

## Capitol riot panel puts blame on Trump

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House panel investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol laid the blame firmly on Donald Trump on Thursday night, saying the assault was hardly spontaneous but an “attempted coup” and a direct result of the defeated president’s effort to overturn the 2020 election.

With a never-before-seen 12-minute video of extremist groups leading the deadly siege and startling testimony from Trump’s most inner circle, the 1/6 committee provided gripping detail in contending that Trump’s repeated lies about election fraud and his public effort to stop Joe Biden’s victory led to the attack and imperiled American democracy

“Democracy remains in danger,” said Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., chairman of the panel, during the hearing, timed for prime time to reach as many Americans as possible.

“Jan. 6 was the culmination of an attempted coup, a brazen attempt, as one rioter put it shortly after Jan. 6, to overthrow the government,” Thompson said. “The violence was no accident.”

The hearings may not change Americans’ views on the Capitol attack, but the panel’s investigation is intended to stand as its public record. Ahead of this fall’s midterm elections, and with Trump considering another White House run, the committee’s final report aims to account for the most violent attack on the Capitol since 1814, and to ensure

such an attack never happens again.

Testimony showed Thursday how Trump desperately clung to his own false claims of election fraud, beckoning supporters to the Capitol on Jan. 6 when Congress would certify the results, despite those around him insisting Biden had won the election.

In a previously unseen video clip, the panel played a quip from former Attorney General Bill Barr who testified that he told Trump the claims of a rigged election were “bull——.”

In another, the former president’s daughter, Ivanka Trump, testified to the committee that she respected Barr’s view that there was no election fraud. “I accepted what he said.”

Others showed leaders of the extremist Oath Keepers and Proud Boys preparing to storm the Capitol to stand up for Trump. One rioter after another told the committee they came to the Capitol because Trump asked them to.

“President Trump summoned a violent mob,” said Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., the panel’s vice chair who took the lead for much of the hearing. “When a president fails to take the steps necessary to preserve our union — or worse, causes a constitutional crisis — we’re in a moment of maximum danger for our republic.”

There was an audible gasp in the hearing room when Cheney read an account that said when Trump was told the Capitol mob was chanting for Vice President Mike Pence to be hanged for refusing to block the elec-

tion results. Trump responded that maybe they were right, that he “deserves it.”

At another point it was disclosed that Rep. Scott Perry, R-Pa., a leader of efforts to object to the election results, had sought a pardon from Trump, which would protect him from prosecution.

When asked about the White House lawyers threatening to resign over what was happening in the administration, Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner scoffed they were “whining.”

Police officers who had fought off the mob consoled one another as they sat in the committee room reliving the violence they faced on Jan. 6. Officer Harry Dunn teared up as bodycam footage showed rioters bludgeoning his colleagues with flagpoles and baseball bats.

The riot left more than 100 police officers injured, many beaten and bloodied, as the crowd of pro-Trump rioters, some armed with pipes, bats and bear spray, charged into the Capitol. At least nine people who were there died during and after the rioting, including a woman who was shot and killed by police.

Biden, in Los Angeles for the Summit of the Americas, said many viewers were “going to be seeing for the first time a lot of the detail that occurred.”

Trump, unapologetic, dismissed the investigation anew — and even declared on social media that Jan. 6 “represented the greatest movement in the history of our country.”

## US service member in Germany infected with monkeypox

By JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

An American service member based in Stuttgart, Germany, has been diagnosed with monkeypox, a spokesman for U.S. European Command confirmed to Stars and Stripes on Friday.

Lt. Cmdr. Russ Wolfkiel said he could not confirm the service member’s gender or say when the positive test occurred. He added that the risk to the public is very low. Monkeypox is a rare disease from the same virus family as smallpox.

“The individual was seen and treated at the Stuttgart Army Health clinic and is currently in isolation recovering in their quarters,” the Army’s health clinic at Stuttgart stated on its Facebook page Friday afternoon.

Wolfkiel clarified that the service member is in isolation at an on-base residence.

As a precautionary measure, officials are doing contact tracing for clinic staffers who interacted with the patient and notifying anyone with whom the service member may have been in close contact with recently, Wolfkiel said.

The patient was infected with the West African variant, which is generally mild and has limited human-to-human transmission, according to the health clinic statement.

CNN first reported the Stuttgart case, which is believed to be the first one in the U.S. military. However, EUCOM could not confirm that Friday.

Since early May, about 900 confirmed cases of monkeypox have been reported across 21 European countries, according to information from the Army’s Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

# No deaths in 2nd craft crash in 2 days

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — A Navy helicopter crashed Thursday and everyone on board survived near the California desert site where a day earlier a Marine Osprey went down, killing all five people aboard, authorities said.

Four people were aboard the Navy chopper, which went down around 6 p.m. on a training range while conducting a routine training flight from Naval Air Facility El Centro, according to the base. The helicopter is an MH-60S Seahawk assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 3 based at Naval Air Station North Island.

