

N. Korea launches 8 missiles off coast

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — North Korea on Sunday launched eight short-range ballistic missiles off its eastern coast, according to the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The missiles were fired between 9:08 a.m. and 9:43 a.m. from four provinces in the country, the Joint Chiefs said in a text message to reporters. The missiles are estimated to have flown between 68 and 416 miles at altitudes of 16 to 56 miles. They are believed to have reached three to six times the speed of sound.

South Korea's military is prepared for additional missile tests and is "maintaining a full readiness posture" through consultation with U.S. forces, the Joint Chiefs said. It added that military leaders discussed the latest launch with U.S. Forces Korea's commander, Army Gen. Paul LaCamera, and "confirmed the combined defense capability and readiness to immediately detect and intercept" North Korean missiles.

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement Sunday afternoon it was aware of the launches and that it assessed they did "not pose an immediate threat to U.S. personnel

or territory, or to our allies."

"The U.S. commitment to the defense of the Republic of Korea and Japan remains ironclad," the statement said.

If the number of missiles is accurate, it would be the largest test event conducted by the regime, Michael Duitsman, a research associate at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, told Stars and Stripes by phone Sunday.

Duitsman said North Korea fired four missiles "almost simultaneously" in 2017. Experts said it may have been an exercise simulating an attack on U.S. forces stationed in Japan.

"It has conducted multiple launches in a single event before, but it's usually in much lower numbers," Duitsman said, adding that North Korea has launched a record high of 28 ballistic missiles so far this year.

The regime in recent months conducted several ballistic missile tests in pairs or in threes and also fired several rockets using multiple rocket launchers, Yang Uk, an associate research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, told Stars and Stripes on Sunday.

Uk said that based on the initial evidence,

North Korea would have likely fired different types of missiles and characterized the launches as a military exercise, rather than a missile test.

The launches mark the 17th round of missile tests so far this year by North Korea and its first in June. The communist regime last conducted a test on May 25, hours after President Joe Biden left Asia after his first presidential trip to South Korea and Japan.

During his trip to Seoul, Biden and newly-elected South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol vowed to reinforce their alliance and proposed to start talks to expand the scale of joint military exercises between their militaries. Those large-scale exercises, which North Korea claims is a rehearsal for an invasion, were suspended in 2018 following the series of summits between then-President Donald Trump, then-South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Sunday's launches came as officials assess that North Korea may soon conduct a nuclear test.

The Biden administration said it continues to leave the door open for North Korea for negotiations without preconditions.

Sailor seeks reduced sentence for fatal crash in Japan

By ALEX WILSON
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — A U.S. Navy officer sentenced to three years in a Japanese prison for a fatal car crash last year is seeking a lesser sentence.

Lt. Ridge Alkonis, 34, is scheduled to go before the Tokyo High Court on Wednesday to appeal the punishment imposed by the Shizuoka District Court on Oct. 18.

Alkonis is seeking to have his three-year prison term reduced to a suspended sentence, in effect, probation, said his spokesman Jonathan Franks.

Alkonis and his family "are

people who deeply respect the country of Japan and the Japanese people," Franks told Stars and Stripes by phone Friday. "His services have been to the benefit of both the Japanese people and the American people in many respects. All they're asking for is the fair application of Japanese law, and to date, it doesn't feel like he's gotten one."

In Japan, the defense or prosecution may appeal a district court decision to the high court in what is known as a "koso" appeal. These cases are typically handled by a three-judge panel.

Either side may appeal the high court ruling to the Supreme Court of Japan.

Alkonis was driving with his family on May 29, 2021, when he crashed into pedestrians and parked vehicles at a soba restaurant parking lot in Fujinomiya, about two hours from Yokosuka Naval Base. Alkonis was stationed there as a weapons officer assigned to the guided-missile destroyer USS Benfold.

An 85-year-old woman died that day as a result of the crash; her 54-year-old son-in-law died in a hospital on June 11. A 53-year-old woman, the daughter and wife of the victims, suffered bruises to her knees and elbows.

Alkonis testified Aug. 24 that a case of mountain, or altitude, sickness caused him to lose con-

sciousness behind the wheel. Alkonis, his wife and their three children were returning from a trip to Mount Fuji when the incident occurred.

However, Shizuoka District Judge Kumiko Maesawa rejected Alkonis' defense, and referred to his testimony at his first hearing, in which he said he had felt fine when he left Mount Fuji.

The symptoms of altitude sickness typically improve as a person descends to lower altitude, the judge said in October.

He remains on active duty, Naval Forces Japan spokeswoman Cmdr. Katie Cerezo told Stars and Stripes by phone on Friday.

S. Korean brass resume US base visits in Japan

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A delegation of South Korean service members, including three general officers, toured U.S. bases in and around Tokyo from Tuesday to Friday, marking a resumption of visits that had been on hold during the coronavirus pandemic.

They stopped at three installations that support the U.N. Command's mission in South Korea: Yokota Air Base, headquarters of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo; Camp Zama, headquarters of U.S. Army Japan; and Yokosuka Naval Base, homeport of the U.S. 7th Fleet.

U.N. Command-Rear, also based at Yokota, supports the movement of personnel, supplies and equipment for nine of 22 nations that have sent forces to South Korea since the Korean War. The member nations also monitor sanctions the U.N. imposed on North Korea to hinder its weapons programs.

