

## Biden: US will add firepower in Europe

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

The U.S. will add air defenses in Germany and Italy, establish a permanent Army garrison in Poland and put additional warships in Spain, President Joe Biden announced Wednesday as NATO's summit in Madrid got underway.

Biden said the U.S. Army's V Corps headquartered in Poland will become permanent, and a new rotational brigade will operate out of Romania, giving the military a boost in the strategic Black Sea region.

In Poland, V Corps' forward post will be a garrison headquarters with a field support battalion assigned to it, according to the Pentagon.

"These forces — the first permanent U.S. forces on NATO's Eastern Flank — will improve our command and control capabilities," the Pentagon said in a statement.

Some of Biden's announcements could have referred to plans that were already in the works, such as the decision to put two F-35 squadrons in the United Kingdom. But the addition of air defenses in Germany and Italy appears to be a new measure.

"We are sending an unmistakable message that NATO is strong and united," Biden said.

Adding firepower in Europe has been a high priority for the Army in recent years as it seeks to bring back at least some of the weapons stocks that were commonplace during the Cold War.

In Germany, the United States will station an air defense artillery brigade headquarters, a short-range air defense battalion, a combat sustainment support battalion headquarters and an engineer brigade headquarters — adding 625 military personnel in all, the Pentagon said.

And in Italy, a short-range air defense battery with 65 troops will be set up.

The U.S. also will enhance rotational deployments to the Baltic region with a mix of armored, aviation, air defense and special operations forces, the White House said. The commitment of an additional Army brigade in Romania also means two such units will now be operating on a rotational basis in Europe. The Army also has a rotational tank brigade based mainly in Poland.

Biden's announcement set the stage

Wednesday in Madrid, where allies agreed to a new strategic concept that will serve as a guidepost for the alliance for the next decade.

The document, which calls Russia NATO's top security threat, also named China as a new challenger to the Western military alliance.

Allies also backed a series of moves that focus on strengthening defenses along the eastern flank, including increasing the size of the quick-reaction force from 40,000 to 300,000 troops.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Wednesday that he expects the expanded NATO Response Force to be operational by next year.

Allies agreed to increase the size of multiple multinational battlegroups operating along the alliance's eastern flank, where more heavy weaponry will be positioned for quick access in a crisis.

"We meet in the midst of the most serious security crisis we have faced since the Second World War," Stoltenberg said. "And we see that allies are able to demonstrate unity."

## Sweden, Finland set to formally be invited into NATO

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTT GART, Germany — Sweden and Finland are poised to formally be invited into NATO after breakthrough negotiations Tuesday with Turkey, paving the way for one of the most significant alliance expansions in years.

Turkish opposition to the two Nordic states' membership bids threatened to derail NATO plans, but hours before an alliance summit in Madrid was set to begin, Ankara got on board.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, who led negotiations between the three countries, said Turkey, Finland and Sweden signed off on a trilateral memorandum that dealt with Ankara's concerns.

"Finnish and Swedish membership of NATO is good for Finland and Sweden, it is good for NATO, and it is good for European

security," Stoltenberg said.

With NATO ready to formally extend an invitation to Finland and Sweden, the next step will be for parliaments of the other NATO states to grant final approval. Typically, once a country has been invited into NATO, membership is a virtual done deal. But the process can be somewhat lengthy, often taking at least a year.

But given current security conditions in Europe, it is possible allies could seek to fast-track Sweden and Finland's entry.

U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., and Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., in a joint statement said allies should "accelerate Finland and Sweden's accession into NATO."

The addition of Finland and Sweden is certain to upset Russia given the historic military neutrality of the Nordic states, which dates all the way back to the early days of the Cold War when tensions be-

tween Moscow and the West were at their highest.

But Russia's full-fledged war on Ukraine changed the calculus for Finland and Sweden, which over the years has steadily developed closer military ties to NATO.

Ultimately, the war in Ukraine was a turning point in the Nordic states' quest for NATO's Article 5 security guarantee that an attack on one member demands a collective response from the entire military alliance.

In Finland and Sweden, NATO also gets two of Europe's most modern militaries that also are strategically positioned along the alliance's northeastern flank and into the Arctic.

Finnish President Sauli Niinisto said the trilateral agreement reached Tuesday confirms that Turkey will support the invitation of Finland and Sweden into NATO.

# Russians fight for last eastern stronghold

Associated Press

KREMENCHUK, Ukraine — Russian forces battled Wednesday to surround the Ukrainian military's last stronghold in a long-contested eastern province, as shock reverberated from a Russian airstrike on a shopping mall that killed at least 18 in the center of the country two days earlier.

Moscow's battle to wrest the entire Donbas region from Ukraine saw Russian forces pushing toward two Luhansk province villages south of the city of Lysychansk while Ukrainian troops fought to prevent their encirclement.

Britain's defense ministry said Russian forces were making "incremental advances" in their offensive to capture the city. Lysychansk is the last major area of the province under Ukrainian control following the retreat of Ukraine's forces from the neighboring city of Sievierodonetsk.