One crew member received an injury that was not life-threatening and was taken to a hospital, the base said.

The crash site was originally described as being about 35 miles north of Yuma, Ariz.

A day earlier, all five Marines on board a tiltrotor aircraft were killed when it crashed in the California desert near the Arizona border, the Marine Corps said Thursday.

The MV-22 Osprey went down at 12:25 p.m. Wednesday during training in a remote area in Imperial County near the community of Glamis, about 115 miles east of San Diego and about 50 miles from Yuma.

The aircraft was based at Camp Pendleton with Marine Aircraft Group 39 and was part of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing headquartered at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego.

“We mourn the loss of our Marines in this

tragic mishap,” Maj. Gen. Bradford J. Gerding, commanding general of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, said in a statement. “Our hearts go out to their families and friends as they cope with this tragedy.”

The statement said as a matter of policy, the Marine Corps would be contacting family members before identifying those who were killed. Efforts to recover equipment were underway and an investigation into the cause of the crash has started. No additional details were provided in the Marine Corps statement.

The Marines were participating in a routine live-fire training over their gunnery range in the Imperial Valley desert, said Marine Maj. Mason Englehart, spokesperson for the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

## US OKs sale of \$120M in warship parts to Taiwan

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The United States approved a sale of \$120 million in warship parts to Taiwan in a move that drew the ire of China during a Chinese Foreign Ministry news briefing Thursday.

The State Department on Wednesday announced it approved a possible foreign military sale to the independently governed island of Taiwan. The deal would include “ship spare parts, ship system spare parts and related equipment,” according to the announcement.

“This proposed sale serves U.S. national, economic, and security interests by supporting the recipient’s continuing efforts to maintain a credible defensive capability,” the State Department said. “The proposed sale will help improve the security of the recipient and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance, and economic progress in the

region.”

The sale comes as tensions between the U.S. and China over Taiwan simmer. The U.S. continues to support Taiwan’s right to defend itself and adheres to the One China policy, which states the U.S. acknowledges that China claims control over Taiwan but the U.S. considers the island’s sovereignty unsettled.

Taiwan split from mainland China in 1949 and has its own democratically elected government.

“China firmly opposes and strongly condemns” the sale, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters Thursday.

Zhao urged the U.S. to scrap the deal and threatened that China would “take resolute and strong measures to firmly defend its sovereignty and security interests.”

The State Department in its announcement said the sale “will not alter the basic military balance in the region.”

## Army couple charged with theft of \$2M in military gear

By COREY DICKSTEIN

*Stars and Stripes*

Federal prosecutors have charged two soldiers who are married and stationed in North Carolina with netting some \$2 million in a multiyear scheme to sell stolen military equipment, according to an indictment unsealed this week.

The 14-page indictment charges Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christopher Hammond used his position as an armament systems maintenance warrant officer in Fort Bragg’s Group Support Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group to request Army gear including firearms parts, night-vision goggles and all-terrain vehicles, and taking the equipment for himself and selling it illegally to civilian buyers. It also charges his wife, Army Maj. Heather Hammond, an ROTC instructor at North Carolina’s Campbell University, aided and abetted her husband’s scheme.

Prosecutors said the thefts occurred between December

2018 and April 2022. They claim Christopher Hammond used his Army email to request goods from the Defense Logistics Agency and at least one manufacturer, which he claimed were for his unit. The Hammonds pocketed dozens of items and sold at least some for a profit of at least \$2,011,841, according to the indictment. The pair funneled the money through a bank account and investment accounts, according to prosecutors.

The stolen weapons parts included gun barrels, firearms magazines, firing pins, gun bolts and scopes, prosecutors said. They also said Christopher Hammond wrongfully requested and took tools, gym equipment, electric guitars, bayonets and a sword. It was not clear whether he sold all the gear that he requested or if he kept some for himself.

An initial court hearing for the pair had yet to be scheduled as of Thursday.

# US inflation hit 40-year high in May with 8.6%

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The costs of gas, food and most other goods and services jumped in May, raising inflation to a new four-decade high and giving American households no respite from rising costs.

Consumer prices surged 8.6% last month from 12 months earlier, faster than April's year-over-year surge of 8.3%, the Labor Department said Friday. The new inflation figure, the biggest yearly increase since December 1981, will heighten pressure on the Federal Reserve to continue raising interest rates aggressively.

On a month-to-month basis, prices jumped 1% from April to May, much faster than the 0.3% increase from March to April. Behind that surge were much higher prices for food, energy, rent, airline tickets and new and used cars.

The widespread price increases also elevated so-called "core" inflation, a measure that excludes volatile food and energy prices. In May, core prices jumped a sharp 0.6% for a second straight month and are now 6% above where they were a year ago.

America's rampant inflation is imposing severe pressures on families, forcing them to pay much more for food, gas and rent and reducing their ability to afford discretion-

ary items, from haircuts to electronics. Lower-income and Black and Hispanic Americans, in particular, are struggling because, on average, a larger proportion of their income is consumed by necessities.

