

S. Korea eyes a pause of North peace deal

BY DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — South Korea's National Security Council will move to suspend an inter-Korean peace agreement days after the North sent nearly 1,000 trash-carrying balloons over the shared border, according to local media.

The council — the intelligence department that reports directly to South Korea's presidential office — announced it would move to suspend the Comprehensive Military Agreement during a cabinet meeting Tuesday, the Yonhap News Agency reported Monday.

The plan would entirely suspend the accords “until mutual trust between the two Koreas is restored,” according to a presidential office news release cited in the report.

“This measure will enable military training near the Military Demarcation Line, which has been restricted by the agreement, and allow for more

adequate and immediate responses to North Korean provocations,” reported Yonhap News, citing the release. “The government will take all necessary measures to protect the lives and safety of our citizens.”

The presidential office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Comprehensive Military Agreement was signed Sept. 19, 2018, by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and then-President Moon Jae-in during their summit at Pyongyang.

The accords were meant to prevent military conflict by establishing no-fly zones on the Military Demarcation Line separating the two Koreas as well as prohibiting armed troops along the border. The line runs through the Demilitarized Zone and marks the actual border between North and South Korea.

Efficacy of the agreement has waned following military tensions within the past year.

Hours after North Korea suc-

cessfully placed a satellite into orbit on Nov. 21, Seoul announced it would partially suspend the agreement and restart aerial reconnaissance operations at the border.

Intelligence agencies from the United States and South Korea have argued that the North's satellite launches use ballistic missile technology and violate U.N. Security Council resolutions prohibiting the communist regime from conducting such tests.

Three days after that launch, the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency reported the country would withdraw from the inter-Korean accord entirely and “deploy more powerful armed forces and new-type military hardware” at the nearly 150-mile-long border.

North Korea launched a barrage of ballistic missiles in six separate days of testing so far this year and a rocket carrying a military satellite on May 27. That launch ended in failure,

scattering debris across the Yellow Sea, according to South Korea's military.

Pyongyang also sent roughly 980 balloons carrying plastic bags of trash to several South Korean provinces in the previous week; the bags contained manure, scrap paper, batteries, cigarette butts and other household trash, according to the South Korean military.

The balloons were sent in retaliation against South Korean human rights activists who floated their own balloons across the border, according to KCNA.

Activists in South Korea frequently send money, household goods and anti-North Korean leaflets in hopes that they reach North Koreans.

North Korean Vice Defense Minister Kim Kang-il said Pyongyang's halted its balloon campaign after the South experienced how “unpleasant” it is to clean up, according to a KCNA report Sunday.

Balloon from N. Korea carried bags of trash onto US base

BY DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The U.S. military confirmed Monday that debris found near an on-base school the previous day had been carried by balloon from North Korea.

The inflatable came down Sunday on Osan Air Base, near Osan Elementary School, according to principal Allyse Struhs' email to parents and guardians that evening.

U.S. Forces Korea spokesman David Kim said in a statement Monday that at least one

North Korean balloon was found at Osan, home of 7th Air Force and the 51st Fighter Wing about 30 miles south of Seoul.

“The debris primarily consisted of basketball-size black plastic bags filled with trash and cloth, which were deemed safe with no threat to the public after investigation,” he wrote.

The site was “thoroughly swept” and the debris was “disposed of safely and appropriately,” according to Kim's statement, which provided no further details nor mentioned Osan Elementary as the site where the balloon came down.

Struhs' email to parents said an explosive ordnance team had set up a cordon to clean up the debris. Parents were told that “no threats or school delays” were anticipated Monday.

Roughly 980 North Korean balloons landed throughout the South starting May 28, some of them reaching as far south as South Gyeongsang province, roughly 170 miles below the border.

Around 720 balloons from a Saturday evening barrage were discovered in South Korea, according to the country's military.

No injuries were reported from the descending balloons; however, at least one landed on a car's windshield in Ansan, about 20 miles south of the capital city, according to local media reports.

The balloons appear to be more of a “military nuisance” rather than a specific threat due to their broad landing sites, Yang Uk, a research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, said Monday.

“These balloons cannot pinpoint the landing zone so if they landed on USFK bases, it's through luck,” he said.

US, China lay out competing security visions

The Washington Post

SINGAPORE — Defense leaders from the United States and China laid out their competing visions of a modern security order in the Indo-Pacific this weekend, with the American side championing Washington's expanded network of security partnerships, while Chinese officials promoted their own such alliances and cast the U.S. as a foreign aggressor meddling in Asian affairs.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his Chinese counterpart, Dong Jun, each delivered addresses at the Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual international security conference in Singapore — one of the rare settings that brings senior officials from the rival militaries close to one another through panel discussions, dinners and cocktail hours in a luxury hotel. Austin and Dong also met on the summit's sidelines Friday, their first meeting in two years.

Competing rhetoric over the course of the weekend's debates — much of it referencing recent events, such as China's spate of large-scale military exercises around Taiwan less than two weeks ago — underscored the sense that regional tensions have grown increasingly incendiary.

