed a Houston family of five at their cabin and stole their pickup truck.

Lopez was thought to be hiding in the vicinity of the cabin when officers received a call from someone concerned after not hearing from an elderly relative, Clark said.

Officers went to the family's cabin along Texas Route 7 west of Centerville

about 6 p.m. Thursday and found the bodies of one adult and four minors. Identities were not released, but gone was their white pickup truck, Clark said. Lopez was believed to have driven the truck from the search area, he said. Lopez was a former member of the Mexican Mafia prison gang and had ties to South Texas, he said.

Lopez had been the subject of an intensive search since his May 12 escape from the prison bus. He was serving a life prison sentence for a 2006 conviction of murdering a man along the Texas-Mexico border.

## Over 750 complaints claim Teslas brake for no reason

*Associated Press*

DETROIT — More than 750 Tesla owners have complained to U.S. safety regulators that cars operating on the automaker's partially automated driving systems have suddenly stopped on roadways for no apparent reason.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration revealed the number in a detailed information request letter to Tesla that was posted Friday on the agency's

website.

The 14-page letter dated May 4 asks the automaker for all consumer and field reports it has received about false braking, as well as reports of crashes, injuries, deaths and property damage claims. It also asks whether the company's "Full Self Driving" and automatic emergency braking systems were active at the time of any incident.

The agency began investigating phantom braking in Tesla's Models 3 and Y last Feb-

ruary after getting 354 complaints. The probe covers an estimated 416,000 vehicles from the 2021 and 2022 model years. In February, the agency said it had no reports of crashes or injuries.

The letter gives Tesla a deadline of June 20 to respond to the information request but says the company can ask for an extension.

A message was left early Friday seeking comment from Tesla.

# Tulsa gunman targeted his surgeon

*Associated Press*

A gunman who killed his surgeon and three other people at a Tulsa medical office blamed the doctor for his continuing pain after a recent back operation and bought an AR-style rifle just hours before the rampage, police said Thursday.

The patient called the clinic repeatedly complaining of pain and specifically targeted the doctor who performed the surgery, then killed himself as police arrived, Tulsa Police Chief Wendell Franklin said.

That physician, Dr. Preston Phillips, was killed Wednesday, along with Dr. Stephanie Husen, receptionist Amanda Glenn and visitor William Love, police said. The attack occurred on the campus of Saint Francis Health System in Tulsa. The chief identified the shooter as Michael Louis, 45, of Muskogee, Okla.

It was the latest in a series of mass shootings in the United States including the deadly school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, and an attack on a supermarket in Buffalo, N.Y. The recent Memorial Day

weekend saw multiple mass shootings nationwide, including at an outdoor festival in Taft, Okla., 45 miles from Tulsa, even as single-death incidents accounted for most gun fatalities.

President Joe Biden addressed the carnage in recent years from mass shootings with AR-style rifles in an address Thursday night.

Since the mass shooting at a Uvalde elementary school killed 21 people, including 19 children, “just over a week ago, there have been 20 mass shootings in America, each with four or more people killed or injured,” he said. After describing the Tulsa shooting as one of those 20 mass shootings, the president said, “That doesn’t count the carnage we see every single day that doesn’t make the headlines.”

Louis carried a letter that said he was targeting Phillips, Franklin said. The letter “made it clear that he came in with the intent to kill Dr. Phillips and anyone who got in his way,” Franklin said. “He blamed Dr. Phillips for the ongoing pain

following the surgery.”

Franklin said Phillips performed the surgery on May 19 and Louis was released from the hospital on May 24.

He said Louis called the doctor’s office “several times over several days” reporting he was still in pain and saw Phillips on Tuesday for “additional treatment.” Louis called the office again Wednesday “complaining of back pain and wanting additional assistance,” he said.

A phone number listed for an address for a Michael Louis in Muskogee was not working Thursday.