The trip aimed to boost the South Koreans' understanding of the U.N. Command's work in Japan, British Army Lt. Gen. Andrew Harrison told Stars and Stripes in Tokyo on Thursday. Harrison, the U.N. deputy commander, is based at Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

"This used to be routine and so that understanding existed (but) there hasn't been an opportunity to meet face to face for a

number of years," Harrison said. "We are reinstigating this and allowing South Korean generals and Japanese leaders to talk and understand the role of the U.N. Command-Rear in Japan."

Last year 3,944 people, 16 ships and 22 aircraft from U.N. Command sending nations came into Japan to support the command's mission, said Royal Australian Air Force Group Capt. Lyle Holt, who leads the Yokota-based U.N. Command-Rear.

The four-day visit coincides with North Korea's increased pace of weapons development. The communist regime has conducted 17 missile tests so far this year.

The North is testing a range of missile capabilities, including intercontinental ballistic missiles, Harrison said.

"It's the most number ever (for a calendar year) and we are only halfway through the year," he said.

The U.S., Japan and South Korea will move rapidly to bolster security cooperation following President Joe Biden's visits to both countries in late May, Kim Hyun-wook, an American studies professor at Korea National Diplomatic Academy in Seoul, said in an email Wednesday.

The U.S. allies have a territorial dispute over a cluster of small islands and disagreements about compensation for forced labor and sexual slavery of South Koreans by Japanese Imperial forces during World War II.

US-South Korea combined division celebrates 7 years

By **DAVID CHOI**
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The Republic of Korea-U.S. Combined Division, the only division in the Army composed of soldiers from both countries, celebrated its seventh anniversary on Friday with a ceremony at 2nd Infantry Division headquarters.

The two allies formed the combined army division in 2015 as a deterrent to further conflict in South Korea.

Roughly 12,000 troops are part of the five brigades within the division and they conduct an average of 80 missions each year, including large scale joint military exercises. It also trains with a South Korean mechanized brigade.

Originally based at Camp Red Cloud, the division moved in 2018 to Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, where 2nd ID, Eighth Army, U.S. Forces Korea and U.N. Command are also headquartered.

"The division will increase the level of mutual trust to become ... one team," Deputy Commanding General Kim Nam Hoon said during the anniversary ceremony. "Beyond our seven-year history, [the combined division] will be at the center of peace of the Korean Peninsula — 70 or 100 years later."

The deputy commander of maneuver, Army Gen. Lance Calvert, echoed Kim's remarks and said the creation of the combined division resulted in an "intangible" contribution for the alliance.

S. Korean city approves \$9.5M for US aircraft noise

By **DAVID CHOI**
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Pyeongtaek city has agreed to compensate its residents with roughly \$24 to \$48 a month for noise from airfields at two nearby U.S. military bases.

A city noise control committee, during its first meeting in May, approved \$9.5 million for over 46,000 residents for noise generated by aircraft at Camp Humphreys and Osan Air Base, according to a city press re-

lease on Monday.

"Our city will do its best to try to get fruitful compensation materialized by dealing with it more cautiously," Pyeongtaek vice mayor Choi Won-yong said in the release.

Camp Humphreys, the largest U.S. military base overseas and home of U.S. Forces Korea and U.N. Command, is in Pyeongtaek, about 40 miles south of Seoul. The base has a population of 35,500 people and includes an airfield that operates fixed and rotary wing aircraft around the clock.

Osan Air Base, the home of 7th Air Force just a few miles north of Humphreys, is also within Pyeongtaek. The base was initially located in Osan city before construction projects stretched 85% of its boundary into Pyeongtaek. U.S. and South Korean military aircraft operate from Osan.

Residents who moved to designated "noise control areas" before 1989 and lived there between Nov. 27, 2020, and Dec. 31 will receive a baseline of \$24 to \$48 a month as compensation, according to a city official.

Ukraine: Russia's strikes missed West aid

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia took aim Sunday at Western military supplies for Ukraine, launching airstrikes on Kyiv that it claimed destroyed tanks donated from abroad. Ukraine said the missiles hit a train repair shop. Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that any Western deliveries of long-range rocket systems to Ukraine would prompt Moscow to hit “objects that we haven’t yet struck.”

The cryptic threat of a military escalation from the Russian leader didn’t specify what the new targets might be, but it comes days after the United States announced plans to deliver \$700 million of security assistance for Ukraine. Those weapons include four precision-guided, medium-range rocket systems, as well as helicopters, Javelin anti-tank weapon systems, radars, tactical vehicles and more.

Military analysts say Russia is

hoping to overrun Ukraine’s embattled eastern industrial Donbas region, where Russia-backed separatists have fought the Ukrainian government since 2014, before any U.S. weapons that might turn the tide arrive. The Pentagon said last week it will take at least three weeks to get the U.S. weapons onto the battlefield.

Russian airstrikes in the eastern city of Druzhkivka destroyed buildings and left at least one person dead, a Ukrainian official said Sunday. Residents described waking to the sound of missile strikes, with rubble and glass falling down around them.

“It was like in a horror movie,” Svitlana Romashkina said.