Some evidence in recent weeks had suggested that inflation might be moderating, particularly for long-lasting goods that were caught up in supply chain snarls and shortages last year. But that trend appeared to reverse itself in May, with used car prices rising 1.8% after having dropped for three straight months.

New car prices also rose, a consequence of auto production remaining hamstrung by shortages of semiconductors. And clothing prices increased after having declined in April.

In light of Friday's inflation reading, the Fed is all but certain to carry out the fastest series of interest rate hikes in three decades. By sharply raising borrowing costs, the Fed hopes to cool spending and growth enough to curb inflation without tipping the economy into a recession. For the central bank, it will be a difficult balancing act.

The Fed has signaled that it will raise its key short-term rate by a half-point — double the size of the usual hike — next week and again in July.

## US lifts COVID testing rule for foreign travelers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is lifting its requirement that international air travelers to the U.S. take a COVID-19 test within a day before boarding their flights, easing one of the last remaining government mandates meant to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

A senior administration official said the mandate expires Sunday at 12:01 a.m. EDT, saying the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has determined that it's no longer necessary. The official, speaking Friday on the condition of anonymity to preview the formal announcement, said that the agency would reevaluate the need for the testing requirement every 90 days and that it could be reinstated if a troubling new variant emerges.

The Biden administration put in place the testing requirement last year, as it moved away from restrictions that banned nonessential travel from several dozen countries — most of Europe, China, Brazil, South Africa, India and Iran — and instead focuses on classifying individuals by the risk they pose to others. It came in conjunction with a requirement that foreign, non-immigrant adults traveling to the United States need to be fully vaccinated, with only limited exceptions.

The initial mandate allowed those who were fully vaccinated to show proof of a negative test within three days of travel, while unvaccinated people had to present a test taken within one day of travel.

In November, as the highly transmissible omicron variant swept the world, the Biden administration toughened the requirement and required all travelers, regardless of vaccination status, to test within a day of travel to the U.S.

Airline and tourism groups have been pressing the administration for months to eliminate the testing requirement, saying it is discouraging people from booking international trips. Many other countries have lifted their testing requirements for fully vaccinated and boosted travelers in a bid to increase tourism.

In February, the groups argued the testing requirement was obsolete because of the high number of omicron cases already in every state, higher vaccination rates and new treatments for the virus.

The official said the CDC will continue to recommend testing prior to air travel as a precaution.

## Mortgage rates jump again in US, many buyers head to the sideline

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Average long-term U.S. mortgage rates jumped back up ahead of next week's Federal Reserve meeting where it's expected to announce another big increase to its main borrowing rate.

Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac reported Thursday that the 30-year rate jumped to 5.23% this week from 5.09% last week. A year ago at this time, the average rate was 2.96%. Until April, the average rate hadn't exceeded 5% in more than a decade.

The brisk jump in rates, along with a sharp increase in home prices, has been pushing potential homebuyers out of the market.

Mortgage applications decreased 6.5% from one week earlier, the Mortgage Bankers Association reported Wednesday. The

group's composite index, a measurement of mortgage loan application volume, is at its lowest level in 22 years. Its refinance index is 75% lower than a year ago.

Last month, the Federal Reserve raised its benchmark interest rate by a half-percentage point and signaling more big rate hikes to come. The Fed's move means higher costs for mortgages as well as credit cards, auto loans and other borrowing for individuals and businesses.

Higher borrowing rates appear to be slowing the housing market, an important part of the economy. In April, sales of both existing homes and new homes showed signs of faltering, worsened by sharply higher home prices and a shrunken supply of available properties.



# Erdogan: Greece should disarm islands

*Associated Press*

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday warned Greece to demilitarize islands in the Aegean Sea, saying he was “not joking” and posting tweets in Greek and English, in a marked harshening of rhetoric against Turkey’s neighbor and historic regional rival.

Turkey says Greece has been building a military presence in violation of treaties that guarantee the unarmed status of the Aegean islands. It argues the islands were ceded to Greece on the condition they remained demilitarized.

Athens counters that the islands, which have been garrisoned for decades and lie within close striking distance of a Turkish

landing fleet, can’t be left undefended.

“We invite Greece to stop arming the islands that have non-military status and to act in accordance with international agreements,” Erdogan said on the final day of military exercises taking place near Izmir, on Turkey’s Aegean coast. “I’m not joking, I’m speaking seriously. This nation is determined.”

Greece and Turkey are NATO allies, but have a history of disputes over a range of issues, including mineral exploration in the eastern Mediterranean and rival claims in the Aegean Sea.

The two countries came close to war three times in the past half century, the last being in 1996 over ownership of an uninhabited eastern Aegean islet. But Ankara has

recently been questioning Greece’s sovereignty over large, inhabited Greek islands — Rhodes, Kos and Lesbos, for example, would meet the description of “militarized” islands.