Phillips, 59, was an orthopedic surgeon with an interest in spinal surgery and joint reconstruction, according to a profile on the clinic’s website. He once served as lead physician for Tulsa’s WNBA team before the franchise moved out of state, according to the Tulsa World.

Police believe Louis bought his weapons legally, Franklin said. Louis bought an AR-style semi-automatic rifle on the afternoon of the shooting and a handgun on Sunday, the police chief said.

## NY votes to raise age to buy semi-auto rifles

*Associated Press*

ALBANY, N.Y. — New York’s legislature voted Thursday to ban anyone under age 21 from buying or possessing a semi-automatic rifle, a major change to state firearm laws pushed through less than three weeks after an 18-year-old used one of the guns to kill 10 people at a supermarket in Buffalo.

The bill raising the age limit is the most significant part of a package of gun control measures announced earlier this week by Democratic legislative leaders and Gov.

Kathy Hochul.

Other new legislation will restrict civilian purchases of bullet-resistant armor, which was worn by the killer in Buffalo, and require new guns to be equipped with microstamping technology that can help law enforcement investigators trace bullets to particular firearms.

The age limit bill passed the Senate along party lines, 43-20, and in the Assembly 102-47, and will now head to Hochul’s desk for her signature.

New York already requires people to be 21 to possess a handgun. Younger people would still be allowed to have other types of rifles and shotguns under the new law, but would be unable to buy the type of fast-firing rifles used by the 18-year-old gunmen in the mass shootings in Buffalo and at a Texas elementary school.

Besides raising the legal purchase age to 21, the bill would also require anyone buying a semi-automatic rifle to get a license — something now only required for handguns.

## COVID shots for youngest kids possible by June 21

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration said Thursday that children under 5 may be able to get their first COVID-19 vaccination doses as soon as June 21, if federal regulators authorize shots for the age group, as expected.

White House COVID-19 coordinator Ashish Jha outlined the administration’s planning for the last remaining ineligible age

group to get shots.

He said the Food and Drug Administration’s outside panel of advisers will meet on June 14-15 to evaluate the Pfizer and Moderna shots for younger kids. Shipments to doctors’ offices and pediatric care facilities would begin soon after FDA authorization, with the first shots possible the following week.

Jha said states can begin placing orders

for pediatric vaccines on Friday, and said the administration has an initial supply of 10 million doses available.

He said it may take a few days for the vaccines to arrive across the country and vaccine appointments to be widespread.

“Our expectation is that within weeks every parent who wants their child to get vaccinated will be able to get an appointment,” Jha said.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Janitor corrals curious cougar in classroom

**CA** PESCADERO — A quick-thinking custodian safely confined a curious cougar in an empty classroom after it entered a Northern California high school Wednesday morning, authorities said.

The custodian was opening Pescadero High for the school day when the juvenile mountain lion was spotted, said Detective Javier Acosta with the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. No students or teachers were on campus at the time, Acosta said.

"The mountain lion casually walked through campus and decided to go into an English classroom," he said. "The custodian acted quickly and managed to shut the door behind it."

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife tranquilized the cat and sent it to the Oakland Zoo for examination.

### Wildlife education center set to open

**WV** ALUM CREEK — Guided hikes, exhibits and interactive programming will greet guests during the grand opening of the Claudia L. Workman Wildlife Education Center, officials said.

The event on Saturday is being hosted by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources and the Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation. Those who attend the free event in Alum Creek can tour the 9,500-square-foot building, explore the 102-acre property and attend shows presented by the West Virginia Raptor Rehab Center, the Division of Natural Resources said in a statement.

The opening fulfills the vision of the center's namesake, Claudia Workman, whose husband donated the land in 2015 so a nature-based education center could be built.

### Envelope shortage impedes \$850 checks

**ME** PORTLAND — Most Maine residents will soon receive \$850 checks to help them cope with inflation after a shortage of envelopes and paper products threatened to slow delivery.

Democratic Gov. Janet Mills said Wednesday her administration will send the first round of the checks this week. Mills said an initial 5,000 checks are to be sent on Thursday and an estimated 200,000 will be mailed per week after that, so most residents will receive the money by the middle of July.