Donetsk governor Pavlo Kyrylenko urged city residents to leave, saying on Facebook that ruined buildings can be restored but “we won’t be able to bring back the lives lost.”

The Russian Defense Ministry said air-launched precision mis-

siles were used to destroy workshops in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine, including in Druzhkivka, that were repairing damaged Ukrainian military equipment.

Meanwhile, Ukraine’s General Staff said Russian forces fired five X-22 cruise missiles from the Caspian Sea toward Kyiv, and one was destroyed by air defenses. Four other missiles hit “infrastructure facilities,” but Ukraine said there were no casualties.

Nuclear plant operator Energoatom said one cruise missile buzzed close to the Pivdennoукраїнськ nuclear plant, 220 miles to the south, and warned of the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe if even one missile fragment hit the plant.

On the Telegram app, the Russian Defense Ministry said high-precision, long-range air-launched missiles were used on the outskirts of Kyiv, destroying T-72 tanks supplied by Eastern

European countries and other armored vehicles in a train car repair shop.

But the head of Ukraine’s railway system rejected the claim that tanks were inside. Oleksandr Kamyshin said four missiles hit the Darnytsia car repair plant, but no military equipment has been stored there. He said the site was used to repair gondolas and carriers for exporting grain.

“Russia has once again lied,” he wrote on Telegram. “Their (Russia’s) real goal is the economy and the civilian population. They want to block our ability to export Ukrainian products.”

In a television interview that aired Sunday, Putin lashed out at Western deliveries of weapons to Ukraine, saying they aim to prolong the conflict.

“All this fuss around additional deliveries of weapons, in my opinion, has only one goal: To drag out the armed conflict as much as possible,” Putin said.

Milley in Sweden to show support for its NATO bid

The Washington Post

STOCKHOLM—The U.S. prepared Saturday to launch a sprawling naval exercise in the Baltic Sea with Sweden, Finland and 13 NATO allies, a visible sign of an expanding partnership as Stockholm and Helsinki apply to join the military alliance following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The Baltic Operations exercise involves more than 40 warships and has been held annually for decades, but will shift this year to include more involvement from Finland and Sweden, said Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He visited Stockholm on Saturday in a show of support for Sweden’s membership bid, one day after a similar stop in Finland. The two countries have long partnered with the U.S. military but resisted applying to join NATO until last

month out of concerns that it would anger Moscow. Following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, however, that changed with significant shifts in public opinion in favor of joining the military alliance in both countries.

The new dynamic was evident as the 843-foot amphibious warship USS Kearsarge sat in a narrow waterway running through Stockholm while packed with attack helicopters and other aircraft and more than 2,000 U.S. Marines and sailors.

Milley told reporters aboard the Kearsarge that President Joe Biden and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin have asked the Pentagon to develop new options to “modestly increase” U.S. military involvement in Sweden where appropriate. Meanwhile, other long-scheduled operations like the naval exercise will continue.

Ukraine losing 60 to 100 soldiers a day in combat

Associated Press

ZHYTOMYR, Ukraine — As soon as they had finished burying a veteran colonel killed by Russian shelling, the cemetery workers readied the next hole. Inevitably, given how quickly death is felling Ukrainian troops on the front lines, the empty grave won’t stay that way for long.

Col. Oleksandr Makhachek left behind a widow, Elena, and their daughters Olena and Myroslava-Oleksandra. In the first 100 days of war, his grave was the 40th dug in the military cemetery in Zhytomyr, 90 miles west of the capital, Kyiv. He was killed May 30 in the Luhansk region of eastern Ukraine where the fighting is raging. Nearby, the burial notice on the also freshly dug grave of Viacheslav Dvornitskyi says he died May 27. Other graves also showed soldiers killed within days of each

other — on May 10, 9th, 7th and 5th. And this is just one cemetery.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said last week Ukraine is now losing 60 to 100 soldiers each day in combat. By way of comparison, just short of 50 American soldiers died per day on average in 1968 during the Vietnam War’s deadliest year for U.S. forces.

Among the comrades-in-arms who paid respects to the 49-year-old Makhachek at his funeral on Friday was Gen. Viktor Muzhenko, the Ukrainian Armed Forces’ chief of general staff until 2019.

“This is one of the critical moments in the war, but it is not the peak,” Muzhenko said.

“In order to reduce losses, Ukraine now needs powerful weapons that match or even surpass Russian weaponry,” he added. “This would enable Ukraine to respond in kind.”

Abbott baby formula plant reopens; restarts output

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Abbott Nutrition has restarted production at the Michigan baby formula factory that has been closed for months due to contamination, the company said Saturday, taking a step toward easing a nationwide supply shortage expected to persist into the summer.

The February shutdown of the largest formula factory in the country led to the supply problems that have forced some parents to seek formula from food banks, friends and doctor's offices.

Abbott said it initially will prioritize production of its EleCare specialty formulas for infants with severe food allergies and digestive problems who have few other options for nutrition. The company said it will take about three weeks before new formula from the plant begins getting to consumers.

"We will ramp production as quickly as we can while meeting all requirements," Abbott said in a statement.

The plant's reopening is one of several federal actions that are expected to improve supplies in the weeks ahead.