The dialogue also allowed the two powers to make their arguments before an international audience of their peers, including defense officials from nearby South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia and others — themselves the targets of U.S. and Chinese influence campaigns and the often uncomfortable bystanders to a global strategic power struggle.

Both Austin and Dong appealed to shared values and a respect for international law, without mentioning the other's country by name, at a conference that nonetheless revolved almost en-

tirely around the U.S.-China relationship.

In his address to the conference Saturday, Austin stressed America's vast and expanding network of security partnerships in the Indo-Pacific — a clear warning to Beijing, observers said, that further Chinese military aggression in the region could prompt a U.S. response.

"We are operating with our allies and partners like never before," Austin said, noting that the U.S. has recently "secured a series of historic agreements with our allies and partners to transform our force posture throughout the Indo-Pacific."

U.S., Japanese and South Korean forces are training together in "unprecedented" ways, he said. The U.S. and the Philippines, along with Australia and France, recently completed their largest annual Balikatan joint naval exercise.

Dong's remarks on Sunday largely mirrored Austin's rhetoric, but flipped the claims of respect for international order and allegations of unlawful aggression to blame Washington and its allies and partners. It is China that is committed to peace and that has exercised tremendous "restraint" in the Asia-Pacific region, Dong said, alluding to the U.S. — without naming it — as a nefarious outsider seeking to influence the affairs of a region where it doesn't belong.

China, too, has strategic partnerships around the world, Dong said, as well as the ability and willingness to arm and train other countries in the region.

"We have a well-established system of military education, and we are ready to provide greater support to other countries in personnel training and offer tailored courses to meet different needs," he said.

Sailor gets 18 years for attempted espionage

BY ALEX WILSON

Stars and Stripes

A sailor convicted of attempted espionage was sentenced to 18 years in prison by a military judge on Wednesday.

Chief Petty Officer Bryce Pedicini, formerly a fire controlman aboard the Japan-based guided-missile destroyer USS Higgins, also received a dishonorable discharge and a reduction in rank to seaman recruit, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service announced in a next-day news release.

Pedicini's sentencing comes more than a month after his April 19 court-martial conviction in San Diego, where he was found guilty of attempted espionage, failure to obey a lawful order and attempted violation of

a lawful general order.

He was initially charged with violating Article 103a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The charges included seven specifications of espionage and one of attempted espionage, according to his charge sheet.

Between November 2022 and February 2023, Pedicini transmitted at least seven documents to a foreign agent via Facebook Messenger, the encrypted messaging service Telegram and other electronic means, according to court records provided by the Office of the Judge Advocate General. In May 2023, he sent photographs of material accessed through a computer screen connected to a Defense Department network used to transmit classified information.

Japan wraps search for dugongs near USMC base

BY KEISHI KOJA

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Japanese government is ending its search for the dugong, an endangered cousin of the manatee, in waters off Okinawa where a controversial Marine Corps runway is under construction.

A committee of the Okinawa Defense Bureau decided May 21 that the long absence of the dugong from Oura Bay, where the government is building the runway from reclaimed land, means it is not likely to return, according to the meeting materials released on the bureau's website.

Starting in April 2020, the bureau added an expanded helicopter search, an additional surveillance ship and five additional underwater audio recording de-

vices in Oura Bay. It also examined signs of seaweed feeding in the bay and set up three underwater cameras in the same area, according to the materials.

After years of searching without success, the bureau concluded the dugongs "do not have a permanent residence in that area," according to the document.

The dugong became not just an environmental concern, but part of the rationale behind opposition to the Marine Corps runway under construction at Camp Schwab. The new airfield is meant to replace Marine Corps Air Station Futenma farther south on Okinawa.

Runway work resumed in January after the prefectural government lost a series of legal challenges.

Jury selection starts in Hunter Biden's gun trial

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — A federal gun case against President Joe Biden's son Hunter opened Monday with jury selection, following the collapse of a plea deal that would have avoided the spectacle of a trial so close the 2024 election. First lady Jill Biden was seated in the front row of the courtroom, in a show of support for her son.

In a statement, the president said he has "boundless love for my son, confidence in him and respect for his strength."

"I am the President, but I am also a Dad," he said, adding that would have no further comment

on the case. "Jill and I love our son, and we are so proud of the man he is today."

Hunter Biden, who spent the weekend with his parents, has been charged in Delaware with three felonies stemming from a 2018 firearm purchase when he was, according to his memoir, in the throes of a crack addiction. He has been accused of lying to a federally licensed gun dealer, making a false claim on the application used to screen firearms applicants when he said he was not a drug user and illegally having the gun for 11 days.

He has pleaded not guilty and has argued he's being unfairly

targeted by the Justice Department, after Republicans decried the now-defunct deal as special treatment for the Democratic president's son.

The trial comes just days after Donald Trump, Republicans' presumptive 2024 presidential nominee, was convicted of 34 felonies in New York City. A jury found the former president guilty of a scheme to cover up a hush money payment to a porn actor to fend off damage to his 2016 presidential campaign.

Roughly two dozen prospective jurors who answered "yes" on a questionnaire were quizzed individually by Judge Maryel-

len Noreika to determine whether they could be fair and impartial.