Russian troops and their separatist allies control 95% of Lu-

hansk and about half of the Donetsk region, the other province that makes up the mostly Russian-speaking Donbas.

The latest assessment by the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said the Ukrainians were likely in a fighting withdrawal to seek more defensible positions while draining the Russian military forces of manpower and resources.

Meanwhile, crews continued to search through the rubble of the shopping mall in Kremenchuk where Ukrainian authorities have said 20 people remain missing. Authorities in the city declared three days of mourning.

Ukrainian State Emergency Services press officer Svitlana Rybalko told The Associated Press that along with the 18 people killed, investigators found fragments of eight more bodies. It was not immediately clear whether that meant there were more victims, as a number of survivors suffered severed limbs.

Several families stood by what was left of the Amstor shopping center Wednesday morning in hope of finding missing loved ones.

"This is pure genocide," local resident Tatiana Chernyshova said while going to lay flowers at the site. "Such things cannot happen in the 21st century."

After the attack on the mall, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of becoming "a terrorist" state. On Wednesday, he reproached NATO for not embracing or equipping his embattled country more fully.

"The open-door policy of NATO shouldn't resemble old turnstiles on Kyiv's subway, which stay open but close when you approach them until you pay," Zelenskyy told NATO leaders meeting in Madrid, speaking by video link. "Hasn't Ukraine paid enough? Hasn't our contribution to defending Europe and the entire civilization been sufficient?"

He asked for more modern ar-

tillery systems and other weapons and warned the NATO leaders they either had to provide Ukraine with the help it needed to defeat Russia or "face a delayed war between Russia and yourself."

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Wednesday dismissed what she claimed was the Ukrainian government's "blatant provocation" in trying to blame the mall missile strike on Russia's military.

Britain's defense ministry said there was a "realistic possibility" that the mall strike "was intended to hit a nearby infrastructure target."

"Russian planners highly likely remain willing to accept a high level of collateral damage when they perceive military necessity in striking a target," the ministry said. "It is almost certain that Russia will continue to conduct strikes in an effort to interdict the resupplying of Ukrainian front-line forces."

## Former aide's testimony paints Trump as volatile, angry

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When President Donald Trump learned his attorney general had publicly rejected his election fraud claims, he heaved his lunch at the wall with such force that the porcelain plate shattered and ketchup streamed down.

On the morning of Jan. 6, 2021, consumed by crowd size concerns, he directed staff in profane terms to remove metal detectors he thought would slow down supporters who'd amassed in Washington for a speech. Never mind that some were armed—they weren't there to hurt him, he said.

And later that day, irate at being driven back to the White House instead of the Capitol, Trump uttered words to the effect

of, "I am the f'ing president. Take me up to the Capitol now" and grabbed at the steering wheel of the presidential vehicle.

Trump's volcanic temper has been the stuff of lore throughout his career in business, but during his presidency it has rarely been described with such evocative detail as in the testimony Tuesday of Cassidy Hutchinson, a junior White House staffer whose proximity to the then-president and top aides that day gave her a remarkably close view.

Hutchinson offered previously unknown details about the extent of Trump's rage in his final weeks of office, his awareness that some supporters had brought weapons with them and his ambivalence as rioters laid siege to the Capitol.

The testimony came as the Justice Department expands its investigation into the insurrection and deepened, but did not resolve, questions about whether Trump himself could face criminal charges. Though Attorney General Merrick Garland has given no hint about whether his department will bring a criminal case against Trump, some legal experts said Hutchinson's testimony could give prosecutors additional facts to pursue.

Potentially problematic for Trump could be his urging on the morning of Jan. 6 to take down metal-detecting magnetometers that he thought would slow down supporters who'd gathered for a rally near the White House.

Upset that some in the crowd

might not get to see him, Trump, according to Hutchinson, said words to the effect of, "I don't care that they have weapons. They're not here to hurt me. Take the f'ing mags away. Let my people in. They can march to the Capitol from here." "Mags" refers to magnetometers.

Whatever any outcome related to a criminal proceeding, the disclosures come as Trump is laying the groundwork for another presidential run in 2024.

Looking to blunt negative publicity surrounding Hutchinson's testimony, Trump issued statements Tuesday calling her accounts of his behavior "fake" and denying that he had requested "that we make room for people with guns to watch my speech."

# Trump allies Boebert, Miller advance

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Two of Congress’ staunchest conservatives repelled more centrist alternatives to lock up Republican nominations on Tuesday, even as the party’s voters chose to vote out a six-term incumbent in Mississippi.

Illinois Republican Rep. Mary Miller won her primary over fellow incumbent Rep. Rodney Davis just days after she called the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* a “historic victory for

white life” during a weekend rally with former President Donald Trump. Her spokesperson said she misspoke.

Another Trump ally, Colorado Rep. Lauren Boebert, one of Congress’ most polarizing members, easily beat back a challenge from a more mainstream Republican.

Mississippi Republican Rep. Steven Palazzo lost in a rare runoff to Sheriff Mike Ezell. But his Republican House colleague, Michael Guest, won a runoff race in the state, despite

defying Trump and voting to create an independent commission to investigate last year’s insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

In Illinois, Democratic Rep. Sean Casten beat progressive Rep. Marie Newman for a seat in suburban Chicago after a declining population cost the state a House seat.