Abbott closed the Sturgis, Mich., factory in February after the Food and Drug Ad-

ministration began investigating four bacterial infections among infants who consumed powdered formula from the plant. Two of the babies died. The company continues to state that its products have not been directly linked to the infections, which involved different bacterial strains.

FDA inspectors eventually uncovered a host of violations at the plant, including bacterial contamination, a leaky roof and lax safety protocols. The FDA has faced intense scrutiny for taking months to close the plant and then negotiate its reopening. Agency leaders recently told Congress they had to enter a legally binding agreement with Abbott to assure all the problems were fixed.

Abbott's February recall of several leading brands, including Similac, squeezed supplies that had already been strained by supply chain disruptions and stockpiling during COVID-19 shutdowns.

The shortage has been most dire for children with allergies, digestive problems and metabolic disorders who rely on specialty formulas. The Abbott factory is the only source of many of those products, providing nutrition to about 5,000 U.S. babies, according to federal officials.

Officials say dozens feared dead after attack on Nigerian church

Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria — Gunmen opened fire on worshippers and detonated explosives at a Catholic church in southwestern Nigeria on Sunday, leaving dozens feared dead, state lawmakers said.

Legislator Ogunmolasuyi Oluwole said the attackers targeted the St. Francis Catholic Church in Ondo state just as the worshippers gathered on Pentecost Sunday. Among the dead were many children, he said. Adelegbe Timileyin, who represents the Owo area in Nigeria's lower legislative chamber, said the presiding priest was abducted as well.

"Our hearts are heavy," Ondo Governor Rotimi Akeredolu tweeted Sunday. "Our peace and tranquility have been attacked by the enemies of the people."

Authorities did not immediately release an official death toll. Timileyin said at

least 50 people had been killed, though others put the figure higher. Videos appearing to be from the scene of the attack showed church worshippers lying in pools of blood while people around them wailed.

It was not immediately clear who was behind the attack at the church. While much of Nigeria has struggled with security issues, Ondo is widely known as one of Nigeria's most peaceful states. The state, though, has been caught up in a rising violent conflict between farmers and herders.

Nigeria's security forces did not immediately respond to inquiries as to how the attack occurred or if there are any leads about suspects. Owo is about 215 miles east of Lagos.

"In the history of Owo, we have never experienced such an ugly incident," said lawmaker Oluwole. "This is too much."

Source: Whitmer, McConnell, Evers on gunman's list

Associated Press

A gunman suspected of fatally shooting a retired county judge at a Wisconsin home had a list that included Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers, Whitmer's office and a law enforcement source said Saturday.

Douglas K. Uhde, 56, who has not been charged, is suspected of killing retired Juneau County Judge John Roemer at Roemer's house in New Lisbon on Friday, the Wisconsin Department of Justice said in a news release Saturday.

Uhde was found in the basement of the home with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, following attempts by police to negotiate with him. Uhde is hospitalized in critical condition, DOJ officials said.

Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul on Friday said the shooting appeared to be a "targeted act" and that the gunman had selected people who were "part of the judicial system."

But investigators believe the gunman also may have planned to target other government officials and found a list in his vehicle that contained the names of several other prominent elected leaders, a law enforcement official said.

Roemer was found zip-tied to a chair in his home and had been fatally shot, the official said. The official could not discuss details of the investigation publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Uhde has an extensive criminal and prison record dating back at least two decades, including a case when he was sentenced by Roemer to six years in prison on weapons charges. He was released from his last prison stint in April 2020.

Zach Pohl, Whitmer's deputy chief of staff, said her office was notified that her name appeared "on the Wisconsin gunman's list."

Whitmer became the object of protests and criticism after she blamed former President Donald Trump for stoking anger over COVID-19 restrictions and refusing to condemn right-wing extremists.

Investigators said there is no immediate danger to the public.

"The information that's been gathered indicated that it was a targeted act and that the targeting was based on some sort of court case or court cases," Kaul said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

2 sought in hockey stick attack, slashing in subway

NY NEW YORK — Police are looking for suspects who beat one man with his own hockey stick on a New York City subway platform and slashed another man who argued over an anti-Asian remark in a subway car a few hours earlier.

A 39-year-old man was slashed in the chest and the back of the neck after a dispute with a person who made an anti-Asian comment on a train approaching the York Street station in Brooklyn, police said. The NYPD's Hate Crimes Unit is investigating.

In the second incident, a 54-year-old man tried to intervene when he saw someone punching another person on a platform at the Court Square-23rd Street station in Queens, police said. They said the person who'd thrown the punches then head-butted the would-be peacemaker, grabbed his hockey stick and bashed him in the back of the head.

Both victims were treated at hospitals for their injuries.

Police group pulls plug on raffle of AR-15 rifle

MO BELTON — A western Missouri police association has pulled the plug on its plan to raffle off an AR-15 rifle in the wake of recent mass shootings.

The Belton Police Athletic Association had planned to raffle off the gun as part of its annual fundraiser supporting an anti-drug education program in schools in the community about 20 miles south of Kansas City,

Mo. Organizers said the decision to include the rifle in this year's event was made months ago — before a gunman killed 19 students and two teachers at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, and before a May 14 racist attack at a Buffalo, N.Y., supermarket that killed 10 people. Police said both shooters had AR-15-style rifles.