The questions ranged from their knowledge of the case, thoughts about gun ownership and whether they or anyone close to them have struggled with substance abuse or addiction or ever owned a gun.

One prospective juror said she didn't know whether she could be impartial because of the opinion she had formed about Biden based on media reports.

"It's not a good one," she replied when an attorney asked what her opinion was. About half were dismissed.

Trump's 3 other criminal cases remain uncertain

The Washington Post

With one trial down, Donald Trump's legal future remains a jumble of uncertainty.

Just months ago, it looked like Trump could be bouncing from courthouse to courthouse in the final months before the presidential election, with multiple criminal cases scheduled to go to trial.

Now, after a guilty verdict in the New York hush money case, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee is a felon awaiting sentencing. But none of the three other criminal cases against him have trial dates — and it's unclear when or if any of them will go before a jury.

The Supreme Court will make a pivotal decision this month or early next that could determine whether Trump's D.C. election interference trial is scheduled before the November election. The pace of his federal classified documents trial in Florida is largely up to U.S. District Judge Aileen M. Cannon, who has moved slowly in handling pre-trial motions, according to legal experts.

And Trump's election interference case in Georgia will almost

certainly push into 2025, as the trial judge waits for an appeals court to take up the question of whether Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis should be allowed to remain on the case.

If Trump is elected president in November, that would greatly complicate at least the two federal trials, because he could appoint an attorney general who might dismiss the indictments against him. It's also against Justice Department policy to prosecute a sitting president, and it's unclear whether courts would allow a president to stand trial on state charges in Georgia.

And if any of the three remaining cases do make it to a jury, Trump will be sitting at the defense table under different circumstances than in New York. He is no longer a first-time offender. He will be a felon with a criminal history.

That means any new conviction carries a significantly greater risk of a prison sentence or a harsher punishment. And during a trial, it could generate fresh attacks from prosecutors on Trump's credibility if he decided to take the witness stand.

Calif. firefighters progress in fighting wind-driven wildfire

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California firefighters made significant progress Sunday to tame a wind-driven wildfire that scorched thousands of acres 60 miles east of San Francisco, burned down a home and forced residents to flee the area near the central California city of Tracy.

The fire erupted Saturday afternoon in the grassy hills managed by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, one of the country's key centers for nuclear weapons science and technology. The cause was under investigation.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said the research center was not under immediate threat from the blaze, dubbed the Corral Fire, which had devoured some 22 square miles by Sunday afternoon. The fire was 50% contained as of Sunday evening.

Thousands of people in the area, including parts of the city of Tracy with a population of 100,000, were ordered to leave for evacuation centers Saturday. The evacuation order was lifted to allow residents to return home

starting Sunday evening. Tracy is about 70 miles south of California's capital in Sacramento.

CalFire Battalion Chief Josh Silveira said Sunday afternoon that the fire "burned right up to the homes" in the area and destroyed one house. With calmer winds and milder weather Sunday, Silveira said he didn't expect the fire to grow.

Two firefighters suffered minor to moderate burns Saturday and were expected to make a full recovery, Silveira said.

The wildfire presented no threat to any laboratory facilities or operations and had moved away from the site, Lawrence Livermore spokesperson Paul Rhien said in a statement to The Associated Press early Sunday.

"As a precaution, we have activated our emergency operations center to monitor the situation through the weekend," Rhien said.

The wildfire also forced the closure of two major highways, including an interstate that connects the San Francisco Bay Area to San Joaquin County in central California. But they had reopened by Sunday afternoon.

Israel eyes Gaza 'governing alternative'

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israel is looking into an alternative local governing body for Gaza, the defense minister said Sunday, proposing a future beyond Hamas but giving no idea who those challengers might be.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's comments came at a time of new uncertainty in the eight-month war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is under growing pressure from many Israelis to accept a new cease-fire deal proposed by President Joe Biden, while far-right allies threaten to collapse his government if he does.

Gallant, part of Israel's three-member War Cabinet who recently urged the government to have a detailed postwar plan for

Gaza, said in a briefing that "we seek a governing alternative to Hamas. The framework for this includes isolating areas, removing Hamas operatives in these areas and bringing in other forces that will enable the formation of a governing alternative."

That will achieve Israel's goals of removing Hamas' military and governing authority in Gaza and returning home the remaining hostages taken in the Oct. 7 Hamas attack that sparked the war, Gallant said. He stressed that "we will not accept the rule of Hamas at any stage in any process aimed at ending the war."

In response to questions, an Israeli defense official told The Associated Press that Gallant

hopes to enable isolated, Hamas-free areas in Gaza to become "hubs of local government" and identify forces that can enable a longer-term formation of a government. Israel is looking for "local non-hostile actors," the official said, adding that Gallant believes that "Palestinians should be governing Palestinians." Israel would facilitate surges of aid to the areas, and the local forces would be responsible for distributing it to strengthen their authority.

But that approach is challenging and has failed before, one expert said.

"I haven't heard of any local players that are brave enough to present themselves as an alternative to Hamas," said Michael Milshtein, an Israeli ana-

lyst of Palestinian affairs at Tel Aviv University and a former military intelligence officer.