The Maine Legislature approved the rebate program, which returns more than half of the state's \$729 million budget surplus to residents. The Office of the Maine State Treasurer said it was initially concerned about the envelope shortage, but has a sufficient number to distribute the checks.

### Steam railroad halts opening amid fire threat

**NM** The commission that oversees a historic steam railroad in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado voted Wednesday to delay opening its operating season by nearly three weeks because of the extreme wildfire threats in the region.

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad operates passenger trains on 64 miles of narrow-

gauge tracks between Chama, N.M., and Antonito, Colo. The two states own the railroad, which provides an economic boost to a five-county region.

The commission voted during an emergency meeting to delay the opening from June 11 to July 1, when summer rains are expected to dampen the region.

### Dogs seized from facility; talks ongoing

**VA** LYNCHBURG — Federal officials and a company that runs a central Virginia research dog-breeding facility are working toward a potential settlement in a civil case accusing the company of animal welfare violations, according to court documents filed Wednesday.

The government and Envigo RMS filed a joint motion asking a judge to extend by two weeks the terms of a temporary restraining order issued against the company in late May. The restraining order had been set to expire Saturday, but both parties are asking for more time to "work out the details of their settlement," the motion said.

The motion also disclosed that Envigo has relinquished 446 beagles seized pursuant to a search warrant and determined to be in "acute distress." That's an increase from the 145 dogs officials said had been seized at the time they filed their complaint.

### Young girl's fire closes Walmart for repairs

**LA** HARAHAAN — A girl who appeared to be 6 to 9 years old started a fire that has closed a suburban New Orleans Walmart for repairs, the

Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office said.

The fire destroyed two aisles of merchandise and started the sprinkler system, causing store-wide water damage at the store in Harahan, according to a sheriff's office news release posted on Twitter.

The child came in with a woman and toddler, left them at some point and went into a restroom unsupervised, the statement said.

She got a cigarette lighter from a display near a register. She then set the fire in an area containing ladies' fashion accessories, the news release said.

### Schools chief fined in school bus passing case

**MT** HELENA — Montana's top schools official was fined \$100 after she pleaded no contest to a citation alleging she illegally passed a stopped school bus while children were boarding.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Elsie Arntzen entered the plea meaning that she did not not admit guilt but was not contesting the charge, according to Helena Municipal Court records.

Arntzen was cited last week for illegally passing the bus in a residential subdivision.

She said she does not recall the incident, but the East Helena Public Schools bus driver recognized her and wrote down the license plate of the pickup truck that passed the bus, according to police reports. The school district also gave Helena police two photos from the school bus video camera showing the incident.

-From Associated Press

STARS AND STRIPES®

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

Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Celtics sink 3s, Warriors in Game 1

*Associated Press*

SAN FRANCISCO — Once Boston's balanced roster of NBA Finals first-timers found a groove from long range, the determined Celtics delivered a memorable comeback and rallied past Stephen Curry and the Golden State old guard.

Jaylen Brown fueled the late charge and scored 24 points, Al Horford hit six three-pointers, and the Celtics rode the most lopsided fourth quarter in NBA Finals history to a 120-108 victory over the Warriors in Game 1 on Thursday night.

Horford finished with 26 points and the Celtics outscored the Warriors 40-16 in the final 12 minutes after trailing by 15 points late in the third quarter. The 15th-year big man, who turned 36 Friday, played in 141 previous postseason games, most ever before playing in the NBA Finals.

"I felt like the guys kept finding me time after time. Also, Derrick White hit some tough shots there, too," Horford said. "I was just getting the looks, knocking them down. That's that."

Boston made its first seven tries from long distance in the fourth and wound up 9-for-12 beyond the arc in the period as almost everybody got involved in the three-point flurry. Jayson Tatum was the lone Celtics regular who struggled offensively, finishing 3-for-17, although he did have 13 assists.