In all, six states held congressional primary elections, primary runoffs or special elections.

In Colorado’s deeply conser-

vative El Paso County, meanwhile, eight-term Republican Rep. Doug Lamborn staved off a challenge from the right from state Rep. Dave Williams for his 5th Congressional District seat. Williams failed to get the phrase “Let’s Go Brandon,” code for an obscenity against President Joe Biden, added to his name on the ballot.

Lamborn is facing an ongoing House ethics investigation over whether he misused official resources for personal purposes.

## Hochul and Zeldin set to face off for NY governor

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Nine months after she stepped into the job of New York governor as a relative unknown, Democrat Kathy Hochul easily locked up her party’s nomination Tuesday, setting her on an expected glide path to win the office in November.

Hochul was serving as an under-the-radar lieutenant governor under the shadow of former Gov. Andrew Cuomo until last year, when he resigned amid sexual harassment allegations, catapulting her into office.

Hochul beat back primary challenges Tuesday from New York City’s elected public advocate, Jumaane Williams, and U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi, a moderate from Long Island. She now turns her eyes to becoming the first woman to win election to the New York governor’s office this fall.

In a nod to the barrier-breaking campaign, Hochul gave an election night speech Tuesday on a stage underneath a glass ceiling at an event space in Manhattan.

“I’m also here because I stand on the shoulders of generations of women, generations of

women who constantly had to bang up against that glass ceiling. To the women of New York, this one’s for you,” Hochul said.

Hochul enters the general election campaign with a big advantage, running as the incumbent with a heavy fundraising advantage in a state that has more than twice as many registered Democrats than Republicans and has not had a GOP governor in 16 years.

She faces Rep. Lee Zeldin, who won the Republican Party’s nomination Tuesday. Zeldin is a staunch ally of former President Donald Trump and was among the Republicans in Congress who voted against certifying the 2020 election results.

“Are we ready to fire Kathy Hochul?” Zeldin said to cheers at a victory party on Long Island.

The Long Island congressman will try to become the first Republican elected governor in New York since Gov. George Pataki was reelected in 2002.

“This November, in the state of New York, one-party rule will end,” he said. “Kathy Hochul will get fired. We will restore balance and common sense to Albany again.”

## Colorado GOP voters say no to indicted clerk for election post

*Associated Press*

DENVER — Colorado Republicans on Tuesday chose a former local official who pledged to keep politics out of running elections as their nominee for secretary of state over an indicted county clerk who gained national prominence by promoting conspiracy theories about voting machines.

In spurning Mesa County Clerk Tina Peters, most Republican primary voters appeared to reject the conspiracy theories and false claims that have spread among conservatives since the last presidential election. Peters has appeared regularly with prominent allies of former President Donald Trump who have claimed without evidence that the 2020 election was stolen from him, and on Tuesday night made similar claims of “cheating” in the primary that were quickly rebutted by the primary winner and the secretary of state.

The win by Pam Anderson, the former Jefferson County clerk and past head of the state clerks’ association, sets up a November matchup with current Secretary of State Jena Griswold, a Democrat seeking a second term who ran unopposed in

Tuesday’s primary.

Despite Peters’ loss, Griswold’s campaign framed the November election as a referendum on voting security and false claims peddled by Republicans across the country that widespread fraud is the reason Trump lost reelection.

Griswold campaign manager Kyla Sabado said in a statement that Anderson “cannot be trusted to stand up to the far-right extremists that dominate the Republican Party.”

Anderson doesn’t bring the political baggage of Peters and is likely to be a much tougher opponent for Griswold, especially during a year that is widely believed to be a difficult one for Democrats.

After her win Tuesday night, Anderson said Republican voters had sent a message that they wanted someone they could trust to be a “fair leader” in the state’s top elections office and vowed to avoid using the post for partisan gain.

“I will continue my fight for restoring the confidence of Colorado voters against lies and the politicians or interest groups that seek to weaponize elections administration for political advantage,” Anderson said.



# Last WWII Medal of Honor recipient dies

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Hershel “Woody” Williams, the last remaining Medal of Honor recipient from World War II, died Wednesday. He was 98.

Williams’ foundation announced on Twitter and Facebook that he died at the Veterans Affairs medical center bearing his name in Huntington.

As a young Marine corporal, Williams went ahead of his unit during the Battle of Iwo Jima in the Pacific Ocean in February 1945 and eliminated a series of Japanese machine gun positions.

Later that year, at age 22, Williams received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation’s highest award for military valor, from President Harry Truman at the White House.

“For me, receiving the Medal of Honor was actually the lifesaver because it

forced me to talk about the experiences that I had, which was a therapy that I didn’t even know I was doing,” Williams said during a 2018 Boy Scouts recognition ceremony in Fairmont, according to the Times West Virginian.

Iwo Jima was where Marines planted the American flag on Mount Suribachi, a moment captured in one of the most iconic war photographs in history.

Williams said he saw the flag from a distance after it went up as troops around him celebrated.

