

Nuclear-powered sub visits S. Korea

By DAVID CHOI

Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — One of the U.S. Navy's largest submarines, the nuclear-powered USS Michigan, sailed into South Korea's largest port Friday, less than a day after the North fired two short-range missiles.

The Michigan — an Ohio-class submarine with a capacity for 155 Tomahawk missiles — arrived “for the purpose of responding to North Korea's advancing threats through joint special warfare exercises,” the South's Ministry of National Defense said in a Friday news release.

The port visit also honors commitments between the United States and South Korea and “will further enhance the regular visibility of strategic assets” on the peninsula, South Korean Vice Adm. Kim Myung-soo said in the release.

The Michigan will stay in South Korean waters until an unspecified day in the following week, a South Korean navy spokesperson told Stars and Stripes by phone Friday. South

Korean officials regularly speak to the media on a customary condition of anonymity.

The visit “reflects the United States' commitment to the Indo-Pacific region,” the Navy's Submarine Group 7 said in a news release Friday. It also complements the many exercises, training, operations and other military cooperation activities conducted by U.S. submarine forces with our [South Korean] allies,” according to the release.

U.S. Forces Korea and U.S. Naval Forces Korea did not immediately respond to a request for comment Friday; the commands regularly do not comment on military training in the Korean Peninsula, citing security concerns.

Ohio-class submarines are the largest ever built by the Navy. As ballistic missile submarines, they were designed to carry the nuclear-tipped Trident II D-5 missile, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

But the Michigan and three other Ohio-class boats were converted to guided-missile submarines laden with Tomahawks, which

can carry nuclear warheads “though policy decisions have phased out their nuclear role,” according to CSIS in February.

The Michigan last sailed into Busan in October 2017 for a routine visit during a scheduled deployment to the Western Pacific, the Navy said at the time. The vessel's homeport is Naval Base Kitsap, Wash.

President Joe Biden and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol agreed in April to send a nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine for a visit to the country at an unspecified date. The Michigan, however, is a guided-missile submarine.

Dubbed the Washington Declaration, the agreement promises Seoul and Washington will broaden their military and economic ties for the “shared goal of achieving the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.”

North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles off its eastern coast on Thursday. The missiles flew nearly 500 miles before landing in the East Sea, or the Sea of Japan, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Leak suspect Teixeira indicted on additional charges

The Washington Post

Jack Teixeira, the Air National Guard member charged with leaking government secrets in an online group of gamers and gun enthusiasts, was indicted Thursday on additional charges that offer more detail about what type of classified information he allegedly mishandled.

The indictment charges Teixeira with six counts of illegal retention and transmission of national defense information, crimes which could send him to prison for years if he is convicted.

Teixeira, a 21-year-old from North Dighton, Mass., has been in jail since his April arrest. FBI agents traced to him photos posted online of classified documents. Authorities say he worked as an IT professional at a military base in Cape Cod, and abused his top secret clearance by illegally sharing U.S. intelligence assessments and other sensitive information on Discord, a social media platform popular with video game players.

Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a written statement announcing the indictment that Teixeira “was entrusted by the United States government with access to classified national defense information — including information that reasonably could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to national security if shared.”

Teixeira is accused of violating the same section of the Espionage Act that former president Donald Trump also is charged with violating, among other crimes, for allegedly stashing classified documents at his post-presidency home in Florida. Trump has pleaded not guilty in that case.

When he was arrested, Teixeira faced two charges, but more charges were likely as the investigation progressed. Teixeira has pleaded not guilty to those two initial charges. It was not immediately clear when he would appear in court to respond to the new indictment.

The first count in Thursday's indictment by a Boston grand jury is based on a document describing “the compromise by a foreign adversary of certain accounts belonging to a U.S. company.”

The second count in the indictment alleges that Teixeira shared classified information concerning the war in Ukraine, including the provision of military equipment to the country, how it would be transferred and how it would be used. He is also charged with disclosing a document describing troop movements in Ukraine, which the indictment says was based on “sensitive U.S. intelligence, gathered through classified sources and methods.”

The descriptions of documents Teixeira allegedly shared are consistent with those obtained by The Washington Post that friends of Teixeira say he posted on Discord, with what he believed was a trusted circle of associates who would not share the information more broadly.