Milshtein said Gallant's "wishful thinking" would amount to a suicidal mission for any local leader. Hamas has threatened anyone cooperating with Israel's government.

Milshtein noted that Israel has tried this approach in the past. In the 1970s and '80s, Israel tried to establish "village leagues," empowering local Palestinian leaders.

"They were considered in the eyes of Palestinians as collaborators, and it ended in a very tragic manner," he said. Unless Israel maintains a constant presence in Gaza, any "alternative forces" they try to install will be too fragile, he added.

Zelenskyy, Marcos boost ties after slamming China

Bloomberg News

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met his Philippine counterpart, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., in Manila on Monday, a day after the conclusion of a security summit where the two leaders delivered statements sharply critical of China.

The two leaders discussed a Ukraine summit that will be held in Switzerland June 15-16, and Zelenskyy underscored the importance for Southeast Asian countries to be represented there.

"I am pleased that the Philippines will participate in the summit," he said in a post on X. Marcos' communications office confirmed that the Philippines is joining the event, but is still finalizing details.

"We will continue to do all that we can to promote peace and to bring an end to the fighting and to come to a political resolution of your country," Marcos told Zelenskyy during their meeting, according to the Philippine president's communications office.

The Ukraine leader's visit to

the Philippines followed his attendance at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore on Sunday, where both he and Marcos delivered statements critical of China during the three-day annual defense summit.

Zelenskyy made an appeal to countries across the Asia-Pacific on Sunday to join the summit in Switzerland, which he accused China and Russia of trying to sabotage.

Marcos, for his part, criticized Beijing's "assertive" actions in the disputed South China Sea in his speech Friday at the defense

forum. The Chinese delegation responded by condemning the Southeast Asian nation's moves to deepen military alliance with the U.S., saying it threatened peace and stability in the region.

Zelenskyy said in a separate interview with Philippine media that he sees similarities between Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Beijing's maritime dispute with Manila.

Zelenskyy and Marcos vowed to strengthen their diplomatic ties, with Kyiv planning to open an embassy in the Philippines later this year.

Mexico elects Sheinbaum as its 1st female president

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's projected presidential winner Claudia Sheinbaum will become the first woman president in the country's 200-year history.

"I will become the first woman president of Mexico," Sheinbaum said with a smile, speaking at a downtown hotel shortly

after electoral authorities announced a statistical sample showing she held an irreversible lead. "I don't make it alone. We've all made it, with our heroines who gave us our homeland, with our mothers, our daughters and our granddaughters."

"We have demonstrated that Mexico is a democratic country

with peaceful elections," she said.

The National Electoral Institute's president said Sheinbaum had between 58.3% and 60.7% of the vote, according to a statistical sample. Opposition candidate Xóchitl Gálvez had between 26.6% and 28.6% of the vote and Jorge Álvarez Máynez

had between 9.9% and 10.8% of the vote. Sheinbaum's Morena party was also projected to hold majorities in both chambers of Congress.

The climate scientist and former Mexico City mayor said that her two competitors had called her and conceded her victory.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Ex-official pleads guilty to conspiring to steal water

CA FRESNO — A former California water official has pleaded guilty to conspiring to steal water in a deal with federal prosecutors in the state's crop-rich Central Valley.

The Los Angeles Times reported that Dennis Falaschi, who used to head the Panoche Water District, entered the plea in federal court in Fresno. He also pleaded guilty to filing a false tax return.

Falaschi, 78, was accused in a case that alleged that more than \$25 million in water was stolen over two decades when it was siphoned from a federal irrigation canal through a secret pipe and sold to farmers and other water districts. The Panoche Water District supplies irrigation for farmland in Fresno and Merced counties — much of it from the federal Delta-Mendota canal.

State willing to help fix pipe replacement damage

MI DETROIT — The state of Michigan said it's willing to step in and oversee property repairs at 1,900 homes in Flint where water pipes have been inspected or replaced but the grounds remain a mess.

The city in March was found in civil contempt by a judge after blowing past deadlines to get the work done, years after a water switch in Flint in 2014 caused lead to leach off old pipes, spoiling the drinking water system. Between 10,000 and 11,000 lead or galvanized steel pipes have been replaced out of 30,000 water lines that were excavated and checked, under a

lawsuit settlement between Flint and residents, the Natural Resources Defense Council said.

"But there are 1,900 homes where the city has not gone back to fix the property," NRDC attorney Sarah Tallman said, noting broken driveways and sidewalks and ripped-up lawns.

In a court filing, the state asked U.S. District Judge David Lawson to allow it to step in.

Police: Suspect injured in shootout with officers

OH CINCINNATI — A suspect with a gun and a bystander inside a grocery store near Cincinnati were shot and injured during a shootout with officers, police said.

Officers in Colerain Township responded to a call about shots fired at a Kroger store Wednesday, and when they arrived the suspect pointed a gun at police outside the store, said Colerain Township Police Chief Ed Cordie said. After exchanging shots, the suspect retreated into the store and they continued the gunfight, he said.

Both the suspect and bystander who were shot were taken to a hospital and are expected to survive, Cordie added. Police did not say who shot the bystander.