Curry scored 34 points in his return to the

NBA's big stage for the first time in three years, but the Warriors couldn't sustain momentum from a 38-point third quarter that put them ahead 92-80.

"It's not ideal but I believe in who we are and how we deal with adversity, how we responded all year, how we respond in the playoffs after a loss," Curry said. "So learn a lot from that fourth quarter. Obviously they made a lot of shots. It seemed like they didn't miss 'til deep into the fourth. When you have a team that just finds a little bit of momentum like they did and they keep making shots, it's tough to kind of regain that momentum."

Game 2 is Sunday night back at Chase Center.

The Celtics were the first team to trail a Finals game by 10 or more points after three quarters and win by 10 or more, according to Sportradar. They are 8-2 on the road in these playoffs.

"It's an unbelievable feeling just to be here and competing at this level against such a dynamic franchise the last couple years," Boston guard Payton Pritchard said. "I think we're all just looking forward to the challenge to go through the series and try to get it done."

White's three over Curry with 5:40 remaining tied the game at 103, then Horford hit from deep the next time down as the Celtics took their first lead since halftime.

Boston is looking to capture its record-

breaking 18th title, which would move the Celtics past the Lakers — and now is just three wins away from doing it.

Brown, who starred at nearby California for one college season, made consecutive baskets that tied the game at 47 with 5:03 left before halftime and the Celtics led 56-54 at the break. Golden State then used a signature third-quarter spurt, pouring in 38 points to build a big lead.

Brown scored five quick points early in the fourth and assisted on an alley-oop dunk to Robert Williams III as the Celtics pulled back within 92-87 with 9:35 remaining. The lead was four midway through the fourth before Boston blew past Golden State with a 20-2 run that made it 117-103.

Andrew Wiggins scored 20 points in his Finals debut and Draymond Green grabbed 11 rebounds before fouling out with 48.3 seconds left. Klay Thompson contributed 15 points as the Warriors began their sixth Finals in eight years after making five straight trips from 2015-19 and winning three championships.

They'll have to win this one from behind after going 21-2 in their previous Game 1s under Steve Kerr.

"It's a different feeling. You obviously go into Game 2 with more of a sense of desperation. That's all part of this stuff. We've been in this position before," Kerr said. "Boston played a brilliant quarter. They came in and earned the win."

## Nadal back in French Open final after Zverev stops

*Associated Press*

PARIS — Rafael Nadal was locked in a tight, compelling and lengthy French Open semifinal Friday when his opponent, third-seeded Alexander Zverev, ran to his right to chase a shot and twisted his right ankle. Zverev crumpled to the ground, wailing in agony and clutching at his lower leg.

His black outfit, arms and legs caked with rust-colored clay, Zverev was helped up by a trainer, then taken away from the court in a wheelchair. Minutes later, Zverev came back out onto Court Philippe Chatrier on crutches, his right shoe removed, and conceded the match, unable to continue.

The sudden end to a contest that was 3 hours old but not even through two full sets allowed Nadal to become, on his 36th birth-

day, the second-oldest men's finalist in French Open history. Now he will try to become the oldest champion at a tournament he's already won a record 13 times.

"Being in the final of Roland Garros is a dream, without a doubt," Nadal said during an on-court interview, then revealed he had seen Zverev crying in a small room in the stadium.

"Very tough, no? And very sad for him, honestly, no?" Nadal told the full house of 15,000 spectators who had loudly tried to encourage him throughout the match, chanting "Ra-fa!" repeatedly.

With the pitter-patter of rain audible against the closed retractable roof at Court Philippe Chatrier, Nadal emerged to claim a tight-as-can-be, draining first set that lasted 1½ hours by a 7-6 (8) score. The sec-

ond set also was headed to a tiebreaker after another 1½ hours when Zverev tumbled behind the baseline.

A trainer came out to attend to him, and Nadal walked around the net to check on Zverev, too. After Zverev returned and said he would need to retire from the match, he shook the chair umpire's hand and then hugged Nadal.