Witness, robbery suspect exchange gunfire in chase

AL PIKE ROAD — The Montgomery County sheriff said a fleeing robbery suspect exchanged gunfire with a witness who had chased him from the scene.

Montgomery County Sheriff Derrick Cunningham told reporters a 16-year-old suspect was arrested when he went to the emergency room in a neighboring county for a gunshot wound. The teen's name was not released because of his age.

The robbery occurred at the Dollar General store on Pike Road. Cunningham said the suspect fled on foot but was confronted by a witness in a pickup truck who followed him. He said the 16-year-old shot several times at the driver, and the driver returned fire.

Manhole blasts send 1 to hospital, force evacuation

MA BOSTON — Two manholes exploded in downtown Boston, pouring smoke into the streets, forcing the evacuation of two buildings and sending one person to the hospital with burns, authorities said.

The explosions, which also shattered a window, were re-

ported near the High Street and Federal Street area in the Financial District.

The cause remains under investigation, but Deputy Fire Chief Brian Tully said at a news conference at the scene that there "may have been an overpressure situation."

The Boston Fire Department said in a tweet that two buildings were evacuated and one person was taken to a hospital by emergency medical services.

Smoking ban takes effect at public beach

GA TYBEE ISLAND — Just in time for summer, Georgia's largest public beach is banning smoking in the sand.

City officials on Tybee Island decided to snuff out cigarette smoking and use of other tobacco products on its beaches in an effort to reduce litter. That's after the city over the past five years collected 500,000 cigarette butts left by smokers using the sand as an ashtray.

Violators will be given warnings during the first 30 days. After that, lighting up on the beach will come with a price. Citations start with \$50 fines and could increase to \$300 for repeat offenders.

Hate crime charge for woman at Starbucks

CA MOUNTAIN VIEW — San Francisco Bay Area prosecutors have charged a 33-year-old woman with a hate crime after she hurled racist epithets at a Starbucks manager and struck a customer several times.

The woman was arraigned in

Santa Clara County and faces jail time if convicted of a misdemeanor hate crime, the office of District Attorney Jeff Rosen said in a press release.

Prosecutors said the woman entered a Starbucks coffee shop in Mountain View and began yelling at the manager that he "should go back to your country" and that she would have him "deported back to Mexico." The manager is of Indian descent, according to the press release.

The woman then heard a Hispanic customer speaking with an accent and told her that she too should return to her country, according to the release. The victim tried to stop the defendant from recording her with her phone, prompting the woman to strike the victim seven to 10 times, inflicting scratches, the release stated.

Hometown celebrates Elvis Presley with festival

MS TUPELO — Elvis Presley's Mississippi hometown is planning to welcome tourists from around the world to celebrate his rock 'n' roll legacy.

The 24th Tupelo Elvis Festival takes place until June 12, the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal reported.

People will dress in their finest leather outfits or rhinestone-studded jumpsuits to compete for the title of Tupelo's Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist. The winner will compete in Memphis, Tenn., during Elvis Week in August for the title of Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist.

Presley was born in 1935 in Tupelo and died in 1977 in Memphis.

— From wire reports



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Nadal wins 14th French Open title, 22nd slam

Associated Press

PARIS — Rafael Nadal, a French Open champion for the 14th time at age 36, is, in obvious ways, different from Rafael Nadal, a French Open champion for the first time all the way back in 2005 at age 19.

His hair is thinning on top. The chartreuse T-shirt he wore while overwhelming Casper Ruud 6-3, 6-3, 6-0 in Sunday's intriguing-for-a-handful-of-minutes final had sleeves, unlike his biceps-baring look of nearly two decades ago. The white capri pants that ran below his knees back in the day were long since traded in for more standard shorts; Sunday's were turquoise.

Here's what hasn't changed along the way to his 22 Grand Slam titles in all, another record, in addition to his between-point mannerisms and meticulous attention paid to the must-be-just-so placement of water bottles and towels: That lefty uppercut of a topspin-slathered, high-bouncing forehand still finds the mark much more frequently than it misses, confounding foes. That ability to read serves and return them with a purpose still stings. That never-concede-a-thing attitude propelling Nadal from side to side, forward and backward, speeding to, and redirecting, balls off an opponent's racket seemingly destined to be unreachable. Nadal is nothing if not indefatigable, just as he was in consecutive four-hour-plus victories earlier in the tournament — including against Novak Djokovic, the defending champion and No. 1 seed — and again on this afternoon, when clouds gave way to the sunlight and blue sky Nadal prefers just as Ruud's 3-1 lead in the second set suddenly began to evaporate in what would become a match-

closing 11-game run for the champion.

Nadal's victory came two days after his 36th birthday and made him the oldest title winner in the history of the clay-court tournament. Given his age, and, of more concern, the chronic pain in his left foot that has been an off-and-on problem for years, Nadal has said repeatedly in recent days that he can never be sure whether each match at Court Philippe Chatrier might be his last.

During the trophy ceremony, Nadal thanked his family and support team, including a doctor who accompanied him to Paris, for helping him, because otherwise he would have needed to "retire much before."

"I don't know what can happen in the future," Nadal told the crowd, "but I'm going to keep fighting to try to keep going."