Manchin, leaving Senate, registers as independent

DC WASHINGTON — Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia announced Friday he has registered as an independent, raising questions about his future political plans.

Manchin, who would have faced a tough reelection in November if he had chosen to run,

has long been an outspoken critic of the Democratic Party and an obstacle to many of President Joe Biden's legislative priorities.

Manchin has served in the Senate since 2010. He said in a statement that over the last 15 years he has seen both major political parties leave their constituents "behind for partisan extremism while jeopardizing our democracy."

"To stay true to myself and remain committed to put country before party, I have decided to register as an independent with no party affiliation and continue to fight for America's sensible majority," Manchin said.

Manchin did not disclose if he will continue caucusing with Democrats in the Senate, where they hold a slim majority. And he did not indicate if he will be running for higher office in the near future.

2nd close call reported at Reagan National Airport

DC WASHINGTON — Federal officials are investigating an incident in which an American Airlines plane rolling down the runway canceled its takeoff from Reagan National Airport to avoid colliding with another plane landing on an intersecting runway.

It was the second close call at the busy airport near Washington, D.C., in the past six weeks.

The Federal Aviation Administration said an air traffic controller canceled the takeoff clearance for American Airlines Flight 2134 after another aircraft was cleared to land on the intersecting runway on Wednesday. The second, smaller plane landed. About four

hours later, American Flight 2134 took off normally and flew to Boston, according to information from FlightAware.

In April, air traffic controllers cleared a Southwest Airlines plane to cross a runway that a JetBlue plane was using for takeoff. Both planes were ordered to stop, and a collision was avoided. The FAA is also investigating that incident.

No charges for officer in death of fleeing teen

MI WYOMING — A prosecutor declined to file charges Tuesday against a police officer who struck and killed a western Michigan teenager while the boy was running from a stolen vehicle.

Kent County prosecutor Chris Becker played a video for reporters and said he found no evidence of intentional deadly force. He instead charged the driver of the stolen vehicle, another teen, with causing death while fleeing from police.

Riley Doggett, 17, was hit by a patrol car driven by a sheriff's deputy in Wyoming, Mich., at the end of a high-speed chase in Kent and Ottawa counties on April 8. He died from head injuries on May 9.

Doggett and another teenager were fleeing on foot from a stolen Range Rover after the vehicle crashed into parked cars in a business area. Becker said the deputy believed Doggett was dangerous and pursued him in a parking lot at 22 mph. The teen was holding a phone, not a gun.

Ven Johnson, an attorney for Doggett's family, said he would ask the state attorney general to review the case for possible charges.

— From wire reports

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Panthers to face Oilers for Stanley Cup

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Matthew Tkachuk is about to renew some acquaintances. Connor McDavid is going back to where his NHL career started.

The Stanley Cup Final matchup is set: The Florida Panthers, back in the title round for the second consecutive year and seeking their first championship, will take on the Edmonton Oilers — a team looking to return to hockey's mountaintop for the first time since 1990.

Edmonton wrapped up the Western Conference on Sunday night, eliminating the Dallas Stars with a 2-1 victory to end that series in six games. Florida won the Eastern Conference on Saturday night, topping the New York Rangers 2-1 to also finish off a six-game series.

McDavid had a goal and an assist in the opening period Sunday against Dallas and Stuart Skinner stopped 34 shots for his hometown team. Zach Hyman also scored — like McDavid, on a first-period power play — and Evan Bouchard had two assists for the Oilers.

Mason Marchmont scored midway through the third period and Jake Oettinger stopped eight shots for the Stars, who finished the regular season with the second-best record in the NHL — 113 points, just one behind the New York Rangers in the race for the Presidents' Trophy.

Game 1 of the Cup Final is Saturday night in Florida. The Panthers are in the title series for the third time; the Oilers are seeking their sixth Cup in what will be their eighth trip to the Final. Edmonton hasn't played for the Cup since losing a seven-game series to Carolina in 2006. And the Oilers have a chance to end a bizarre streak, given hockey's meaning and deep ties to Canada: no team from a Canadian city has won the Stanley Cup since Montreal in 1993.

"Unbelievable," Oilers forward Ryan Nugent-Hopkins said in a televised on-ice interview Sunday night as fans in Edmonton celebrated the clincher over Dallas. "Best fans in the league. It's incredible to do it, to get to the next level in front of

these fans. Obviously, we've got a ton of work to do. We're playing a good team."

There is serious star power on both sides. Florida has Tkachuk, Aleksander Barkov, Sam Reinhart and Sergei Bobrovsky among its leaders; Edmonton has McDavid, Leon Draisaitl, Zach Hyman and Nugent-Hopkins among its top draws.

Tkachuk came to Florida in a trade from Calgary in 2022 and famously got into the ties that bind — or don't bind — hockey in Alberta at his introductory news conference with the Panthers, saying "I hate Edmonton, but I hate Tampa more now."

This season's playoff run for Tkachuk and Florida started with Tampa Bay, a five-game win. It'll end with Edmonton, and Tkachuk will surely be welcomed back to Alberta less than warmly.