African leaders push peace in Kyiv

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — A delegation of leaders and senior officials from Africa sought in Ukraine on Friday ways to end the country's full-scale war with Russia and ensure food and fertilizer deliveries to their continent, though an air raid in Kyiv during their stay provided a reminder of the challenges they face.

The delegation, which included the presidents of South Africa, Senegal, Zambia and the Comoros Islands, first went to Bucha, a Kyiv suburb where bodies of civilians lay scattered in the streets last year after Russian troops abandoned a campaign to seize the capital and withdrew from the area.

The delegation's stop in Bucha was symbolically significant, as the town has come to stand for the brutality of Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The Russian occupation of Bucha left hundreds of civilians dead in the streets and in mass graves. Some showed signs of torture.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said last month that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin had agreed to separate

meetings with members of an African peace mission.

The delegation was set to travel to St. Petersburg later Friday, where Russia's top international economic conference is taking place, and meet with Putin on Saturday. It also includes senior officials from Uganda, Egypt and Congo-Brazzaville.

The members of the delegation represent a cross-section of African views about the war. South Africa, Senegal and Uganda have avoided censuring Moscow for the conflict, while Egypt, Zambia and Comoros voted against Russia last year in a U.N. General Assembly resolution condemning Russia's invasion. Many African nations have long had close ties with Moscow, dating back to the Cold War when the Soviet Union supported their anti-colonial struggles.

While in Bucha, the visitors placed commemorative candles at a small memorial outside St. Andrew's Church, near one of the locations where a mass grave was unearthed.

Shortly after, air raid sirens began to wail in Ukraine's capital. Mayor Vitali Klitschko

reported an explosion in the Podilskiy district, one of the city's oldest neighborhoods.

"Russian missiles are a message to Africa: Russia wants more war, not peace," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted.

The Ukrainian air force said it shot down six Russian Kalibr cruise missiles, six Kinzhal hypersonic ballistic missiles and two reconnaissance drones. It gave no details on where they were shot down.

Germany will deliver another 64 Patriot missiles to Ukraine, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Friday, to help shield it against Russia's relentless aerial attacks.

Officials who helped lay the groundwork for the delegation's talks said the African leaders not only aimed to initiate a peace process but also to assess how Russia, which is under heavy international sanctions, can be paid for fertilizer exports that Africa desperately needs.

They are also set to discuss the related issue of ensuring more grain shipments out of Ukraine amid the war and the possibility of more prisoner swaps.

Russian ransomware gang breaches federal agencies

Associated Press

The Department of Energy and several other federal agencies were compromised in a Russian cyber-extortion gang's global hack of a file-transfer program popular with corporations and governments, but the impact was not expected to be great, Homeland Security officials said Thursday.

But for others among what could be hundreds of victims from industry to higher education — including patrons of at least two state motor vehicle agencies — the hack was beginning to show some serious impacts.

Jen Easterly, director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, told reporters that unlike the meticulous, stealthy SolarWinds hacking campaign attributed to state-backed Russian intelligence agents that was months in the making, this campaign was short, relatively superficial and caught quickly.

"Based on discussions we have had with industry partners ... these intrusions are not

being leveraged to gain broader access, to gain persistence into targeted systems, or to steal specific high value information— in sum, as we understand it, this attack is largely an opportunistic one," Easterly said.

"Although we are very concerned about this campaign and working on it with urgency, this is not a campaign like SolarWinds that presents a systemic risk to our national security or our nation's networks," she added.

A senior CISA official said neither the U.S. military nor intelligence community was affected. Energy Department spokesperson Chad Smith said two agency entities were compromised but did not provide more detail.

Known victims to date include Louisiana's Office of Motor Vehicles, Oregon's Department of Transportation, the Nova Scotia provincial government, British Airways, the British Broadcasting Company and the U.K. drugstore chain Boots. The exploited program, MOVEit, is widely used by busi-

nesses to securely share files. Security experts say that can include sensitive financial and insurance data.

Louisiana officials said Thursday that people with a driver's license or vehicle registration in the state likely had their personal information exposed. That included their name, address, Social Security number and birthdate. They encouraged Louisiana residents to freeze their credit to guard against identity theft.

The Oregon Department of Transportation confirmed Thursday that the attackers accessed personal information, some sensitive, for about 3.5 million people to whom the state issued identity cards or driver's licenses.