Nadal has been dealing with chronic pain in his left foot and was coming off a pair of victories that each lasted more than 4 hours — including against defending champion Novak Djokovic on Tuesday — but showed no signs of age, injury or fatigue against the 25-year-old Zverev.

In addition to bidding for a 14th trophy from the French Open, Nadal can claim his 22nd Grand Slam title.

# Avs blank Oilers, forge 2-0 series lead

Associated Press

DENVER — As an early birthday present, Colorado backup goaltender Pavel Francouz received a whole lot of defense and a shutout to go with it.

Just not the nod to take over as the starter. That will have to wait.

Francouz stopped 24 shots for his second career playoff shutout, Nazem Kadri had three assists in a 2:04 span in the second period and the Avalanche beat the Edmonton Oilers 4-0 on Thursday night to take a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference finals.

“Since the first seconds, I knew they would help me a lot so that made me more calm,” said Francouz, who turned 32 on Friday. “I could just focus on my play.”

The Avalanche focused on proving a point — that a team known for its speed could also play some tenacious “D.” It was under scrutiny after a Game 1 in which they won 8-6 but nearly

squandered a four-goal lead.

This time, they locked in.

“Definitely a confidence booster,” Kadri said. “We can play either way — we can score and we can defend.”

Francouz grew stronger with every save he made as he stepped in for Darcy Kuemper, who left Game 1 with an upper-body injury. Francouz was serenaded with chants of “Frankie! Frankie!” from the crowd.

“It was an overall team effort,” Francouz said. “It was better when they were shouting, ‘Go, Avs, Go!’ or ‘Let’s go Avs!’”

For as good as he was, coach Jared Bednar wasn’t ready to proclaim him the starter moving forward.

“We’ll see,” Bednar said.

“We’ll evaluate the game and we’ll talk to Darcy and Frankie and then we’ll make our decision.”

Colorado held Edmonton’s big three of Connor McDavid, Leon Draisaitl and Evander Kane to seven shots. Draisaitl

saw his streak of nine straight games with at least one assist come to an end.

“They’ve got good players. They’ve got good D-men,” McDavid said. “They do a lot of good things, and we’ve got to find a way to figure them out.”

The Avalanche broke through in the second after a scoreless opening period that featured something rarely seen so far in this series — defense. Artturi Lehkonen and Josh Manson scored 15 seconds apart to get things going in the second, with Mikko Rantanen adding another on Kadri’s third assist.

Nathan MacKinnon scored late in the third. He had 11 shots.

Game 3 is Saturday in Edmonton. The Avalanche are 5-0 on the road so far in these playoffs, and 15-4 in a best-of-seven series when taking a 2-0 lead.

Mike Smith allowed four goals on 40 shots. This after the 40-year-old Smith was pulled in Game 1 after surrendering six

goals.

Edmonton is looking to regroup at home.

“We’re certainly not counting ourselves out of this one,” Oilers defenseman Tyson Barrie said. “We’ve got a lot of hockey left to play.”

To slow down the speedy MacKinnon, Edmonton tried to shadow him at all times. The relentless pressure included a trip by Duncan Keith after the whistle. It didn’t draw a penalty but drew plenty of boos from the crowd. MacKinnon also got smacked in the face on a play.

Kadri was originally credited with the first goal at 3:58 of the second before it was ruled that Lehkonen tipped the puck. Kadri ended up tying the franchise record for assists in a period. It was a mark set by Quebec’s Risto Siltanen in 1987 and matched in 1996 by Avalanche Hall of Fame forward turned GM Joe Sakic.

“Some fortunate bounces,” Kadri said.

## Griner receiving, answering emails from WNBA players

Associated Press

Brittney Griner can’t play with her WNBA colleagues. She can’t call them, either.

But she can write.

In one small bit of normalcy, Griner has been able to receive emails and letters from WNBA players during her detainment in Russia. Hundreds of emails have been sent by players to an account Griner’s agent set up to allow them to communicate with her.