Williams’ actions in battle to clear the way for U.S. forces were detailed on the military’s Medal of Honor website: He was “quick to volunteer his services when our tanks were maneuvering vainly to open a lane for the infantry through the network of reinforced concrete pillboxes, buried mines and black volcanic sands.

Williams daringly went forward alone to attempt the reduction of devastating machine gun fire from the unyielding positions.”

Facing small-arms fire, Williams fought for four hours, repeatedly returning to prepare demolition charges and obtain flamethrowers.

“His unyielding determination and extraordinary heroism in the face of ruthless enemy resistance were directly instrumental in neutralizing one of the most fanatically defended Japanese strong points encountered by his regiment and aided vitally in enabling his company to reach its objective,” the website said.

Williams remained in the Marines after the war, serving a total of 20 years, before working for the Veterans Administration for 33 years as a veterans service representative.

## Gen. Mattis marries physicist in Vegas

By SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

Former Marine Gen. and Defense Secretary James Mattis married a physicist in a ceremony officiated by an Elvis impersonator Saturday in Las Vegas, according to reports.

The 71-year-old, who led the U.S. Central Command from 2010-13 and served in President Donald Trump’s Cabinet from January 2017 to January 2019, married Christina Lomasney in a riverside ceremony, Politico reported Tuesday.

Photographs tweeted by the news organization, which reported that the couple met in a bar, show a beaming Mattis and Lomasney standing with the Elvis impersonator who officiated the ceremony.

Maximilian Uriarte, the creator of the comic “Terminal Lance” about life in the Corps’ lower ranks, tweeted that a weekend-in-Vegas wedding was “very on-brand Marine Corps.”

Brian Mills, the Elvis imper-

sonator who claimed credit for the union responded: “80,000 couples are getting married here in 2022. Many of them aren’t Marines. He was one of the happiest Groom’s I’ve had in 20 years, though.”

Mattis fashioned a reputation among Marines as a warrior monk who wielded “knife hands” during four decades of infantry leadership that included the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Bachelorhood during his military career allowed Mattis “a single-minded focus on his career and a passionate engagement with the military’s traditions and history,” according to a May 22, 2017, profile in the New Yorker magazine.

After leading troops in Afghanistan after 9/11, Mattis commanded the 1st Marine Division during the invasion of Iraq and later during the first battle of Fallujah in 2004, which became pivotal as Iraq descending into a sectarian insurgency.

## US officials taking more steps to fight monkeypox

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Reacting to a surprising and growing monkeypox outbreak, U.S. health officials on Tuesday expanded the group of people recommended to get vaccinated against the monkeypox virus.

They also said they are providing more monkeypox vaccine, working to expand testing and taking other steps to try to get ahead of the outbreak.

“We will continue to take aggressive action against this virus,” said Dr. Ashish Jha, White House COVID-19 response coordinator, who has also been playing a role in how the government deals with monkeypox.

The administration said it was expanding the pool of people who are advised to get vaccinated to include those who may realize on their own that they could have been infected. That includes men who who have recently had sex with men at parties or in other gatherings in cities where monkeypox cases have been identified.

Most monkeypox patients experience only fever, body aches, chills and fatigue. People with more serious illness may develop a rash and lesions on the face and hands that can spread to other parts of the body.

The disease is endemic in parts of Africa, where people have been infected through bites from rodents or small animals. It does not usually spread easily among people.

Last month, cases began emerging in Europe and the United States. Many — but not all — of those who contracted the virus had traveled internationally. Most were among men who had sex with men, but health officials have stressed that anyone can get monkeypox.

As of Tuesday, the U.S. had identified 306 cases in 27 states and the District of Columbia. More than 4,700 cases have been found in more than 40 other countries outside the areas of Africa where the virus is endemic.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Man dies after he was run over by Clydesdale**

**MN** ST. CLOUD — A Minnesota man who planned to offer carriage rides at an event in St. Cloud was killed when he was trampled by one of the Clydesdale horses.

St. Cloud police said the incident happened at the Municipal Athletic Complex.

The 44-year-old man, from Isanti, was walking the horses when he lost control and was run over by one of them.

The horses ran off with the carriage still attached and the man's child inside, but stopped when the wagon became stuck on a tree. The child was not injured, police said.

A family member was able to get the horses into a trailer with no additional injuries.

**Police: Man arrested with rifle at pizzeria**

**CA** ONTARIO — Authorities said a 20-year-old man was arrested after stealing food while carrying a handgun and a semi-automatic rifle at a Southern California pizza restaurant.

Police in Ontario said in a statement that officers received a call about a man at a Little Caesars location displaying a firearm in the waistband of his pants.

Once officers arrived at the restaurant, the man went outside with stolen food and a large rifle seen under his shirt, the statement said.

Officers used a stun gun on the man after he refused to put his hands up, and arrested him,

police said.

He was found carrying an AR-15-style rifle and a handgun and is being investigated for robbery and weapons charges, the police statement said.

**New items to be added to site for fallen firefighters**

**SC** CHARLESTON — Charleston plans new remembrances at a memorial honoring nine firefighters who died trying to put out a blaze at a furniture store in 2007.