The Cl0p ransomware syndicate behind the hack announced last week on its dark web site that its victims, who it suggested numbered in the hundreds, had until Wednesday to get in touch to negotiate a ransom or risk having sensitive stolen data dumped online.

Ticket companies to show true costs

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden highlighted progress in chipping away at hidden junk fees tacked onto ticket, lodging and other prices as a “win for consumers” as major company executives meeting with him at the White House announced they’ll start showing customers the real cost upfront.

Live Nation, which is based in Beverly Hills, Calif., said Thursday that it will provide customers with upfront all-in pricing — meaning the actual purchase price including service charges and any other fees — for its owned venues by September and that Ticketmaster will give consumers the option

to view all-in pricing upfront for other venues on the live-entertainment tickets platform. SeatGeek, based in New York, will unveil features to make it easier to browse for tickets with the true cost displayed.

Biden, who met with those and other companies that have taken steps to embrace more transparency, including Airbnb, prioritized the effort to combat surprise or undisclosed fees in his State of the Union address and has called for legislation, regulation and private sector action to end them.

The president, at Thursday’s event, praised actions by companies that have eliminated or plan to eliminate those surprise

fees.

The consumer advocacy push is part of Biden’s pitch to voters in his 2024 reelection bid that government can help improve their lives in big and small ways.

Besides the moves by Live Nation and SeatGeek, San Francisco-based Airbnb rolled out its all-in pricing tool in December, after Biden first called on companies to stop hiding fees.

“These are just the latest private sector leaders who are responding to my call to action,” Biden said, saying junk fees “can add hundreds of dollars a month and make it harder for families to pay their bills.”

“I’m asking their competitors to follow suit and adopt an all-in pricing as well,” Biden said. “These actions matter and it’s inspiring companies to change their practices.”

National Economic Council director Lael Brainard said in a statement that the president “has been working to lower costs for hardworking families by bringing down inflation, capping insulin prices for seniors, and eliminating hidden junk fees.”

“More companies are heeding the President’s call so that Americans know what they’re paying for up front and can save money as a result,” Brainard said.

Arrests made in thefts of artwork, Yogi Berra rings

Associated Press

Federal authorities announced charges against a ring of nine people for thefts of millions of dollars worth of paintings, sports memorabilia and other valuables including an Andy Warhol silkscreen, a Jackson Pollock painting and nine World Series rings belonging to the late Yankees catcher Yogi Berra.

The thefts took place over more than two decades at 20 different museums and institutions across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and North Dakota, the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania said Thursday.

Investigators believe some of the sports memorabilia had been melted down, including nine of Berra’s 10 World Series rings, U.S. Attorney Gerard M. Karam said.

It was unclear which items would be returned to their owners or to the museums, but authorities said some of those valuables had been recovered.

Eight of the nine people named as part of the theft ring Thursday have turned themselves in, Karam said. At least five had already entered into preliminary plea agreements on charges including theft of major artwork and conspiracy to dispose of major objects of cultural heritage, according to court records. The suspects are in their late 40s to early 50s and are Pennsylvania residents.

Karam said the ninth suspect, 53-year-old Nicholas Dombek, is considered a fugitive.

The indictments allege the thieves transported the valuables and would melt the gold items down into transportable discs that were sold for hundreds of thousands of dollars — but for way less than many of the items were worth.

Court documents also allege that Dombek destroyed a painting by Jasper Cropsey by burning it, to avoid the stolen artwork titled “Upper Hudson” from being used as evidence against him.

Man threatened shooting at Stanley Cup game, cops say

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Less than four hours before Game 5 of the Stanley Cup Final was set to begin Tuesday on the Las Vegas Strip, authorities in Nevada arrested a man they say threatened to carry out a mass shooting at the arena where the Golden Knights would capture their first championship that night.

An arrest report released Thursday by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department identifies the suspect as Matthew DeSavio, who is described by detectives in the document as a 33-year-old man with a history of mental illness and arrests “that would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, harassed or fearful for their immediate safety.” The report doesn’t say whether detectives have found any weapons in DeSavio’s possession.

In a series of rambling text messages, phone calls and social media posts on Tuesday, according to the report, the sus-

pect threatened to “shoot up” the hockey game against the Florida Panthers in a massacre that would rival the October 2017 mass shooting on the Strip. That mass shooting left 60 dead and hundreds more injured.