He played so crisply and cleanly, accumulating more than twice as many winners as Ruud, 37 to 16. Nadal also committed fewer unforced errors, making just 16 to Ruud's 26.

When it ended with a down-the-line backhand from Nadal, he chucked his racket to the red clay he loves so much and covered his face with the taped-up finger.

No man or woman ever has won the singles trophy at any major event more than his 14 in Paris. And no man has won more Grand Slam titles than Nadal.

He is two ahead of rivals Roger Federer, who hasn't played in almost a year after a series of knee operations, and Djokovic, who missed the Australian Open in January because he is not vaccinated against COVID-19.

For all that he has accomplished already, Nadal now has done something he never

managed previously: He is halfway to a calendar-year Grand Slam thanks to titles at the Australian Open and French Open in the same season.

Doesn't really seem much reason for Nadal to quit now, considering that he navigated his way past four French Open opponents ranked in the top 10 (No. 9 Felix Auger-Aliassime in the fourth round, Djokovic in the quarterfinals, No. 3 Alexander Zverev — who stopped because of a foot injury — in the semifinals, and then No. 8 Ruud).

Nadal improved to 14-0 in finals at Roland Garros and 112-3 overall at his favorite tournament.

"You are a true inspiration for me, for everyone who follows tennis around the world," said Ruud, a 23-year-old Norwegian participating in his first Grand Slam final, "so I hope — we all hope — that you will continue for some more time."

When the players met at the net for the prematch coin toss, the first chants of "Ra-fa! Ra-fa!" rang out in the 15,000-seat stadium. There would be more such choruses. Ruud heard his own support, especially when he briefly went up in the second set, with some in the stands marking points he won with drawn-out pronouncements of his last name, "Ruuuuuuud," so it sounded as if they might be booing.

Ruud considers Nadal his idol. He recalls watching all of Nadal's past finals in Paris on TV. He has trained at Nadal's tennis academy on Mallorca.

The two had never met in a real match until Sunday, when a championship, money, ranking points, prestige and a piece of history were on the line.

Alo powers Oklahoma into WCWS semifinals

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma got revenge on Big 12 rival Texas and pitcher Hailey Dolcini.

Jocelyn Alo homered and knocked in three runs to help the No. 1-seeded Sooners beat the Longhorns 7-2 on Saturday at the Women's College World Series.

Oklahoma opened the season with 38 wins before Dolcini shut the Sooners down in a 4-2 Texas victory April 16.

Alo set the tone Saturday with her two-run blast as the second

batter of the game. The two-time reigning USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year increased her Division I career-record home run total to 118.

Alo was off her game against Dolcini in April, but she expected to bounce back.

"As good as a pitcher Dolcini is, I'm a really good hitter, too," she said. "I'm going to trust myself. I'm going to pick myself no matter what. I knew the adjustments I had to make, went out there and made them."

Tiare Jennings also hit a hom-

er for Oklahoma (56-2), who advanced to the semifinals Monday and moved one step closer to defending their national title.

Jennings said the Sooners have changed since the loss in Austin.

"The good thing is they didn't know us today," she said. "We came in a whole different team than we were in Austin. That's something we had an advantage of. We knew that we were different, that's why we did what we did today."

Hope Trautwein (20-1) went

the distance for Oklahoma to claim the win. Janae Jefferson hit a solo homer in the seventh for the Longhorns (44-20-1).

Alo's blast in the top of the first was her 30th homer of the season. Dolcini (23-11) settled down after that and retired the next nine batters.

"She was able to hang in there," Texas coach Mike White said. "That's a testament to her fight and her determination. She didn't let it get down. A lot of pitchers would have folded right there, right?"

Avs beat Oilers, take 3-0 series lead

Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — Pavel Francouz took J.T. Compher off the hook for a penalty with a key save on Connor McDavid. A few seconds later, Compher took the life out of Rogers Place — and put the Colorado Avalanche on the cusp of the Stanley Cup Finals.

Compher came out of the penalty box to give Colorado the lead with 7:18 left and the Avalanche beat the Edmonton Oilers 4-2 on Saturday night to take a 3-0 lead in the Western Conference finals.

Called for tripping Leon Draisaitl just three minutes after Ryan McLeod tied it for Edmonton, Compher raced out of the box, beat defenseman Evan Bouchard for control along the boards and scored between goalie Mike Smith's legs.

Valeri Nichushkin scored twice for Colorado, Mikko Rantanen had an empty-netter with 30 seconds left, and Francouz made 27 saves.

Francouz stepped in midway through the Avalanche's 8-6 victory in Game 1 when Darcy Kuemper sustained an upper-body injury, then made 24 saves Thursday night in a 4-0 win for his second career playoff shutout. In Game 3, he made the big stop on McDavid to keep it tied before Compher scored.

"Frankie's quick and got over there and made a great stop on it," Colorado forward Nathan MacKinnon said. "That shows some strength to be able to reset after they tie it up in

the fashion they did and be able to reset and get back to it."

McLeod tied it at 2 at 7:34 of the third, going the length of the ice and beating Francouz with a snap shot from the high slot.

McDavid opened the scoring 38 seconds in for the Oilers. Smith made 39 saves.