“We warn Greece to stay away from dreams, statements and actions that will lead to regret, as it did a century ago, and to return to its senses,” the Turkish leader said. A hundred years ago, Turkey defeated Greece after a three-year war that saw Greek armies invade western Turkey.

Greece maintains Turkey has deliberately misinterpreted the treaties and says it has legal grounds to defend itself following hostile actions by Ankara, including a long-standing threat of war if Greece extended its territorial waters.

# NASA to join in the hunt for UFOs

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — NASA is joining the hunt for UFOs, a top space agency official said Thursday, forming a team that would examine “observations of events that cannot be identified as aircraft or known natural phenomena.”

The space agency would bring a scientific perspective to efforts already underway by the Pentagon and intelligence agencies to make sense of dozens of such sightings, Thomas Zurbuchen, the head of NASA’s science mission directorate, said during a speech before the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine.

The announcement comes just weeks after

a rare and historic hearing before Congress on sightings of what the Defense Department calls Unidentified Aerial Phenomena, more commonly known as UFOs, and a report issued last year by the director of national intelligence that cataloged more than 140 flying objects that officials were not able to identify.

The limited number of such observations makes it difficult “to draw scientific conclusions about the nature of such events,” NASA said in a statement. The agency said it was concerned not just about national security but also the safety of flying in the air. It also said, “There is no evidence UAPs are extraterrestrial in origin.”

Still, NASA said it wants to apply scientific rigor to a vexing issue that has been a fixation for generations. Studying UAPs fits into the agency’s mission of looking for signs of life beyond Earth, from studying water on Mars to exploring the moons of Saturn and Jupiter, the agency said.

“NASA believes that the tools of scientific discovery are powerful and apply here also,” Zurbuchen said in a statement. “We have the tools and team who can help us improve our understanding of the unknown. That’s the very definition of what science is. That’s what we do.” The study, to begin in the fall, will last about nine months and be independent from efforts by the Pentagon, he said.

# Biden, leaders reach migrant pact at summit

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — President Joe Biden and other Western Hemisphere leaders were set to announce on Friday what is being billed as a road map for countries to host large numbers of migrants and refugees.

“The Los Angeles Declaration” is perhaps the biggest achievement of the Summit of the Americas, which was undercut by differences over Biden’s invitation list. Leaders of Mexico and several Central American countries sent top diplomats instead after the U.S. excluded Cuba, Nicaragua

and Venezuela.

A set of principles expected to be announced Friday on the summit’s final day includes legal pathways to enter countries, aid to communities most affected by migration, humane border management and coordinated emergency responses, according to a senior U.S. official who briefed reporters ahead of an official announcement.

It is a blueprint already being followed to a large extent by Colombia and Ecuador, whose right-leaning leaders were saluted at the summit for giving temporary legal status to many of the 6 million people who

have left Venezuela in recent years.

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Thursday that the summit declaration acknowledged migration’s regional dimensions. He and other U.S. officials applauded efforts of Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica and Panama, among others, for accepting migrants and refugees, and noted that the U.S. has granted refuge from natural disasters and civil strife to hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans, Haitians, Venezuelans and others under what is known as Temporary Protected Status.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Fed up gas station owner stops selling fuel

**MA** AMHERST — A Massachusetts gas station owner fed up with what he considers attempts by oil companies to fleece customers with outrageously high prices at the pump has stopped selling gas as a protest.

Reynold Gladu, who has run Ren's Mobil Service in downtown Amherst for nearly 50 years, drained his tanks earlier this month and has no current plans to refill them.

"I don't want to be part of it anymore," Gladu told The Daily Hampshire Gazette. "This is the biggest ripoff that ever has happened to people in my lifetime."

Gasoline in Massachusetts is averaging more than \$5 per gallon, according to AAA New England.

The business will continue to do oil changes and other repairs, but Gladu acknowledges it is unlikely he will be able to remain open for long without selling gas.

### Orchid not seen in state since 1902 is found

**VT** MONTPELIER — A federally threatened species of orchid that hasn't been confirmed in Vermont since 1902 has been found, the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife said.

Department botanists confirmed that a population of small whorled pogonia has been documented on Winooski Valley Park District conservation land in Chittenden County. To protect them, officials won't say exactly where the orchids were found.

The small whorled pogonia is a globally rare orchid historically found across the eastern states and Ontario. Populations in Maine and New Hampshire are found in areas of partial sun, including forest edges and openings.

### Tech boot camps have surpassed 1K graduates

**TN** NASHVILLE — Vanderbilt University's tech boot camps recently surpassed 1,000 graduates since they began enrolling students in 2019.

The camps are a project of the Vanderbilt School of Engineering, the Owen Graduate School of Management and Trilogy Education Services. They teach coding, data analytics, cybersecurity and digital marketing. Participants also have access to career-planning assistance, according to a news release from Vanderbilt.