At least three people contacted police about the suspect in the hours before his arrest Tuesday afternoon. The 911 callers included an acquaintance from grade school who told police DeSavio has been stalking her for close to a decade, as well as a relative with an active restraining order against DeSavio, according to the report.

Court records show DeSavio’s arrests in Las Vegas date to 2014 on charges that include domestic battery and stalking. Most recently, he was arrested in October on a felony charge of threatening an act of terrorism or mass destruction.

Details surrounding those threats weren’t available Thursday, but the court records show he was ordered to undergo a competency evaluation.

China spies hack hundreds of public, private networks

Associated Press

Suspected state-backed Chinese hackers used a security hole in a popular email security appliance to break into the networks of hundreds of public and private sector organizations globally, nearly a third of them government agencies including foreign ministries, the cybersecurity firm Mandiant said Thursday.

"This is the broadest cyber espionage campaign known to be conducted by a China-nexus threat actor since the mass exploitation of Microsoft Exchange in early 2021," Charles Carmakal, Mandiant's chief technical officer, said in a emailed statement. That hack compromised tens of thousands of computers globally.

In a blog post Thursday, Google-owned Mandiant expressed "high confidence" that the group exploiting a software vul-

nerability in Barracuda Networks' Email Security Gateway was engaged in "espionage activity in support of the People's Republic of China." It said the activity began as early as October.

The hackers sent emails containing malicious file attachments to gain access to targeted organizations' devices and data, Mandiant said. Of those organizations, 55% were from the Americas, 22% from Asia Pacific and 24% from Europe, the Middle East and Africa and they included foreign ministries in Southeast Asia, foreign trade offices and academic organizations in Taiwan and Hong Kong, the company said.

Mandiant said the majority impact in the Americas may partially reflect the geography of Barracuda's customer base.

Barracuda announced on June 6 that some of its email se-

curity appliances had been hacked as early as October, giving the intruders a back door into compromised networks. The hack was so severe the California company recommended fully replacing the appliances.

After discovering it in mid-May, Barracuda released containment and remediation patches but the hacking group, which Mandiant identifies as UNC4841, altered their malware to try to maintain access, Mandiant said. The group then "countered with high frequency operations targeting a number of victims located in at least 16 different countries."

Word of the breach arrived with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken departing for China this weekend as part of the Biden administration's push to repair deteriorating ties between Washington and Beijing.

Probe: Rights violated by police in Minneapolis

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Justice Department has found that Minneapolis police engaged in a pattern of violating constitutional rights and discriminating against Black and Native American people following an investigation prompted by the killing of George Floyd.

The sweeping two-year civil rights investigation concluded that systemic problems in the Minneapolis Police Department "made what happened to George Floyd possible," the report said.

The investigation found that Minneapolis officers used excessive force, including "unjustified deadly force," and violated the rights of people engaged in constitutionally protected speech.

The probe also found that both Minneapolis police and the city of Minneapolis discriminated against people with "behavioral health disabilities" when officers are called for help.

The "pattern or practice" investigation was launched in April 2021, a day after former officer Derek Chauvin, who is white, was convicted of murder and manslaughter in the May 25, 2020, killing of Floyd, who was Black.

Floyd repeatedly said he couldn't breathe before going limp as Chauvin knelt on his neck for 9½ minutes. The killing was recorded by a bystander and sparked mass protests as part of a broader national reckoning over racial injustice.

SeaWorld launches orca-free park in UAE

Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. theme park chain SeaWorld, mired in controversy in recent years over its treatment of killer whales and other marine mammals, has opened a massive new aquatic life park in the United Arab Emirates, its first outside the United States.

The \$1.2 billion venture with state-owned developer Miral features the world's largest aquarium and a cylindrical

LED screen. There are no orcas here, but the park houses animals like dolphins and seals, whose captivity and training for profit and entertainment purposes are also often criticized as unethical by animal rights advocacy groups.

The new facility, which opened to visitors last month, gives the Orlando, Fla.-based company a foothold in a fast-growing international tourism destination and the opportunity to continue its rebranding after

years of criticism and allegations of animal cruelty.