It’s not easy: The emails are printed out and delivered sporadically in bunches to Griner by her lawyer after they are vetted by Russian officials. Griner doesn’t have access to the email account; she’ll either write a response on paper and her lawyers will take a photo of it or she’ll dictate a response if she

doesn’t have any paper.

Los Angeles Sparks forward Amanda Zahui B. never thought she’d hear back from Griner when she sent an email to the Phoenix Mercury center a few months ago.

“When she responded to my second letter it blew me away,” Zahui B. said. “I was like she responded!! In my third letter, I was like ‘hey best friend, we are officially best friends now.’”

Like so many WNBA players, Zahui B. wanted Griner to know she was thinking about her as the two-time Olympic gold medalist remains, in the view of U.S. officials, wrongfully detained in Russia.

Griner has been detained for 105 days after vape cartridges containing oil derived from cannabis were allegedly found in

her luggage at an airport near Moscow.

When Zahui B. got her first response from Griner it made her smile and she promised herself she would send more notes. And she has, sending them every few weeks. So have many other players.

“We just don’t want her to think she’s forgotten,” Liberty center Stefanie Dolson said.

It’s not just emails being sent to Griner; Diana Taurasi actually sent a hand-written letter to her Mercury and Olympic teammate.

Griner’s agent Lindsay Kaga-wa Colas said the letters have been a way for the 6-foot-9 center to stay connected to her WNBA family.

Some players just offer hopes and prayers for Griner’s release

and say they are thinking about her. Others send Sudoku puzzles or more personal notes.

“She jokes in her letters. I don’t know how she does it with what she’s going through. She’s an amazing soul,” Zahui B. said. “She brings light in a situation like this. I don’t think a lot of people could manage to do that.”

Zahui B., who jokingly admitted she tends to ramble, sent Griner updates on her daily activities describing such mundane things as getting her nails done or what she ate for lunch.

Griner faces drug smuggling charges that carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. Another American regarded as unjustly detained in Russia is Paul Whelan, a corporate security executive from Michigan.

# Yankees pitcher Taillon nears perfection

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jameson Taillon took a perfect game into the eighth inning, then fell behind before the New York Yankees rallied past the Los Angeles Angels 2-1 Thursday night on a clutch swing by pinch-hitter Anthony Rizzo.

With two outs in the bottom of the eighth, Rizzo grounded a two-run single up the middle. Clay Holmes left the bases loaded in the ninth, and the Yankees swept a doubleheader while handing the Angels their eighth straight loss — the team's worst skid since 2019.

New York won the opener 6-1, with manager Joe Maddon indicating starter Shohei Ohtani may have been tipping his pitches. The AL MVP gave up solo homers to Matt Carpenter, Gleyber Torres and Aaron Judge.

Jared Walsh ended Taillon's bid for a perfect game in the top of the eighth with a ground-ball double off shortstop Isiah Kiner-Falefa's glove. He scored on Kurt Suzuki's single for a 1-0 lead. The Yankees countered by loading the bases with one out in the bottom half against Oliver Ortega (1-2). Archie Bradley relieved and struck out Joey Gallo, then got two strikes on Rizzo.

Ohtani made history in the nightcap, joining Hall of Fame slugger Jimmie Foxx as the on-

ly players to start both ends of a doubleheader, one of them as a pitcher, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Foxx did it with the Philadelphia Phillies in 1945 during the final month of his career.

In the first game, Nestor Cortes (5-1) delivered seven tidy innings for the Yankees.

**Dodgers 2, Mets 0:** Tony Gonsolin (6-0) allowed two hits in six sharp innings as host Los Angeles snapped New York's six-game winning streak.

Trea Turner doubled on Taijuan Walker's first pitch of the sixth to extend his 25-game hitting streak, tops in the majors this year.

**Brewers 5, Padres 4:** Jace Peterson tied the score in the ninth inning with a three-run triple and slumping Andrew McCutchen followed with a game-ending single as Milwaukee rallied past visiting San Diego.