Charleston 9 Memorial Park was built several years ago next to Charleston Fire Station 11, which is on the site of the Sofa Super Store where the nine firefighters were killed.

The city wants to add a terrace next to the fire station that overlooks the parks with nine bands of bricks extending from nine windows, WCSC-TV reported.

There will also be memorial panels remembering the men who died near a flagpole on the site.

**Climate change lengthens black fly season**

**ME** PORTLAND — Maine's season for black flies appears to be taking up more of the year due to factors including cleaner water and climate change.

Black flies are small insects, some of which feed on human blood and bedevil outdoor adventure seekers in the state.

Jim Dill, a pest management specialist at University of Maine Cooperative Extension, told the Bangor Daily News that a few decades ago the Maine

season for black flies was from the end of May into the first weeks of June and then they would die off.

Experts said that doesn't appear to be the case anymore, and the season now lasts for the entirety of the summer.

One reason is because the flies need fresh water to reproduce, and decades of environmental protection laws have provided them with that, the Bangor Daily News reported.

**Coyote that attacked 2-year-old euthanized**

**CA** FOUNTAIN VALLEY — Wildlife authorities caught and euthanized a coyote that attacked a 2-year-old child at a Southern California park earlier this week, officials said.

The attack happened at Mile Square Park in the city of Fountain Valley southeast of Los Angeles, police said.

"California Department of Fish and Wildlife obtained a DNA sample from the victim's clothing, which conclusively proved to be a coyote responsible for the attack," police said in a statement.

Fish and Wildlife trapped the coyote at the park and killed it.

The child was recovering from unspecified injuries, police said.

**Man charged with secretly recording girl**

**MA** BOSTON — A California man was accused by federal prosecutors of climbing onto the roof of a Massachusetts family's garage so he could secretly record an 11-year-old girl as she changed in

her bedroom.

Jacob Guerrero, 23, of Woodland, Calif., was indicted on a charge of sexually exploiting a child, the U.S. attorney's office said in a statement.

Before making the video recording, Guerrero conducted surveillance of the family's home and made notes regarding the time of day that the girl and her siblings arrived home, showered, and changed at night, prosecutors said.

Then on about March 17, 2021, prosecutors said he climbed on to the garage attached to the girl's home and stood outside a second-floor bedroom window to make the video as she changed.

**Man acquitted of murder due to insanity escapes**

**TX** AUSTIN — A man acquitted by reason of insanity of murder in the 2013 stabbing death of his father in Austin escaped from a state hospital to which he was committed, authorities said.

Staff at the North Texas State Hospital in Vernon, near the Oklahoma border and 190 miles northwest of Dallas, advised police that Alexander Scott Ervin, 29, was found missing from the hospital, the Vernon Police Department reported.

A review of the hospital's security video revealed that Ervin left his dormitory room and scaled the hospital's 8-foot security fence before heading north on foot.

A Travis County jury in 2014 found Ervin, who is autistic, not guilty of murder by reason of insanity in Ray Scott Ervin's death.

— From wire reports



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**Reporting World, National and Military News**

# Serena loses in first round at Wimbledon

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Serena Williams began — and ended — her comeback at Wimbledon after 364 days out of singles competition looking very much like someone who hadn't competed in just that long. She missed shots, shook her head, rolled her eyes.

In between, there were moments where Williams played very much like someone whose strokes and will have carried her to 23 Grand Slam titles. She hit blistering serves and strokes, celebrated with arms aloft.

Returning to the site of her last singles match, which she had to stop after less than a set because of an injury on June 29, 2021, and seven of her major championships, the 40-year-old Williams came within two points of victory. But she could not finish the job against an opponent making her Wimbledon debut and bowed out with a 7-5, 1-6, 7-6 (10-7) loss to 115th-ranked Harmony Tan of France.

"It's definitely better than last year," Williams said. "That's a start."

Asked whether this might have been her last match, Williams replied: "That's a question I can't answer. I don't know. ... Who knows? Who knows where I'll pop up?"

With her older sister, Venus, jumping out of a guest box seat at Centre Court to celebrate the best points, Serena Williams was oh-so-close to pulling out a topsy-turvy match that lasted 3 hours, 11 minutes and was contested with the retractable roof shut for the last two sets.

"For my first Wimbledon, it's: Wow. Just wow," said the 24-year-old Tan, who recalled watching Williams on TV as a youngster.

"When I saw the draw, I was really scared," Tan said with a laugh, "because it's Serena Williams. She's a legend. I was like, 'Oh, my God, how can I play?'"

This is one indication of how things were at the get-go: Of Tan's first 11 points, only one came via a winner she pro-

duced. Others came via errors by Williams, either forced or unforced.

While Williams — who wore two pieces of black tape on her right cheek; the reason was not immediately clear — recovered from dropping the opening two games to lead 4-2, she reversed course again and allowed Tan to quickly climb back into that set with her mix of spins and slices.

When Tan pulled even at 4-4 by striking a down-the-line backhand winner, she celebrated with a yell; that shot was so good that even Williams felt compelled to applaud.