Scrutiny of SeaWorld reached a crescendo following the release of the 2013 documentary "Blackfish." The documentary focused on the life of Tilikum, a 12,000-pound orca that killed trainer Dawn Brancheau when he dragged her into a pool at SeaWorld Orlando in 2010.

The film implied that orcas become more aggressive in captivity.

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Ohtani wins on mound, hits 22nd homer

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Shohei Ohtani pitched six innings for his first victory in five starts and matched the MLB lead with his 22nd homer in the Los Angeles Angels' 5-3 victory over the AL West-leading Texas Rangers on Thursday night.

Ohtani (6-2) had already thrown the last of his 99 pitches before Mickey Moniak's tying homer leading off the top of the seventh against Nathan Eovaldi (9-3).

Still in the game as the designated hitter, Ohtani hit a two-run homer in the eighth. It was a 443-foot opposite-field blast that landed in the second deck in left-center field. His 10th homer over the past 16 games, and the second pitching start in a row where he went deep, matched Pete Alonso for the big-league lead and extended his hitting streak to 12 games.

The Angels (39-32) won three of four in Texas, and have won nine of 11. They are still 4½ games behind the Rangers (42-26), who have dropped six of eight.

Dodgers 5, White Sox 4 (11): Freddie Freeman singled to deep center field with the bases loaded in the 11th inning, Chris Taylor hit a tying grand slam in the sixth and Los Angeles beat visiting Chicago.

Luis Robert Jr. was playing in shallow center and never moved a muscle on Freeman's winning hit off Garrett Crochet (0-1) that landed on the warning track.

Robert and Eloy Jiménez hit back-to-back homers in the first inning and Jake Burger and Andrew Vaughn went deep in consecutive at-bats in the fourth to give the White Sox a 4-0 lead.

Phillies 5, Diamondbacks 4: Bryson Stott hit his second homer in three games, Aaron Nola threw 6⅔ effective innings and Philadelphia beat Arizona to move over .500 for the first time in more than a month.

The defending National League champion Phillies have

won 10 of 12 to improve to 35-34, jumping above .500 for the first time since May 13. They took three of four games from the NL West-leading Diamondbacks.

Nola (6-5) was terrific outside of a four-run third. The veteran right-hander gave up four runs on six hits and a walk while striking out nine. Craig Kimbrel worked the ninth for his 10th save despite three pitch-clock violations.

Ketel Marte homered for Arizona. Ryne Nelson (2-4) was the loser.

Orioles 4, Blue Jays 2: Adley Rutschman and Austin Hays homered, Anthony Santander singled in the tiebreaking run in the sixth inning and host Baltimore beat Toronto behind a strong pitching performance by Tyler Wells.

Rutschman went 3 for 4 to help the Orioles overcome a pair of homers by Toronto's Danny Jansen. Baltimore has won six of seven and has the second-best record in the majors (43-25).

Wells (6-2) allowed two runs and five hits in 6⅔ innings. The right-hander struck out eight and walked one in winning his third straight start.

Yennier Cano got the next three outs, and Felix Bautista struck out Matt Chapman with two on and two outs in the eighth inning before working a perfect ninth for his 18th save. Yimi García (1-3) was the loser.

Braves 8, Rockies 3: Ozzie Albies had three hits and three RBIs and host Atlanta beat Colorado to give 20-year-old AJ Smith-Shawver his first major league victory.

Smith-Shawver (1-0) gave up three runs and six hits over 5⅔ innings in his second start. The rookie struck out six, walked one and allowed two solo homers.

Matt Olson hit his team-leading 19th home run for Atlanta. Michael Tonkin struck out six in 3⅔ innings of scoreless relief.

Kyle Freeland (4-8) gave up seven runs and nine hits in 4⅔ in-

nings. Elias Díaz and Ezequiel Tovar homered for Colorado.

Cubs 7, Pirates 2: Marcus Stroman threw six effective innings for his sixth straight victory and host Chicago beat Pittsburgh for a three-game sweep.

Ian Happ had a triple, double and single and drove in two runs, and Christopher Morel went 3 for 3 with a triple and two RBIs. Chicago had 12 hits to reach double-digits for the third straight game.

Cody Bellinger laced an RBI double in Chicago's five-run fifth inning after missing a month because of a bruised left knee. Nico Hoerner had two hits.

The Cubs outscored the Pirates 28-11 in the series. Pittsburgh, still in first place in the NL Central at 34-33, has dropped four of five.