"Nothing better than playing hockey in June," Tkachuk said.

McDavid's first Stanley Cup Final game will be in the building where he officially pulled on an NHL sweater for the first time. He was the No. 1 pick in

the 2015 draft, one held in the building that the Panthers call home. Commissioner Gary Bettman was there to greet him with a handshake and a few words of congratulations when he took the stage that night — "this is awesome," Bettman told him — and in a couple of weeks, Bettman will hand either McDavid or Barkov the Stanley Cup for the first time, the moment that captains in the NHL want to enjoy most.

"Feels like a dream, honestly," McDavid said.

There's going to be a slew of names that get etched onto the Cup for the first time when this series is over, since hardly anyone on either side has previously been part of a championship.

For Florida, Vladimir Tarasenko won it with St. Louis in 2019 and Carter Verhaeghe won it with Tampa Bay in 2020. For Edmonton, Corey Perry won it with Anaheim in 2007 — and is now back in the title round for the fourth time in five years, with a fourth different franchise.

Sabalenka powers into French Open quarterfinals

Associated Press

PARIS — Aryna Sabalenka extended her dominant run at the French Open by dispatching Emma Navarro 6-2, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals on Monday.

And watch out, because the sun is back at Porte d'Auteuil in the southwest of Paris.

"When the sun is out, I play with a lot more happiness," said Sabalenka, who has yet to drop a set at Roland Garros.

She was joyful after her fourth-round win over the 22nd-seeded Navarro, showing disco-inspired dance moves on her way off the court to the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" being played loudly on the phone of No. 8 Ons Jabeur, who stood near a staircase leading to the

locker room.

The second-seeded Sabalenka is one win away from her seventh straight Grand Slam semifinal. She will face the unseeded Mirra Andrejeva, who reached the quarterfinals of a major for the first time after beating Varvara Gracheva 7-5, 6-2.

Other results included No. 12 Jasmine Paolini defeating Elina Avanesyan 4-6, 6-0, 6-1, and No. 4 Elena Rybakina eclipsing Elina Svitolina 6-4, 6-3. Paolini and Rybakina will meet in the quarterfinals.

"She's a tough opponent," Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, said of Paolini. "She's moving well and hitting the ball quite heavily. I'll have

to focus on my footwork."

With temperatures in Paris approaching 72 degrees, the absence of rain allowed the matches on Court Philippe Chatrier and Court Suzanne Lenglen to proceed with an open roof.

It was far from the scorching heat Alex de Minaur grew up with in Australia. The 11th-seeded De Minaur rallied past No. 5 Daniil Medvedev 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-3 to become the first Australian to reach the quarterfinals at Roland Garros since Lleyton Hewitt 20 years ago.

Medvedev had treatment on his right foot during the second set, but said it was nothing more serious than a blister.

After toppling the fifth-seed-

ed Medvedev, De Minaur turned to his box and yelled something special at them.

"I screamed 'I love the clay. I love it here. I can't get enough,'" he revealed, laughing again.

De Minaur conducted his on-court interview all in French.

"I want to say thank you to everyone, it was an incredible atmosphere. I was not expecting to get to the quarterfinals at Roland Garros because I haven't played very well on clay in recent years," the 25-year-old De Minaur said. "Looks like I've converted myself into a clay specialist."

Next up for De Minaur is No. 4 Alexander Zverev or No. 13 Holger Rune, who were playing later Monday.

Dixon wins his fourth Detroit Grand Prix

Associated Press

DETROIT — Scott Dixon made some savvy decisions, choosing not to pit for rain tires early and calculating he would have enough fuel to finish, that paid off at the Detroit Grand Prix.

Dixon also had some good fortune on his side.

"Some of it today was a little bit of luck," he acknowledged.

Dixon won a record fourth Detroit Grand Prix, outlasting the competition in a caution-filled race Sunday to become the first IndyCar driver with two victories this season. The six-time IndyCar Series champion won his 58th career race, trailing only A.J. Foyt's total of 67 in the series.

The New Zealand racer was responsible for the fifth and final lead change on Lap 66, and held off a late charge from Marcus Ericsson to break a tie in the Detroit Grand Prix record books with Will Power and Helio Castroneves.

The Chip Ganassi Racing driver finished nearly a second ahead of Ericsson and was followed by Marcus Armstrong, Kyle Kirkwood and Alexander Rossi thanks to strategy that also served him well during his win at Long Beach in April.

"Scott Dixon is the best ever at what he did today, saving the fuel," Ericsson said.

The Detroit Grand Prix got off to a rough start and failed to find much of a flow as eight cautions stunted nearly half of the 100-lap race.

"I don't think it's embarrassing," Dixon said. "Most people go to races to watch crashes. I don't."

Theo Pourchaire tapped Power from behind on the third turn of Lap 1, tangling several cars in a rare spot to potentially pass on the tight, short and bumpy track.

Santino Ferrucci, whose driving drew Kyle Kirkwood's ire in practice Saturday, tried to get around Castroneves and

clipped him. Castroneves, a four-time Indy 500 champion, was filling in for struggling Tom Blomqvist for Meyer Shank Racing in the hopes of picking up points, only to finish 25th.