Tan came into the day with a 2-6 career record at all Grand Slam tournaments. Clearly enjoying herself — and the setting, the moment, the way it all was going — she broke to lead 6-5 with the help of a cross-court forehand winner, looked at her guest box, raised a fist and waved her arms to ask for more noise from a crowd that was loudly backing Williams.

Soon enough, a forehand passing winner gave Tan that

set. At that point, it seemed reasonable to ask: Could Tan pull off by far the biggest victory of her career? Might Williams exit a major in the first round for only the third time in 80 appearances (the previous were a loss at the 2012 French Open and that mid-match retirement at Wimbledon last year)?

The latter is what happened, of course, although Williams certainly played spectacularly in the second set. She won a monumental game to lead 2-0, breaking after 30 points and 12 deuces across almost 20 minutes when Tan shanked a forehand into the chair umpire's stand.

In a blink, then, it was 5-0 and sure seemed as if Williams was on her way.

Her serves picked up pace and became more accurate, too: After winning just 57% of her first-serve points in the first set, she claimed 80% in the second. Her other strokes were better-calibrated: After making 22 unforced errors in the first set, she made 13 in the second.

## Ruud becomes seventh of top 11 men out of Wimbledon

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Yet another of the highest-ranked players on the men's tour is out of the tournament at Wimbledon. Novak Djokovic or Rafael Nadal are not among them.

Casper Ruud, the runner-up to Nadal at this year's French Open, became the seventh of the top 11-ranked male players to be out of the grass-court Grand Slam for either losing early, injury, illness or being banned.

Ruud, who was seeded third but ranked sixth, lost to Ugo Humbert of France 3-6, 6-2, 7-5, 6-4 on Wednesday in the second round.

Djokovic, a six-time Wimbledon champion who is looking for his fourth straight title at the All England Club, beat Thanasi Kokkinakis of Australia 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 to reach the third round. Nadal advanced to the second round on Tuesday.

The third-ranked Djokovic, No. 4 Nadal,

No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas and No. 7 Carlos Alcaraz are the only players in the top 11 remaining in the draw. Top-ranked Daniil Medvedev is out because of a ban on Russians over the war in Ukraine, No. 2 Alexander Zverev is injured, No. 8 Andrey Rublev of Russia is also banned, No. 9 Felix Auger-Aliassime and No. 10 Hubert Hurkacz lost, and No. 11 Matteo Berrettini withdrew after testing positive for COVID-19.

Djokovic hosted Boris Becker's girlfriend and the three-time Wimbledon champion's son in his box for the match. Becker, who previously coached the Serb, was sentenced to 2½ years in prison in Britain for illicitly transferring large amounts of money and hiding assets after he was declared bankrupt.

"I've just been trying to give support to people around him, his closest people, his family members, because I consider Boris really a family member, someone that I greatly appreciate, respect, and care

about," Djokovic said. "We've been through a lot together during those three years of collaboration. Our relationship dates back even before that. Of course, after we finished our professional relationship, we always stayed close, him with my team, with my agents, with my family.

"He knows and they know that they can always count on me for whatever support or help I can provide."

In the women's tournament, three of the top 11 ranked players were eliminated on Wednesday.

Anett Kontaveit lost to Juke Niemeier of Germany 6-4, 6-0, while 2017 Wimbledon champion Garbiñe Muguruza was beaten by Greet Minnen 6-4, 6-0 and U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu lost to Caroline Garcia 6-3, 6-3.

Kontaveit was seeded second at Wimbledon but is ranked third, while Muguruza was seeded ninth and ranked 10th, and Raducanu was seeded 10th and ranked 11th.



# MLS' Vermillion diagnosed with CTE

Associated Press

BOSTON — Researchers have diagnosed chronic traumatic encephalopathy in a Major League Soccer player for the first time, saying Tuesday that defender Scott Vermillion suffered from the degenerative brain disease.

The Boston University CTE Center said Vermillion, who died of an accidental drug overdose in December 2020 at the age of 44, had the disease. Although it is not possible to connect any individual case to a cause, CTE has been linked to repeated blows to the head.

CTE has been found in more than 100 former NFL players as well as semi-pro and high school soccer players. Vermillion, who played for the Kansas City Wizards, Colorado Rapids and D.C. United, is the first from MLS.

"Mr. Vermillion has shown us that soccer players are at risk for CTE," said Dr. Ann

McKee, director of the BU CTE Center. "We need to make every effort to identify players who are suffering and provide them compassionate care and appropriate medical support."

Vermillion began playing soccer at the age of 5 and continued for 22 years, culminating in four MLS seasons. He also played for the United States at the 1993 Under-17 World Championship and made some appearances for the Under-20 team in 1996.

After retiring in 2001 with an ankle injury, his family said, he became depressed and had problems with impulse control and aggression. Eventually, he suffered from memory loss and developed a substance abuse problem.

All have been associated with CTE, which has been linked to concussions or sub-concussive blows in athletes, combat veterans and others who sustain repeated head

trauma.

"This disease destroys families, and not just football families," said Vermillion's father, Dave Vermillion. "We hope this will be a wake-up call to the soccer community to support former players and get them the help they need, so some good can come from this tragedy."