"Our goal is the same as it was today, which is we've got to win one hockey game," Edmonton interim coach Jay Woodcroft said.

Game 4 is Monday night in Edmonton, with the Avs a game away from advancing to the Stanley Cup final. Colorado won titles in 1996 and 2001.

"No doubt, obviously, a big win, but the job's not done," captain Gabriel Landeskog said.

After McDavid's quick goal, the Oilers killed a five-minute penalty on Evander Kane for boarding Nazem Kadri just 28 seconds after McDavid's goal, and stopped the Avalanche power play again midway through the period after Edmonton defenseman Darnell Nurse was called for shooting the puck over the glass. Kadri was injured on Kane's hit and didn't return.

Coach Jared Bednar ruled out Kadri for at least the rest of the series, if not longer.

"He's out," Bednar said. "The hit? It's the most dangerous hit in hockey."

Nichushkin scored on two fortunate deflections to give the Avs the lead. He tied it with 3:48 left in the first period when his centering pass deflected in off Nurse. Then at 4:37 of the

second, Nichushkin controlled a deflection off a shot from the point that MacKinnon and fired a wrist shot through Bouchard's legs and past the screened Smith.

"Val is a huge part of our team and our offensive game and our checking game and helps out in all areas of the game," Landeskog said. "Tonight, obviously, he was a force and comes up with two big goals for us, and I thought did a great job on the forecheck and neutral zone, staying above their top players and not giving them much room. It's a tough task, but he's been huge for us and he just continues to get better and better and a big, important piece for us."

Colorado killed off MacKinnon's tripping penalty late in the second, and the Oilers stopped the Avalanche's power play again early in the third with Draisaitl off for high-sticking.

Only four NHL teams have ever come back from a 3-0 deficit to win a seven-game series. The Los Angeles Kings were the last to accomplish the feat in the first round of the 2014 playoffs against San Jose.

"Every play counts," Smith said. "The desperation level has to be at an all-time high in order to win at this time of the year. It comes from everybody in the room — just a little bit more."

"There's not a lot of space out there, but you've got to give everything you have for one game."

Haney beats Kambosos, picks up 3 lightweight belts

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — American Devin Haney made it official — and unanimous — on Sunday. He's the undisputed world lightweight boxing champion.

Haney retained his WBC lightweight title and added three more from the weight class after his unanimous points decision over Australian George Kambosos.

The 23-year-old Haney won three of the first four rounds and was well ahead at the half-way point of the 12-round bout to become undisputed champion in the lightweight division.

The judges scored the fight 116-112, 116-112 and 118-110 in

Haney's favor.

Haney, who proved to be the better technical fighter before a crowd of 41,129 at the covered Marvel Stadium in Melbourne, now has an undefeated record of 28-0 with 15 KOs.

"I was comfortable, just sticking to the game plan," Haney said. "The game plan was to hit and not get hit. I fought a good smart fight. He couldn't hit me with either of his best shots."

Haney praised the U.S.-based Kambosos, who was fighting for the first time in his native Australia in five years.

"I take my hat off to him, he's a true warrior. Even though he got disrespectful, I stayed a

gentleman," Haney said. "A lot of these so-called champions wouldn't give me my shot, but George has."

Kambosos, 28, held the WBO, WBA, and IBF lightweight titles heading into the fight. Those now belong to Haney.

Kambosos' unbeaten pro career record has ended — he's 20-1 with 10 KOs. Kambosos won all three of his world titles when he beat Teofimo Lopez in 2019.

"It's amazing for the sport and the country," Kambosos said after handing over his belts to Haney. "I wanted to take the hardest test and I will give him full respect after his victory. Let him have his time."

While Kambosos landed the heavier blows throughout the 12-round contest, Haney peppered the home hope with left jabs to win over the judges.

The fighters barely threw a punch in a watchful opening round that Kambosos may have stolen with a late combination to the American's body. Kambosos landed the first big punch of the fight, a heavy right to Haney's head, in the second as the Australian had his challenger retreating.

A more aggressive Haney took the third round with a series of left jabs and looked to have also shaded the fourth before Kambosos delivered a big left hook late.

Severino, Judge lift Yanks past Tigers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Luis Severino combined with two relievers on a one-hitter to continue New York's run of outstanding starting pitching performances as the Yankees beat the Detroit Tigers 3-0 on Saturday.

Aaron Judge hit his MLB-best 21st homer on the first pitch in the bottom of the first inning. New York won its fifth straight and for the ninth time in 11 games since its only three-game losing streak this year.

Anthony Rizzo also went deep and Josh Donaldson lifted a sacrifice fly for the Yankees, who have outscored opponents 33-3 in their winning streak.

After Jameson Taillon retired the first 21 hitters Thursday night against the Angels and Gerrit Cole followed by setting down the first 20 batters Friday night against the Tigers, the suspense ended early for Severino and it ended by mere inches.

Miguel Cabrera's 3,033rd career hit opened the second after Severino (4-1) needed just 12 pitches in the first.

"It was a really good pitch and Cabrera is Miguel Cabrera," Severino said. "It was hit pretty hard."

Cabrera singled when his sharp 109.6 mph liner glanced off the top of shortstop Isiah Kiner-Falefa's glove and into left field for the slugger's fifth career hit off Severino. It was the only ball the Tigers hit over 100 mph.