"I think people are driving reckless," Ericsson said. "We're some of the best drivers in the world racing, so we shouldn't be having incidents like today."

As if the track didn't pose enough of a challenge, conditions added another obstacle on the nine-turn, 1.6-mile street course near the banks of the Detroit River.

Overnight rain removed some rubber from the street circuit and sporadic showers made it slick in spots.

Pole sitter Colton Herta, who led 31 laps early in the race, attempted to make an aggressive inside move midway through the race and lost control of the No. 26 Honda that went into a tire barrier that led to a 19th-place finish.

Dixon was thankful to be above the fray for much of the day.

"It was pretty wild," he said.

Star watch

Josef Newgarden had a humbling afternoon a day after Team Penske announced a multiyear contract extension with the back-to-back Indianapolis 500 winner. Late in the race, Newgarden lost control of the back end of his car — with no one nearby — and hit a wall to set up a 26th-place finish in the 27-car field.

Reigning IndyCar champion Alex Palou, who won last year's race in Detroit, started second and finished 16th to end a run of being eighth or better in points-paying races.

"A lot of guys that you know are going to be racing for a championship had a rough day," said Dixon, who moved past Palou, his Chip Ganassi Racing teammate, to become the season's points leader.

NASCAR's Cindric wins after Blaney runs out of gas

Associated Press

MADISON, Ill. — Austin Cindric emerged as the surprise winner of the NASCAR Cup series race Sunday at World Wide Technology Raceway when teammate Ryan Blaney ran out of gas while leading on the final lap.

Blaney, the reigning NASCAR Cup series champion, appeared to be on his way to his first win of the season after fighting off a challenge from Christopher Bell, who had his own car trouble in the closing laps.

Cindric, who had pitted just one lap after Blaney, took advantage of the situation and notched his second career victory. The other came in the 2022 Daytona 500.

"It was like my first time all over again," Cindric said. "It's

been so long. Even just standing up on the roof of my car, I about fell over in Victory Lane."

Denny Hamlin came in second, recording his sixth straight top-5 finish. Brad Keselowski was third, followed by Tyler Reddick and Joey Logano.

Cindric said he didn't find out until he reached Victory Lane that Blaney had run out of gas — or that it might have been an issue for him.

"Probably the two best cars at the end of that race both had an issue, and the third-place car wins the race. That's the way I see it," Cindric said. "I mean, it's not like I went out there and I took the lead away but we were in position, and this is one of our best-executed races so far this year with probably our best speed."

The three Penske cars — Cin-

dric, Blaney and Logano — did not pit in the break between the second and third stages, and that put them in position to go for Team Penske's first win of the year.

"It's been miserable to be in our shop here lately. We expect to win," said Logano, a two-time series champion who entered the race 17th in points. "We got used to winning and when you're fighting for 20th, it's quite the kick in the you-know-what."

Bell, the winner of last week's rain-shortened Coca-Cola 600, had been the dominant car for much of the day in suburban St. Louis, leading 80 of the 240 laps.

Blaney and Bell dueled for the lead for several laps before Bell — just after finally squeezing ahead of Blaney briefly — let up and reported motor issues

to his crew. Bell wound up seventh, getting a push by teammate Martin Truex Jr. on the straightaways in the final laps.

"I have no idea what happened — some sort of motor issue — and I'm surprised that it made it to the end," Bell said. "So glad that we were able to salvage something out of it."

"But you don't get race cars like that very often. And whenever you do, you need to take advantage of them."

Blaney settled for 24th, coasting around as the last finisher on the lead lap.

Cindric's crew chief, Brian Wilson, said the Penske team coordinated during the week on the decision to keep all three cars out at the start of Stage 3, but they didn't share strategy on the final pit stop as they were competing for the win.

Siri, Rays beat Orioles to avoid sweep

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Jose Siri hit a two-run double in the eighth to put Tampa Bay ahead, Garrett Cleavinger escaped the bottom of the inning thanks to a bases-loaded double play and the Rays avoided a sweep with a 4-3 win over the Baltimore Orioles on Sunday.

Gunnar Henderson hit his sixth leadoff homer of the season for the Orioles, who led 3-0 in the fourth before Tampa Bay's comeback. With the score 3-2, Dillon Tate (2-1) allowed two straight singles to start the eighth and then fell behind in the count against Siri, who was squaring around to bunt.

"The way he looked after the first (bunt attempt), we decided to take it off," Rays manager Kevin Cash said.

Siri swung away at a 3-1 pitch and drove it to right-center field to put Tampa Bay on top.

"I just wasn't good at my job today," Tate said. "Ultimately, if I do what I need to do right there, outcome could be different if we

get him to lay a bunt down."

Nationals 5, Guardians 2: Joey Meneses' two-run double keyed a four-run second inning and Jake Irvin (3-5) pitched six strong innings to lead visiting Washington to a victory over Cleveland.

Meneses' double to deep center field opened the scoring against Carlos Carrasco. Ildemaro Vargas and Lane Thomas had back-to-back RBI singles later in the second to put the Nationals up 4-0 as they avoided a series sweep.