The part-time, 24-week camps are helping to fill a need in Tennessee for employees with technical skills, said Philippe Fauchet, the engineering school dean.

### 'Unburnable' copy of book sold for \$130K

**NY** NEW YORK — A specially commissioned, unburnable edition of Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale" has been auctioned for \$130,000, Sotheby's announced Tuesday.

Proceeds will be donated to PEN America, which advocates for free expression worldwide. The 384-page book consists mainly of Cinefoil, a specially treated aluminum product, and

was announced last month at PEN's annual fundraising gala. To help promote the initiative, Atwood agreed to be filmed attempting — unsuccessfully — to incinerate a prototype with a flame thrower.

The fireproof book was a joint project by PEN, Atwood, Penguin Random House and two companies based in Toronto, where Atwood is a longtime resident: the Rethink creative agency and The Gas Co., a graphic arts and bookbinding specialty studio.

### Motorcyclist flies off, lands on lanes below

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — Two drivers were arrested on suspicion of DUI after a motorcyclist went flying off a San Francisco freeway overpass and landed on top of a moving car below before being run over by another vehicle early Tuesday, authorities said.

The unidentified motorcyclist died at the scene, the California Highway Patrol said in a statement describing the extraordinary series of events that occurred.

The motorcyclist swerved to avoid a disabled Nissan sedan on an elevated connector ramp and struck a concrete wall, the highway patrol said.

The rider was ejected from the motorcycle and plummeted 50 feet down onto the roof of a Honda sedan traveling in lanes below, the statement said.

### Woman poured hot oil on disabled cousin

**NC** THOMASVILLE — A North Carolina woman poured hot cooking oil

on her cousin while he was sleeping, leaving him severely burned, police said.

Andrew Kirby, 32, called the Thomasville Police Department early Monday, the High Point Enterprise reported. Officers arrived at a house to find Kirby sitting outside in his wheelchair pleading for help, police said, adding that he had third-degree burns on his head and upper torso.

Police said Kirby was taken to a hospital in Winston-Salem, where he was listed in serious but stable condition on Wednesday.

Keeva Dawn Carlton, 41, left the house before police arrived, but police found her at a shopping center and arrested her.

### Man accused of killing delivery man over sauce

**NY** NEW YORK — A condiment-obsessed Queens murder suspect hoarded sweet-and-sour duck sauce in his refrigerator — but not enough to stop him from killing a Chinese food delivery worker in a feud over his wish for more, a police source said.

When police opened accused killer Glenn Hirsch's refrigerator, they found it full of items to flavor up his food — including lots of duck sauce of the kind given away by Chinese restaurants in little plastic packets.

Hirsch, 51, was busted last week on charges of shooting dead Zhiwen Yan, 45, on April 30 in Forest Hills after stalking Yan's restaurant for weeks over his demand for more duck sauce in what the Queens DA called an "obsessive point of contention."

— From Associated Press

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# Lightning push Rangers to brink

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — After falling behind midway through the game, the Tampa Bay Lightning showed the poise of a two-time defending champion. They rallied for another late victory to move a win away from returning to the Stanley Cup Final.

Ondrej Palat scored on a deflection with 1:50 remaining to break a tie and lead the Lightning to a 3-1 victory over the New York Rangers on Thursday night for a 3-2 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

“We just stayed patient,” Tampa Bay captain Steven Stamkos said. “We knew it would be a challenge in this atmosphere. We knew it would be a low-scoring grinding game. We continued our game plan and got rewarded.”

Mikhail Sergachev had a goal and an assist, and Brandon Hagel also scored to help the Lightning get their third straight win, the first by a road team in this series. Andre Vasilevskiy stopped 24 shots.

On the tiebreaking goal, Sergachev got a pass from Victor Hedman and fired a shot from the right point through traffic in front that deflected off Palat’s knee and past Igor Shesterkin to give the Lightning their first lead of the night.

“I saw our guys going to the net hard,” Sergachev said. “I tried to shoot the puck as

quickly as possible.”

Ryan Lindgren scored for New York, which had won eight straight at home. Shesterkin finished with 24 saves.

“It definitely stings,” Rangers defenseman Jacob Trouba said. “It was a tight game that could have gone either way. I think that’s what makes it more frustrating.”

Game 6 is Saturday night in Tampa, Fla. “We haven’t won the series, it’s just 3-2,” Lightning coach Jon Cooper said. “The Rangers — any team — has proven they can wipe that out. We’re the first ones with our eyes wide open, knowing that can happen. We’ll see how this goes.”

Vasilevskiy made several sprawling saves midway through the third, stopping attempts by Ryan Strome, Adam Fox and then Lindgren in a 32-second span to keep it tied at 1. Vasilevskiy also gloved a shot by Kevin Rooney with about eight minutes left.

After Palat’s deflection put the Lightning ahead, Hagel sealed the win with an empty-netter with 59 seconds remaining.