Stroman (8-4) allowed four hits and struck out five while walking two in his MLB-leading 13th quality start.

Guardians 8, Padres 6: David Fry hit a three-run shot for his first major league homer, José Ramírez had three hits and two RBIs and visiting Cleveland beat San Diego.

Josh Naylor had a two-run single and Fry also doubled as the Guardians rapped out 14 hits.

Manny Machado launched a three-run homer in the first inning, but the Padres were unable to overcome an early 5-0 deficit.

Both teams turned to the bullpen after the starters were chased early. Trevor Stephan (3-2) got the win with 1⅔ innings of scoreless relief. Emmanuel Clase got four outs for his 21st save, most in the majors.

Cleveland scored five times in the first off beleaguered starter Ryan Weathers (1-5), who gave up six runs and seven hits in 1⅔ innings.

Nationals 4, Astros 1 (10): Lane Thomas and Keibert Ruiz each had RBI singles in a three-run 10th inning to lift visiting

Washington past Houston.

Ruiz homered off closer Ryan Pressly leading off the ninth to break a scoreless tie, but pinch-hitter Yainer Diaz tied it in the bottom half with a two-out RBI single against Hunter Harvey (3-3).

Thomas gave Washington a 2-1 lead with a one-out single off Phil Maton (0-2) in the 10th. Luis García singled and Jeimer Candelario was hit by a pitch before Corey Dickerson drew a bases-loaded walk. Ruiz hit a blooper for his RBI single.

Rays 4, Athletics 3: Luke Raley hit a go-ahead solo homer with one out in the eighth, Manuel Margot connected earlier and Tampa Bay beat Oakland.

Rays rookie Taj Bradley struck out the first six A's batters in order and a career-high 11 in all, surrendering Seth Brown's tying two-run single in the fifth.

The A's loaded the bases against former Oakland pitcher Jake Diekman in the seventh. Seth Brown hit a hard grounder that second baseman Taylor Walls fielded and fired home to save a run, then catcher Francisco Mejía threw to first for the inning-ending double play.

Robert Stephenson (1-0) came in for Diekman to get the final out of the seventh. Right-hander Pete Fairbanks returned from the 15-day injured list with inflammation in his left hip and finished for his sixth save.

Tigers 8, Twins 4: Javier Báez and Spencer Torkelson each had two hits and drove in two runs to help Detroit beat Minnesota for its second victory in 13 games.

Matt Vierling was 3 for 3 with a run and an RBI for the Tigers. Matthew Boyd (4-5) survived a four-run second inning for the victory. He walked one and struck out eight over six innings.

Donovan Solano homered for the Twins, who had won four of their previous five. Jovani Moran (0-2) was the loser.

Fowler, Schauffele shoot 62 at US Open

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Rickie Fowler and Xander Schauffele became part of U.S. Open history on Thursday in a most unfathomable manner. No one had ever shot 62 in the previous 122 editions of golf's toughest test until they did it some 15 minutes apart.

Even more stunning were so many other records on an extraordinary day for scoring at the major that puts par on a pedestal.

Fowler made 10 birdies — believed to be a record for most holes under par for any round in the U.S. Open — and can always say he was the first with a 62. Two groups behind him, Schauffele capped off his 8-under 62 without a bogey on his card or a care in the world.

"I'm going to take what the course can give me," he said. "And today it gave me a low one."

The North course at Los Angeles Country Club was so defenseless that no one shot 80 or higher over 18 holes. The U.S.

Open had never had more than two players at 65 or better in the opening round. There were six such rounds at LACC.

Most telling was the average score of 71.37 was the lowest for an opening round in U.S. Open history. Most embarrassing for the USGA was the U.S. Open joining the Bermuda Championship as the only tournaments this year to feature two rounds at 62 on the same day.

"I'd imagine the USGA is not loving the scores too much," Mackenzie Hughes said. "I'm guessing the sprinklers are going to be turned off tonight."

No need for Fowler and Schauffele to apologize. No need for an asterisk. PGA champion Brooks Koepka couldn't break par — he shot 71, never a bad start at the U.S. Open but leaving him nine shots behind in this one.

The toughest test in golf. Tough meant keeping track of the 485 birdies and eight eagles.