Severino struck out 10 in seven innings. His only walk came to Derek Hill in the third, and he was thrown out trying to steal second during an at-bat to Jonathan Schoop—who ended Cole's perfect game.

Mets 9, Dodgers 4: Pete Alonso homered twice for the second time this season, drove in five runs and bounced back from a costly error

as visiting New York beat Los Angeles.

Dodgers starter Walker Buehler was chased early, and Los Angeles used seven pitchers. Manager Dave Roberts tried to bring in infielder Zach McKinstry to pitch the ninth inning, apparently unaware of a rule barring position players from pitching in games with a deficit of five runs or fewer. Umpires halted McKinstry from taking the mound, forcing Roberts to use a seventh pitcher, Evan Phillips.

Trea Turner went 0-for-4 to snap his 26-game hitting streak, which was the longest in the majors this season.

Phillies 7, Angels 2: Zack Wheeler struck out nine over six solid innings and Johan Camargo had four RBIs as host Philadelphia sent slumping slugger Mike Trout and Los Angeles to its 10th straight defeat, its worst skid in almost six years.

Trout, the three-time AL MVP, struck out three times and went 0-for-4.

Braves 6, Rockies 2 (11): Adam Duvall capped a four-run 11th inning with a two-run homer and visiting Atlanta spoiled the debut of Colorado's new — and very green — "City Connect" uniforms.

Marcell Ozuna and William Contreras each hit a two-out, run-scoring double off Jhouly Chacin (3-2) to set the stage for Duvall.

Cubs 6, Cardinals 1; Cardinals 7, Cubs 4 (10): St. Louis rookie Brendan Donovan hit a two-run double in the 10th inning and the visitors overcame a baserunning mistake to beat the Chicago in the nightcap for a doubleheader split.

Red Sox 8, Athletics 0: Nick Pivetta pitched two-hit ball over seven innings to win his fifth consecutive start and visiting Boston beat Oakland.

Marlins 5, Giants 4: Jesús Sánchez hit a game-winning sacrifice fly in the ninth inning and host Miami beat San Francisco.

Nationals 10, Reds 8: Juan Soto hit a three-run homer and a solo shot, and Maikel Franco and Luis Garcia drove in ninth-inning runs to rally visiting Washington past Cincinnati.

Rangers 3, Mariners 2: Adolis Garcia hit a three-run homer, rookie Glenn Otto won his third start in a row despite some erratic control and closer Joe Barlow quickly rebounded as host Texas beat Seattle.

Padres 4, Brewers 0: MacKenzie Gore pitched six stellar innings and Jake Cronenworth homered and drove in three runs in visiting San Diego's win over Milwaukee.

White Sox 3, Rays 2: Jake Burger's first career pinch-hit homer highlighted a three-run eighth inning and visiting Chicago beat Tampa Bay to snap a four-game skid.

Blue Jays 12, Twins 3: José Berríos struck out a career-high 13 over seven innings against his former team and host Toronto backed him with three home runs in a win over Minnesota.

Pirates 2, Diamondbacks 1: Rookie Jack Suwinski hit a two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth inning, rallying host Pittsburgh past Arizona.

Orioles 5, Guardians 4: Trey Mancini hit a 438-foot homer run, the longest by a Baltimore player this season, Rougned Odor had a shot that landed on Eutaw Street and the host Orioles beat Cleveland.

Royals 6, Astros 0: Salvador Perez broke a scoreless tie with a two-run homer in the sixth inning and host Kansas City ended a five-game losing streak with its 2,000th regular-season win at Kauffman Stadium, which opened in 1973.

Razorbacks rally for win as offenses dominate

Associated Press

Six of the top eight seeds were unbeaten through two days of an NCAA baseball tournament marked by potent offenses and few surprises until Arkansas staged a dramatic comeback against No. 7 Oklahoma State on Saturday night.

No. 1 Tennessee, No. 3 Oregon State, No. 4 Virginia Tech, No. 5 Texas A&M and No. 8 East Carolina advanced to regional finals, and No. 6 Miami can clinch a spot

in its weather-delayed regional with a win Sunday. Top-eight seeds that win regionals stay at home for the best-of-three super regionals next week.

Texas State opened with two wins for the first time in six all-time regional appearances after beating No. 2 Stanford 5-2 and ending the Cardinal's 17-game win streak.

Oregon State scored in all but three innings while beating San Diego 12-3.

Arkansas was down 10-5 in Stillwater, Okla., before erupting for 15 runs over the final three innings and beating the Cowboys 20-12. Oklahoma State had been 32-2 when taking a lead into the seventh.

Jalen Battles' grand slam highlighted an eight-run eighth and was one of the Razorbacks' seven homers. Five teams scored at least 20 runs Saturday, and one or both teams scored in double digits in 15 of the 33 games.

Tennessee (55-7) set a program record for wins in a season with its 12-7 victory over Campbell. The Volunteers homered four times to increase their nation-leading total to 150, most by any team since 1998 and sixth all-time.

Virginia Tech beat Columbia 24-4, and its 39 runs in two games is an Atlantic Coast Conference postseason record. Texas A&M beat Louisiana 9-6 and is 2-0 in a regional for the first time since 2016.