“The game-winning goal can come in the first minute or last minute,” Cooper said. “It doesn’t really matter when it comes. You just have to get it.”

The loss dropped the Rangers into a 3-2 series hole for the third time this postseason. They were down 3-1 to Pittsburgh in the

first round before winning three straight to advance. Then, they trailed 3-2 against Carolina before winning the last two games to reach the conference finals.

“It seems like we play our best hockey when our backs are against the wall,” Lindgren said.

“We’ve just got to go to Tampa and win a game. Take it one game at a time and just draw from those past experiences and go play our best hockey.”

The Rangers opened the scoring when Lindgren fired a shot from the left side over Vasilevskiy’s right shoulder with traffic in front with 9:31 left in the second period. It was the defenseman’s second of the postseason.

After a Lightning turnover, Motte fired a long shot that was gloved and smothered by Vasilevskiy with just under three minutes left to keep it a one-goal game.

Just 30 seconds later, Sergachev tied it from center point with a shot through traffic for his first this postseason with 2:26 to go.

The Rangers outshot the Lightning in a fast-paced and penalty-free first period. New York had the only shot on goal of the first 5½ minutes.

Kucherov hit a goalpost less than 20 seconds earlier.

## Avalanche, in holding pattern, prep for Final

*Associated Press*

DENVER — There were quite a few big names missing from Colorado’s practice Thursday: Captain Gabriel Landeskog, defensemen Devon Toews and Josh Manson, forward Andre Burakovsky.

No need for concern, though. Just a maintenance day for that group of Avalanche players as they rest up — and wait — to face the New York Rangers or two-time defending champion Tampa Bay in the Stanley Cup Final.

Maybe of some concern were two more missing forwards: Nazem Kadri (thumb) and Andrew Cogliano (hand), who both recently underwent surgery. They haven’t been ruled out from playing in the Final, whenever that may be. This time off could be the window they need to return to health.

“It’s good to get a little bit of rest,” forward J.T. Compher said of a break that could extend to nearly two weeks. “It’s just keeping

your mind in it. You have a little time to relax, but it’s just mentally making sure you’re refreshed and focused on the goal ahead.”

The Avalanche started their preliminary preparations Thursday even as they remain in a holding pattern. They kept things condensed in front of fans — and kids attending a summer camp — during practice at their training facility, which houses laser tag, a climbing wall and arcade games on the other side of the rink.

“When we come to work, we’re going to work. When we give them rest, we’ll give them rest,” coach Jared Bednar explained. “If they need anything extra, then it’s up to them to go and get what they need on their own.”

This was a practice session dedicated to getting back up to speed on the heels of a travel day back from Edmonton — where they finished a sweep of Connor McDavid and the Oilers — and an off day. They talked

some strategy before taking shots on goaltenders Pavel Francouz and Darcy Kuemper. Bednar was mum on which one would be in net for Game 1.

Kuemper was the starter before exiting the first game against Edmonton with an upper-body injury. Francouz was in net the rest of the series as the Avalanche earned a spot in the Stanley Cup Final for the first time since 2001.

“It’s a tough decision,” Bednar said. “There will be conversations about it.”

Kuemper wouldn’t divulge the precise nature of his injury. He did say he was seeing the puck “really good.” In the Nashville series, Kuemper was poked through his mask with a stick that caught him near his eye. He was back for the St. Louis series, which the Avalanche won in six games.

He applauded Francouz’s performance. “Super happy for him,” Kuemper said. “It was great for the team.”



# Brown now indispensable for Celtics

Associated Press

BOSTON — There was a time when the narrative surrounding Jaylen Brown was that he was a redundant player on a Celtics team shaping its identity around budding superstar Jayson Tatum.

Though he was a recent All-Star on a team packed with young, homegrown talent, Brown was considered by outsiders to be a potential trade chip Boston could use to adjust a roster that didn't get past the conference finals during his first five seasons.

Cries to jettison the third overall pick of the 2016 draft only grew louder after a tepid 18-21 start to this season under new coach Ime Udoka that had veteran Marcus Smart calling out the Celtics' young stars.

Six months and a run to the NBA Finals later, Mr. Expen-

dable is suddenly Mr. Indispensable as the Celtics pursue their 18th championship.

"It's hard for me to reflect on moments when I'm in the heart of the storm," Brown said. "But everything, all the adversity, all the ups and downs and negative things, indirectly and directly, has helped build me to where I'm at."

Brown is averaging a team-best 22.7 points and 7.3 rebounds through the first three games of the Finals. He delivered probably his best performance of the playoffs — 27 points, nine rebounds and five assists — as Boston beat the Golden State Warriors 116-100 in Game 3 to take a 2-1 series lead.

His 17-point first quarter set the tone for Boston's attack, but Udoka said Brown's game

has evolved on both ends.

"The versatility he gives us on the defensive end, is what it is. I think that goes trickle-down with Marcus and our bigs as well as our big wings," Udoka said.