"It's not really what you expect playing a U.S. Open," Schauffele said. "But monkey

see, monkey do. Was just chasing Rickie up the leaderboard. Glad he was just in front of me."

Those who came behind them looked to do the same. Dustin Johnson hit all 13 fairways and had a chance at 62 until his 5-iron on the par-3 ninth went into a bunker next to the 18th green. That led to his only bogey and a somewhat disappointing 64 — rare to say in a U.S. Open — to join Wyndham Clark.

Rory McIlroy went out in 30 — his best nine-hole start in any major — and had to settle for a 65. He whiffed on a delicate flop shot from the thick collar of grass around the 18th and escaped with a bogey. Also at 65 was Brian Harman, who played his first 10 holes in 6 under but went 1 over from there.

Johnson found his way into the record book. He tied Tiger Woods for most rounds of 65 or lower in the majors (10).

"This isn't your typical U.S. Open mindset of like, 'I'm just playing for par.' You've got to make some birdies to keep in line with those guys," Harris

English said after a ho-hum 67.

It all started with Fowler, whose remarkable round included two bogeys when he missed the green on the 254-yard 11th and missed the fairway on the 17th on his front nine. Starting with a 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th, he ran off four straight birdies.

He set the record with a two-putt from just under 60 feet on the par-5 ninth. That's also when he noticed the leaderboard.

"I knew where I was at," Fowler said. "I would say from the middle of the round up until the ninth green, our last hole, I didn't really know or see any scores. And then I saw that Xander was at 7 (under) at that point, and I'm not sure if he even knew where I was or anything."

"But it was kind of cool if he did to see he kind of latched on and we were taking off a bit."

They now share the major championship record with Branden Grace, who had a 62 in the third round at Royal Birkdale in the 2017 British Open.

US win over Mexico cut short by homophobic chants

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Four players were ejected and the soccer match was cut short by the referee after repeated homophobic chants Thursday night.

The United States' 3-0 victory over Mexico for a spot Sunday in the CONCACAF Nations League final against Canada will be remembered as much for the ugliness as for two goals by Christian Pulisic and one by Ricardo Pepi.

Americans Weston McKennie and Sergiño Dest were ejected by Salvadoran referee Iván Barton along with Mexicans César Montes and Gerardo Arteaga during the testy second half.

"These are rivalry games. These are derby games. Things like this happen across the

world and in no way am I embarrassed," B.J. Callaghan said after his first game as U.S. interim coach. "It comes from a good place. They care about each other so much in that locker room that they're standing up for each other. Sometimes does it have an issue where we take a red card? Yeah, but when you know where it comes from, you can accept it and it's a learning lesson for us."

Play was halted in the 90th minute because of homophobic chants. When action resumed, 12 minutes of stoppage time were signaled but resumed chants caused Barton to end the match in the eighth added minute.

"In terms of the chant, I want to make it very clear first and

foremost, for our beliefs and our culture, it has no place in the game," Callaghan said. "It has no place in our value system."

McKennie and Dest are suspended for the final. Luca de la Torre and Joe Scally are possible replacements.

"It's definitely a blow," Tim Weah said. "It comes with the game. I know the red cards are definitely a bummer, but it happens. Aggressive match tonight."

Striker Folarin Balogun made his debut after the 21-year-old decided to play for the U.S. over England and Nigeria.

"The boys told me it was going to be intense, but I'm definitely still shocked by the events," said Balogun, who at one point was shoved to the

field. "I was just on the floor because I was in pain, but when I looked up I just saw so many people around and I knew my teammates were just trying to defend me."

Making his first start for club or country since April 15, Pulisic put the U.S. ahead in the 37th minute and doubled the lead in the 46th. He has 25 goals in 59 international appearances, including four goals against Mexico. Pepi scored in the 79th, five minutes after replacing Bologun.

With its first three-goal victory over Mexico in 23 years, the U.S. stretched its unbeaten streak against El Tri to six (three wins, three draws), matching the Americans' longest, from 2011-15.

Justice Department looking into PGA Tour-LIV Golf deal

Associated Press

The Justice Department has begun to examine an agreement between the PGA Tour and Saudi Arabian backers of LIV Golf to determine whether it violates federal antitrust statutes, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press.