Twins 4, Astros 3: Jose Miranda hit a solo homer in the sixth inning and a tiebreaking RBI double in the eighth, helping visiting Minnesota top Houston.

Trevor Larnach also went deep for the Twins, who took two of three in the weekend series. Steven Okert (2-0) got two outs for the win, and Jhoan Duran handled the ninth for his 10th save.

Braves 3, Athletics 1: Sean Murphy drove in the go-ahead run with a bloop double in the

seventh inning and host Atlanta limited Oakland to two hits.

Rangers 6, Marlins 0: Andrew Heaney (2-6) threw six scoreless innings, Adolis García homered and singled and visiting Texas beat Miami.

Brewers 6, White Sox 3: Jackson Chourio hit a three-run homer and host Milwaukee extended Chicago's slide to a season-high 11 games.

Diamondbacks 5, Mets 4: Ketel Marte hit a leadoff homer and then a go-ahead, two-run shot in the ninth inning that lifted visiting Arizona over New York for a four-game split.

Blue Jays 5, Pirates 4: Daniel Vogelbach had two hits and two RBIs and Chris Bassitt (6-6) pitched five innings to remain unbeaten in five career starts against Pittsburgh as host Toronto won.

Tigers 8, Red Sox 4 (10): Javier Báez's two-run single highlighted a four-run 10th inning and visiting Detroit beat Boston.

Reds 5, Cubs 2: TJ Friedl hit a three-run homer, Nick Lodolo

(5-2) pitched six effective innings and visiting Cincinnati beat slumping Chicago.

Royals 4, Padres 3: Nick Loftin hit a walk-off sacrifice fly, Nelson Velázquez hit two RBIs and host Kansas City defeated San Diego.

Dodgers 4, Rockies 0: Mookie Betts and Freddie Freeman homered in the first inning, Gavin Stone (6-2) had another strong outing and host Los Angeles beat Colorado.

Mariners 5, Angels 1: Luis Castillo (5-6) threw seven shutout innings, Mitch Garver hit a three-run double and host Seattle beat Los Angeles for a sweep of their weekend series.

Yankees 7, Giants 5: Juan Soto homered twice, including a go-ahead drive in a four-run ninth inning against All-Star closer Camilo Doval, and visiting New York rallied past San Francisco.

Cardinals 5, Phillies 4 (10): Nolan Gorman hit an early two-run homer and a tiebreaking single in the 10th inning to lead visiting St. Louis over Philadelphia.

Tennessee heads SEC teams locking up regional titles

Associated Press

Four teams from the Southeastern Conference and four from the Atlantic Coast Conference won regionals in the NCAA Tournament on Sunday and will take the next step in their bids to reach the College World Series.

The Pac-12 will have its final baseball season extended at least another week with Oregon winning three straight games as a No. 3 regional seed. West Virginia, whose coach will retire after the season, made it to the super regionals for the first time and joined Kansas State as Big 12 teams to win regionals.

The best-of-three supers begin Friday and Saturday to determine the eight teams that advance to the CWS, which begins June 14 in Omaha, Neb. The NCAA will announce super regional sites Tuesday, but it's rare for the higher-seeded team to not host.

No. 1 national seed Tennessee hit five homers in a 12-3 win over Southern Mississippi and will head to the super regionals for a

fourth consecutive year. The Volunteers will play East Carolina or Evansville with a third trip to the CWS in four years, and second straight, at stake.

No. 2 Kentucky beat Indiana State 5-0 to make the supers a second straight year. The Wildcats will play Oregon State or UC Irvine.

No. 3 Texas A&M beat Louisiana-Lafayette 9-4 and returned to supers for the second time in three years under Jim Schlossnagle. The Aggies will be matched against Oregon, which beat UC Santa Barbara 3-0.

No. 7 Georgia, down three runs early, beat Georgia Tech 8-6 in 10 innings to reach the super regionals for the first time since 2008 after Kolby Branch hit a tying homer in the ninth. The Bulldogs will play No. 10 North Carolina State, which beat James Madison 5-3 to make its deepest run in the tournament since 2021, when the Wolfpack were removed from the CWS because of a COVID-19 outbreak on the team.

Clemson, Florida State and Virginia joined

NC State as regional winners from the ACC.

No. 6 Clemson beat Coastal Carolina 12-5 to reach the supers for the first time since 2010 under second-year coach Erik Bakich. The Tigers will likely host Oklahoma State or Florida in the next round.

No. 8 Florida State defeated UCF 12-4 and is in supers for the first time since 2019 under second-year coach Link Jarrett. The Seminoles will play Oklahoma or UConn.

No. 12 Virginia is in the super regionals for the third time in four years after a 9-2 win over Mississippi State. The Cavaliers are in line to host Kansas State, a No. 3 regional seed from the Big 12 that beat Southeast Missouri State 7-2 to reach its first super regional since 2013.

West Virginia, a No. 3 regional seed like its conference mate K-State, beat No. 4 regional seed Grand Canyon 10-6 and will play North Carolina or LSU. The Mountaineers' coach, Randy Mazey, announced last summer that he would retire after this season.