"We're asking (for) more communication, more recognition, and he is one of the guys that's improved throughout the season as far as that."

While Brown has been locked in during the playoffs, Tatum said he and Brown knew there were questions about whether they could coexist after the team's slow start. He said they've figured out how to meld their skill sets and personalities.

"I think all of those things helped, from saying that we need to split the group up, get rid of somebody or me and JB can't play together," Tatum

said after Boston beat Miami to win the Eastern Conference title. "That fueled us to figure it out and not run from it. ... That we trust in each other and we had to be better."

Under the tutelage of Udoka and his staff, both players have learned to play off their teammates more.

Tatum has steered away from his past tendencies of relying on isolation and jump shots. Instead, he's using the double teams he draws to shuffle the ball to Brown and others to share the scoring load.

Brown, too, has morphed his game. Against Golden State in particular, he's been slashing inside, finding mismatches and picking his spots against the Warriors' small lineups.

Smart said the aggression of Brown and Tatum has become contagious.

# Ohtani helps Angels end 14-game losing streak

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Shohei Ohtani pitched seven stellar innings and hit a two-run homer, and the Los Angeles Angels snapped their 14-game losing streak with a 5-2 victory over the Boston Red Sox on Thursday night.

Andrew Velazquez added a three-run homer in the sixth, but the Angels ended the longest skid in franchise history squarely on the shoulders of their AL MVP, both on the mound and at the plate.

Ohtani (4-4) yielded four hits and a run while striking out six. He also had two hits, and he put the Angels ahead for the first time by crushing his 12th homer of the season off Nick Pivetta (5-5) in the fifth inning.

**Phillies 8, Brewers 3:** Bryce Harper, Kyle Schwarber and Odúbel Herrera homered as interim manager Rob Thomson and visiting Philadelphia won

its season-high seventh straight game.

Thomson, 6-0 since replacing Joe Girardi, is off to the best start by a first-time major league manager since Boston's Joe Morgan won his first 12 games from July 15-25, 1988, the Elias Sports Bureau said.

**Dodgers 11, White Sox 9:** Los Angeles' Max Muncy broke open the game with a three-run homer in the top of the sixth inning after Chicago manager Tony La Russa ordered an intentional walk to Trea Turner with a 1-2 count against lefthander Bennett Sousa.

**Yankees 10, Twins 7:** Gerrit Cole gave up home runs to his first three batters and a career-high five in 2½ innings, but visiting New York rallied to beat Minnesota behind two home runs from Joey Gallo.

Five of Minnesota's first 16 batters homered off Cole, who allowed seven runs and eight

hits.

**Diamondbacks 5, Reds 4:** Josh Rojas hit a two-run single for a 4-3 lead during a four-run rally in the ninth as visiting Arizona gained a four-game split.

**Rockies 4, Giants 2:** At Denver, Colorado's Yonathan Daza looped a tiebreaking single into right field, capping a three-run fourth inning fueled by three San Francisco errors.

**Rays 2, Cardinals 1:** Shane McClellan (7-2) allowed an unearned run and two hits in eight innings and struck out nine, winning his fifth consecutive start as host Tampa Bay completed a three-game sweep.

**Marlins 7, Nationals 4:** Jazz Chisholm bunted for a single on the first pitch of Stephen Strasburg's return from a one-year absence, stole second and host Miami kept on going in a win over Washington that finished

a three-game sweep.

The 33-year-old Strasburg (0-1) allowed seven runs, eight hits and two walks in 4½ innings. He struck out five and hit a batter, throwing 63 of 83 pitches for strikes.

**Guardians 8, Athletics 4:** Andrés Giménez drove in the go-ahead run with a single in his team's four-run eighth inning, and host Cleveland rallied without manager Terry Francona, sending Oakland to its ninth straight loss.

Francona was ejected in the sixth inning for arguing with the Guardians down 4-2.

**Braves 3, Pirates 1:** Max Fried (6-2) won his sixth straight decision by pitching six sharp innings and host Atlanta earned its eighth consecutive victory.

**Royals 7, Orioles 5:** Carlos Santana and MJ Melendez homered, leading host Kansas City past Baltimore.

# Sixteen teams chasing trip to Omaha

*Associated Press*

Super regionals are the next stop on the NCAA baseball tournament's Road to Omaha.

Four of the best-of-three series are Friday through Sunday: Notre Dame (38-14) at No. 1 national seed Tennessee (56-7); No. 9 Texas (45-19) at No. 8 East Carolina (45-19); No. 12 Louisville (42-19-1) at No. 5 Texas A&M (40-18); and Oklahoma (40-21) at No. 4 Virginia Tech (44-12).

The four series Saturday through Monday: UConn (49-14) at No. 2 Stanford (45-15); Arkansas (41-19) at No. 10 North Carolina (42-20); Mississippi (35-22) at No. 11 Southern Mississippi (47-17); and No. 14 Auburn (40-19) at No. 3 Oregon State (47-16).