The MLS Players Association called upon the league to break with the sport's international governing bodies and adopt a rule expanding substitutions to allow for players with concussions.

"We must not sit by and wait for them to do the right thing. MLS should unilaterally adopt a full concussion substitution rule immediately," the union said in a statement. "Current substitution rules do not give medical professionals sufficient time to properly diagnose potential concussions without putting a team at a substantial

competitive disadvantage."

MLS Chief Medical Officer Margot Putukian said the league has "comprehensive policies to educate players, coaches, officials and medical staffs about the importance of head injury identification, early reporting and treatment."

The Concussion Legacy Foundation has called for rules that would limit tackle football and heading in soccer to children over 14. CLF co-founder Chris Nowinski said dementia has already been linked to repetitive heading by pro soccer players in Britain.

"It is time for the global soccer community to have a real conversation about heading, especially in the youth game," Nowinski said. "We urgently need to investigate how far this crisis extends into amateur soccer and immediately put in place reforms to prevent CTE in the next generation."

## Koepka cites injuries, family for joining LIV Golf

Associated Press

NORTH PLAINS, Ore. — Four months after suggesting those who defected to the Saudi-backed LIV Golf series were sellouts, Brooks Koepka explained Tuesday that he simply changed his mind.

Koepka signed with LIV Golf last week for its first event on American soil, which starts Thursday at Pumpkin Ridge west of Portland.

It was a stunning reversal for the four-time major champion, who was once an outspoken critic of the fledgling series that seeks to challenge the PGA Tour.

"Opinions change. I feel very comfortable with the decision I made. I'm happy, and did what's best for me," Koepka said.

In February, Koepka said of LIV Golf: "They'll get their

guys. Somebody will sell out and go to it."

Former world No. 1 and fellow four-time major winner Rory McIlroy suggested last week that Koepka and others were duplicitous "to say one thing and then do another thing."

"Look, he's entitled to his opinion. He can think whatever he wants," Koepka responded. "He's going to do what's best for him and his family, I'm going to do what's best for me and my family. Can't hate on anybody for that, and like I said, opinions change, man."

Koepka cited a knee injury that has taken a toll on his body and the desire to spend more time with his family as factors in his decision. He did not mention the multimillion-dollar signing bonuses LIV Golf — which is backed by Saudi Arabia's sover-

eign wealth fund — has handed to players. Koepka is one of the biggest names, along with Dustin Johnson and six-time major champion Phil Mickelson.

And there's more money to be made: The 48-man field will compete for a \$20 million purse, with an additional \$5 million prize fund for a team competition. Charl Schwartzel won the inaugural event outside London and took home \$4.75 million. LIV tournaments are played over 54 holes with no cut, and even the last-place finisher gets paid.

Players who spoke to reporters on Tuesday skirted questions about Saudi Arabia's human rights record.

"I understand the topics you're trying to bring up, and they're horrible events, but I'm here to play golf. That's my

deal," said Pat Perez, a three-time PGA Tour winner who also spoke against LIV Golf before changing his mind. "I've got an opportunity to play golf, and that's it."

Bryson DeChambeau, the 2020 U.S. Open champion, pointed to the good he plans to do in his community with the money he's making from LIV Golf.

"I think as time goes on, hopefully people will see the good that they are doing and what they are trying to accomplish rather than looking at the bad that's happened before," DeChambeau said. "I think moving on from that is important, and going and continuing to move forward in a positive light is something that could be a force for good for the future of the game."

# Astros rip Mets with Valdez, homers

Associated Press

NEW YORK— Kyle Tucker gave Astros starter Framber Valdez all the support he needed with a three-run homer in the first inning.

Houston piled on anyway.

“We scored early and we kept scoring,” manager Dusty Baker said. “That’s the thing we got to do.”

Tucker had a key early drive and a stolen base, Yordan Alvarez hit his 23rd home run and Valdez pitched a gem to lift the Astros over the New York Mets 9-1 Tuesday night.

Alvarez reached base five times, Yuli Gurriel also homered and Alex Bregman had three hits as Houston beat the Mets for the third time in a week. The AL West leaders swept a two-game series at home to begin a stretch of nine straight games against the Mets and Yankees. Houston is 5-2 in that string so far.

“You know, we’re playing high-quality teams,” Baker said. “I mean, these guys can score, just like the Yankees can score, and just like we can score.”

Valdez (8-3) allowed six hits over eight scoreless innings, striking out four and inducing a dozen ground ball outs. The left-hander came in with the highest grounder rate in the majors at 68.9%.

**Braves 5, Phillies 3:** Matt Olson homered twice, Travis d’Arnaud also connected and visiting Atlanta beat Philadelphia.

Olson had his second two-homer game this season and the 13th of his career. He broke a 3-all tie in the eighth with his second homer, driving an 86 mph slider from Andrew Bellatti (1-3) out to right.

A.J. Minter, filling in for injured closer Kenley Jansen, pitched a perfect ninth for his first save in his third chance. Collin McHugh (1-1) tossed 1 2/3 scoreless innings of relief.