Peter Strzelecki (1-0) worked two innings in relief, earning the win in his major league debut. He struck out three.

**Blue Jays 8, White Sox 3:** Alek Manoah pitched into the eighth inning, Teoscar Hernández homered and host Toronto extended its winning streak to eight games.

Manoah (6-1) allowed three runs and six hits, walked one and struck out five in 7 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings. He's 9-0 with a 2.12 ERA

in 13 career home starts.

**Marlins 3, Giants 0:** Sandy Alcantara allowed three hits in seven innings as Miami beat visiting San Francisco.

The 26-year-old right-hander walked two and struck out eight, extending his string of recent dominant outings. Alcantara (6-2) has completed at least seven innings in his last five starts and allowed only three earned runs. He lowered his ERA to 1.81.

**Cubs 7, Cardinals 5:** Frank Schwindel launched a long solo homer and doubled among his three hits as Chicago topped visiting St. Louis.

Willson Contreras went deep for the third time in four games and Ian Happ also homered to help Chicago end the Cardinals' three-game winning streak.

**Braves 13, Rockies 6:** Travis d'Arnaud homered twice, including a grand slam, and drove in a career-high six runs as visiting Atlanta pounced on Colorado.

The Braves had 18 hits against the Rockies, who have allowed 39 runs over the past three games.

**Rays 3, Rangers 1:** Corey Kluber pitched six solid innings to give Tampa Bay a win over host Texas.

Kluber (2-2) allowed one run and four hits, striking out four and walking none. The two-

time AL Cy Young Award winner matched his longest outing of the season.

**Mariners 7, Orioles 6 (10):** Abraham Toro hit a tiebreaking triple in the top of the 10th inning, and Diego Castillo shut down host Baltimore in the bottom half to give Seattle a win.

With the automatic runner on third and one out, Toro hit a drive to deep center field off Jorge López (3-3). Cedric Mullins ran it down at the wall but couldn't hold onto the ball. López retired Luis Torrens and Jesse Winker to limit the Mariners to a run.

**Tigers 3, Twins 2:** Daz Cameron hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in the eighth inning as surging Detroit won at home against slumping Minnesota.

Cameron's 416-foot shot to left-center off Emilio Pagan (1-2) scored Eric Haase, who hit a one-out single for the Tigers.

**Reds 8, Nationals 1:** Cincinnati rookie Graham Ashcraft delivered another gem, throwing seven innings of one-run ball, and Joey Votto and Kyle Farmer hit three-run homers in a win over visiting Washington.

Ashcraft (2-0) reached the upper 90s with his sinker and cutter. He struck out four and allowed just four hits, shutting out the Nationals until Josh Bell hit a solo homer in the seventh inning.

## Girardi fired by Phillies, replaced by Thomson

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Joe Girardi was fired by the Philadelphia Phillies on Friday after his team's terrible start, becoming the first major league manager to lose his job this season.

Philadelphia said bench coach Rob Thomson will become interim manager for the rest of the season.

Expected to contend for an NL East title, the Phillies are 22-29 and 12 games behind the first-place New York Mets.

"It has been a frustrating season for us up

until this point, as we feel that our club has not played up to its capabilities," Phillies president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski said in a statement. "While all of us share the responsibility for the shortcomings, I felt that a change was needed and that a new voice in the clubhouse would give us the best chance to turn things around. I believe we have a talented group that can get back on track, and I am confident that Rob, with his experience and familiarity with our club, is the right man to lead us going forward."

Girardi's first year with Philadelphia was the pandemic-shortened 2020 season. The Phillies went 82-80 last year and he ends his tenure with a 132-141 record. Girardi managed the New York Yankees from 2008-17 and the Florida Marlins in 2006.

The Phillies have lost 12 of 17 games heading into the opener of Friday's three-game series against the Los Angeles Angels.

"We underperformed and that falls on me. This is what happens," Girardi told SiriusXM's MLB Network Radio.