The eight winners advance to the College World Series in Omaha, Neb., starting June 17.

## You like offense?

The 16 super regional teams averaged 9.3 runs per game per team, and six of them scored at least 20 runs in a game. Auburn scored 17 runs per game and Virginia Tech 15.3.

Overall, the regional round was the highest-scoring since 1999 at 7.1 runs per game per team. Notre Dame was on the low end at 3.7 after outscoring three regional opponents 50-5 last year.

The long ball continues to be in fashion. North Carolina slugged 14 home runs in five games, Ar-

kansas 12 in four games and Auburn 11 in three games.

The 349 home runs in 105 regional games were a record. The regional average of 1.66 per game per team was up 9% from last year's 1.52 and up 28% from 1.30 in 2019. There was no tournament in 2020 because of the pandemic.

## You like strikeouts?

Mississippi pitchers averaged 15.3 strikeouts per nine innings in regionals and the tournament field's overall rate was a record 8.86. The trend has been for strikeouts to go up in super regionals and the CWS.

Walks are up, too. There were 4.54 per nine innings, the most since at least 2015. Arkansas allowed 6.57.

## Vols do it all

Barring a flameout, any conversation about most dominant college baseball teams in history must include Tennessee, which is the first team to lead the nation in both home runs (150) and ERA (2.38).

The Volunteers' 56-7 record gives them a winning percentage (.889) on track to be highest since Oregon State went 56-6 (.903) in 2017. Outstanding pitching carried the Beavers that season but their offensive numbers were modest.

Tennessee's homer total is the highest since LSU hit 157 in 1998 and ranks sixth all-time. Nine players have double-digit homers. The Vols are the only team this season with an ERA under 3.00, and they also lead the nation in several oth-

er pitching categories.

## Been there, done that

Arkansas' four straight super regional appearances lead the nation. East Carolina, Mississippi and Stanford are in supers for a third time in a row.

Texas' winning percentage of .729 in regionals and super regionals is best in the field and second all-time among teams that have played a minimum of 25 such games.

## Welcome aboard

Virginia Tech is the only team making its first appearance in super regionals. Few expected the Hokies to be here. They were picked second-to-last in the ACC Coastal Division and started 0-4 in conference play. They ended up winning the ACC regular-season title and recording their most wins (44) since 1985. They enter supers having won 34 of their last 40.

## Welcome back

Southern Mississippi is making its second appearance in super regionals and first since 2009. That was the year the Golden Eagles made it to the CWS under Corky Palmer. Current coach Scott Berry was an assistant on the '09 team.

## Game 1 means a lot

The team that wins Game 1 of its super regional has advanced to the CWS 80% of the time (140 of 176) since the tournament went to its current format in 1999. Eleven of the last 12 national champions won their super regional openers.

# Oklahoma beats Texas, repeats as national champion

*Associated Press*

OKLAHOMA CITY — Jocelyn Alo and Tiare Jennings put Oklahoma on the brink of a repeat national championship with their stellar play throughout the Women's College World Series.

Their teammates brought it home.

Kinzie Hansen and Grace Lyons hit three-run homers, Jayda Coleman made spectacular defensive plays and No. 1 seed Oklahoma defeated unseeded Texas 10-5 on Thursday night to win its second straight title.

Alo, the two-time USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year, was named Most Outstanding Player. She hit .667 for the World Series, tied Jennings for a series-record five home runs and set a series mark with 12 runs scored.

Alo ends her career with a Division I record 122 home runs. Most important to her, she

ended one of the greatest college careers with a win.

"These are the moments that I'll remember forever," she said. "I'm just happy to be going out on top and to just know that all the hard work we put in paid off."

The Sooners (59-3) claimed the best-of-three series against their Big 12 rival 2-0 after winning Game 1 on Wednesday 16-1 with a record six home runs. It was Oklahoma's sixth overall national championship and fifth in the past nine World Series.

Alo hit a hard single in her final at-bat in the sixth inning and later scored. In the seventh, she stepped in to play left field and caught two fly balls for outs before leaving a standing ovation.

The future looks bright for the Sooners.

Jennings — just a sophomore — set a World Series record with 15 RBIs. Coleman is a soph-

omore, too.

And then there's Oklahoma's Jordy Bahl (22-1). The NFCA Freshman of the Year settled down after a rough start. She allowed two runs and four hits in four innings.

Texas wasn't even expected to reach the World Series, but the Longhorns expected a better performance than they gave in Game 1. Texas coach Mike White called Wednesday's loss to Oklahoma embarrassing and thought Thursday's effort was better.

"My job was to pick them back up, (have them) come back out and fight," White said. "Do the Texas fight. I thought we did that. I thought we fought well. Just didn't turn out our way."

Mia Scott hit a three-run homer and JJ Smith had two hits for the Longhorns (47-22-1), who had survived six elimination games in NCAA tournament play before Thursday.