The inquiry is in its early stages, and it isn't clear yet whether the Justice Department would take any enforcement action, the person said. The person was not authorized to publicly discuss details of the inquiry and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The Wall Street Journal first reported the Justice Department's involvement.

"We are confident that once all stakeholders learn more about how the PGA Tour will lead this new venture, they will understand how it benefits our players, fans and sport while

protecting the American institution of golf," the PGA Tour said in a statement.

The PGA Tour, European tour and Saudi Arabia's national wealth fund came together in a partnership that was negotiated so privately over two months that none of the players were aware.

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan had been critical of LIV Golf since the rival circuit began poaching some of golf's biggest names with signing bonuses of \$100 million or more, money provided by the Public Investment Fund.

The PGA Tour suspended players who defected to LIV, such as Phil Mickelson, leading to 11 players and eventually LIV to file an antitrust lawsuit against the PGA Tour last August. The PGA Tour then filed a countersuit, and the case was not expected to go trial until at least 2024.

Part of the agreement is to drop all litigation. One motivation for the PGA Tour joining with the Saudis was the financial drain from legal fees on lawsuits that were nowhere near close to being resolved.

The Justice Department already was looking into antitrust issues since last summer.

Monahan has described the agreement announced June 6 as a "framework" with plenty of details still to be determined.

The agreement was for the PGA Tour, European tour and the PIF to pool commercial business and rights into a separate, for-profit company. The PGA Tour would continue to operate with its tax-exempt 501-c-6 status.

In a letter to various lawmakers sent last week, Monahan said he would be CEO of the new commercial entity, which he described as a subsidiary of the PGA Tour.

Governor signs public funding bill for stadium

Associated Press

RENO, Nev. — Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo signed into law Thursday a \$380 million public financing package to help build a Major League Baseball stadium for the Oakland Athletics on the Las Vegas Strip as MLB's commissioner outlined a monthslong approval process for the A's proposed move there.

The first-term Republican governor and former sheriff in Las Vegas said he was excited to sign the measure the Democrat-controlled Legislature approved Wednesday night after a seven-day-long special session.

"This is an incredible opportunity to bring the A's to Nevada," Lombardo said in a statement from Carson City.

The \$1.5 billion stadium with a retractable roof is planned near the homes of the NFL's Vegas Raiders, who fled Oakland in 2020, and the NHL's Golden Knights, who won the Stanley Cup this week in just their sixth season.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred outlined the review process of the A's proposed relocation during a news conference hours earlier at a meeting of owners in New York. With a capacity of 30,000, the stadium would be MLB's smallest.

Manfred said the team must submit a relocation application explaining its efforts in Oakland and why Las Vegas is a better market. A relocation committee will define the new operating territory and television territory. It will then make a recommendation to Manfred and the eight-man executive council. The executive council formulates a recommendation to all clubs, which must approve the move by at least three-quarters vote.

Conor McGregor is accused of sexually assaulting woman at NBA Finals game

Associated Press

MIAMI — The NBA and the Miami Heat are investigating an allegation that former UFC champion Conor McGregor sexually assaulted a woman inside an arena bathroom after Game 4 of the NBA Finals.

The woman's attorney, Ariel Mitchell, said her client has provided Miami police with the clothing she was wearing that night and that a report was filed. Miami police did not respond when asked Thursday evening whether they were investigating.

McGregor's attorney said the fighter denied any wrongdoing. "Mr. McGregor will not be intimidated," said the attorney,

Barbara Llanes.

In letters sent to the NBA, the Heat and McGregor's representatives, Mitchell detailed her client's allegations and said the client would discuss "reasonable settlement offers" before June 12 or else proceed with litigation.

"We are aware of the allegations and are conducting a full investigation," read a statement from the Heat. "Pending the outcome of the investigation, we will withhold further comment."

The NBA had a similar statement, saying it was working with the Heat to gather information.

The alleged incident happened on the same night McGre-

gorknocked out the Heat mascot in a midgame bit that went wrong.

Burnie — more specifically, the man who occupies Burnie's costume — briefly sought medical attention Friday night after taking two punches from McGregor during a third-quarter stoppage of Game 4 of the NBA Finals between the Heat and the Denver Nuggets.

The employee, who was not identified, received pain medication and was recovering, the team said.

McGregor was there as a promotional gimmick for a pain-relief spray — and was booed by many in the Miami crowd even before the bit started.