**Yankees 2, Athletics 1:** JP Sears stretched his big league scoreless streak to 12 2/3 innings and won his second spot start, pitching host New York over Oakland for its 15th win in 19 games.

Jose Trevino backed Sears with an RBI single in the first off trade candidate Frankie Montas (3-8), and Marwin Gonzalez homered in the second.

**Blue Jays 6, Red Sox 5:** Vladimir Guerrero Jr. hit a game-ending single in the ninth inning to complete host Toronto’s rally over Boston.

The Blue Jays trailed 5-4 when pinch-hitter Alejandro Kirk singled to begin the ninth against Tyler Danish (2-1). Hansel Robles gave up Bo Bichette’s tying RBI single, and Guerrero followed with his base hit. The blown save was Robles’ fifth.

Boston lost back-to-back games for the first time since May 30-31.

**Guardians 3-0, Twins 2-6:** Amed Rosario’s clutch two-run single in the eighth inning rallied his team past Minnesota in the first game of a doubleheader, snapping Cleveland’s five-game losing streak.

Carlos Correa’s homer leading off the eighth against Sam Hentges (2-0) had given the Twins a 2-1 lead.

Jorge Polanco drove in three runs in his first game back from the injured list, rookie Josh Winder pitched six stellar innings, and Minnesota won the second game for a split.

Byron Buxton hit his 20th homer and José Miranda also connected for the Twins.

**Rockies 7, Dodgers 4:** Randal Grichuk and Elias Diaz homered as host Colorado roughed up Los Angeles’ Clayton Kershaw.

The Rockies tagged Kershaw (5-2) for six runs and nine hits in four innings, his shortest outing in Colorado since his first career start at Coors Field on July

22, 2008.

Charlie Blackmon had four hits and scored twice, and Brandon Rodgers had two hits and two RBIs as the Rockies clinched their second series victory over the Dodgers this season.

**Brewers 5, Rays 3:** Brandon Woodruff struck out 10 in five innings in his return from the injured list, Andrew McCutchen and Luis Urías homered during a four-run sixth, and visiting Milwaukee beat Tampa Bay.

**Rangers 8, Royals 3:** Marcus Semien homered and drove in four runs, Jon Gray pitched seven effective innings and visiting Texas beat Kansas City.

Corey Seager hit a two-run double as the Rangers handed the last-place Royals their fourth consecutive defeat.

**Cardinals 5, Marlins 3:** Dylan Carlson drove in a pair of runs and the St. Louis bullpen held visiting Miami scoreless for four innings.

Junior Fernández pitched two innings, Giovanny Gallegos worked the eighth and Ryan Helsley struck out the side in the ninth for his sixth save in eight opportunities.

**Nationals 3, Pirates 1:** Patrick Corbin matched a career high with 12 strikeouts, Yadiel Hernandez delivered a go-ahead two-run double and host Washington rallied in the eighth inning for the second straight game to beat Pittsburgh.

Corbin (4-10) allowed one run in eight innings for Washington, which has won three in a row and six of eight.

Pittsburgh has lost five in a row by a combined seven runs.

**Reds 5, Cubs 3:** Luis Castillo struck out 11 in six shutout innings in his first win in a month, Jonathan India hit a three-run homer and visiting Cincinnati beat Chicago.

Keegan Thompson (7-3) matched Castillo all the way to the sixth, when the last-place Reds grabbed a 2-0 lead on con-

secutive RBI doubles by Brandon Drury and Donovan Solano.

**Giants 4, Tigers 3:** Mike Yastrzemski hit a two-run single and made a beautiful catch in the outfield on Miguel Cabrera’s sharp liner as host San Francisco held off Detroit.

Giants lefty Carlos Rodón (7-4) allowed one run and seven hits in six innings with four strikeouts and no walks. Rodón has permitted just two runs in his last 27 innings.

**Mariners 2, Orioles 0:** Robbie Ray held Baltimore to one hit in seven innings and Jesse Winker delivered a two-run double in the eighth for host Seattle.

Winker’s clutch hit came with two outs against Felix Bautista, driving in J.P. Crawford and Julio Rodriguez.

Ryan Mountcastle singled in the fourth for the Orioles’ lone hit.

**White Sox 11, Angels 4:** Josh Harrison and Luis Robert each hit a two-run homer in the fifth inning, and visiting Chicago pounded out 17 hits against Los Angeles.

José Abreu and Yoán Moncada had RBI doubles during a five-run seventh for the White Sox, who rallied from an early three-run deficit with multi-hit games from seven batters to win for only the second time in seven games.

Mike Trout and Shohei Ohtani hit back-to-back homers for the Angels. Ohtani went 3-for-3 with a walk, two doubles and two RBIs on the night before his next mound start.

**Diamondbacks 7, Padres 6:** Josh Rojas scored the winning run in the ninth inning when shortstop C.J. Abrams couldn’t handle a throw at second base, and host Arizona rallied from a late six-run deficit to beat San Diego.

The Diamondbacks trailed 6-0 after six innings, but scored four in the seventh and tied it with two more in the eighth.