

Ukraine may keep some F-16s safe abroad

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine may keep some of the F-16 fighter jets it's set to receive from its Western allies at foreign bases to protect them from Russian strikes, a senior Ukrainian military officer said Monday.

Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway have committed to providing Ukraine with over 60 U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets to help it fend off Russian attacks. Ukrainian pilots are currently undergoing training to fly the warplanes ahead of the deliveries expected to start later this year.

Serhii Holubtsov, head of aviation within Ukraine's air force, said "a certain number of aircraft will be stored at secure air bases outside of Ukraine so that they are not targeted here."

Holubtsov told the U.S. government-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty that those F-16s could be used to re-

place damaged aircraft as they undergo repairs as well as for training Ukrainian pilots abroad.

"This way, we can always have a certain number of aircraft in the operational fleet that corresponds to the number of pilots we have," he said. "If there are more pilots, there will be more aircraft in Ukraine."

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned Moscow could consider launching strikes at facilities in NATO countries if they host the warplanes used in Ukraine.

"If they are stationed at air bases outside the Ukrainian borders and used in combat, we will have to see how and where to strike the assets used in combat against us," Putin said last year. "It poses a serious danger of NATO being further drawn into the conflict."

In March, the Russian leader again warned Ukraine's West-

ern allies against providing air bases from where the F-16s could launch sorties against the Kremlin's forces. Those bases would become a "legitimate target," he said.

"F-16s are capable of carrying nuclear weapons, and we will also need to take that into account while organizing our combat operations," Putin stated.

On Monday, Andrei Kartapolov, the head of the defense committee in the Russian Parliament's lower house, told the state RIA Novosti news agency that NATO bases hosting Ukrainian F-16s would be "legitimate targets" for Moscow if the warplanes use them to launch attacks on Russia.

The F-16s require a high standard of runways and reinforced hangars to protect them from attacks on the ground. It's not clear how many Ukrainian air bases can meet those require-

ments, and Russia would be certain to quickly target a few that could accommodate them once the jets arrive.

Holubtsov noted that the F-16s will help protect front-line and border regions from Russian glide bombs that have inflicted significant damage to both troops and residential areas, including its second-largest city of Kharkiv. Glide bombs are heavy Soviet-era bombs fitted with precision guidance systems and launched from aircraft flying out of range of air defenses.

"I think we will succeed, first of all, in pushing back the aircraft that drop glide bombs farther from the contact line," he said. "If we manage to push them back at least another 19-31 miles, this can already be considered a turning point and an achievement, if not of superiority, then of parity in the airspace."

Houthi missile attacks hit 2 ships in Gulf of Aden

Associated Press

MANAMA, Bahrain — Missile attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels struck two ships in the Gulf of Aden, authorities said Sunday, the latest assaults on shipping in the region.

One anti-ship ballistic cruise missile hit the Antigua- and Barbuda-flagged cargo ship Norderney forward station late Saturday, starting a fire that those on board put out, the U.S. military's Central Command said. It added that a second anti-ship cruise missile also hit the Norderney.

The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center similarly reported the attack and fire in the same area off Aden, saying "damage control is underway."

Houthi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree claimed the attack in a prerecorded video message Sunday, saying the vessel had

been targeted with both missiles and drones. Tracking data analyzed by The Associated Press showed the Norderney was still in the Gulf of Aden on Sunday afternoon.

In a second attack, a Houthi ballistic missile hit the Tavvishi, a Liberian-flagged, Swiss-owned-and-operated container ship in the Gulf of Aden, CENTCOM said. Saree claimed the attack happened in the Arabian Sea, but provided no evidence. Tracking data suggested the Tavvishi was in the Gulf of Aden at the time of the attack.

The "Tavvishi reported damage but has continued underway," CENTCOM said. A second ballistic missile fired by the Houthis at the ship was intercepted by a coalition warship, it added.

Saree also claimed an unreported attack on a warship, without providing any evidence to support his claim. The Houthis have exagger-

ated some of their attacks since launching their campaign.

The Houthis, who seized Yemen's capital nearly a decade ago and have been fighting a Saudi-led coalition since shortly after, have been targeting shipping throughout the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. They have said the attacks are aimed at stopping the war and supporting the Palestinians, though the attacks often target vessels that have nothing to do with the conflict.

The Houthis have launched more than 50 attacks on shipping, killed three sailors, seized one vessel and sunk another since November, according to the U.S. Maritime Administration. A U.S.-led airstrike campaign has targeted the Houthis since January, with a series of strikes May 30 killing at least 16 people and wounding 42 others, the rebels have said.

DeCA seeks to expand kosher, halal options

By KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

The Defense Commissary Agency is working on improving its selection of kosher and halal foods to accommodate members of the Jewish and Islamic faiths, according to a DeCA spokeswoman.

Tens of thousands of military beneficiaries practice a religion that carries unique dietary requirements, but commissaries have limited supply, integration and promotion of certified kosher and halal options, according to a May 29 letter to the agency from two congresswomen.

"We request DeCA urgently address issues regarding access to foods that meet religious dietary restrictions," Reps. Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., and Chrissy Houlahan, D-Pa., wrote to commissary director John Hall.

"This neglect undermines the

diversity and appreciation of the military community and discourages specific religious groups from serving," the lawmakers wrote. "No active-duty personnel should have to sacrifice their faith to serve in our military."

DeCA already stocks more than 16,000 kosher products and nearly 400 halal products, DeCA Headquarters and Support Center spokeswoman Tressa Smith said Wednesday.

After reviewing its kosher and halal offerings, DeCA solicited additional halal options from the food industry, Smith said.

"From giving notice to getting newly selected products onto the shelf, the process takes several months," she said. "DeCA is looking for an opportunity to create a Ramadan promotional package, in addition to its Passover package."

DeCA recently added Pre Brands beef, which is certified halal, to all stateside commissaries after testing it in smaller markets, Smith said.

"The Defense Commissary Agency has a mission to deliver a benefit that improves the quality of life and readiness of its military patrons," she said. "Providing an assortment that speaks to its patrons' preferences and needs — including religious dietary options — is a vital component of DeCA's effort to be its patrons' grocery provider of choice."

Approximately 10,000 Jews serve on active duty in the United States military, Lauren Magy, a spokeswoman for the Jewish Community Centers of North America, said Wednesday.

Approximately 5,000 Muslims are serving, according to Department of Defense data

from 2023.

"The Jewish and the Muslim population are kind of struggling to source food, especially here in Japan," Air Force spouse Alaa Rodriguez said Tuesday at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo.

Rodriguez, a Muslim from Manama, Bahrain, follows the halal diet. She bought meats from Tokyo Camii and Diyanet Turkish Culture Center in Shibuya, more than an hour by train from Yokota, until she found Haijima Halal Food, a five-minute drive from the base.

"For people that are here on a longer term, they have other options and know where to get the food that they're comfortable eating," she said. "But for people that are here for a short period of time and want a quick solution, they don't find it at the commissary, and it makes their life challenging."

For 1st time, Japan joins Valiant Shield exercise

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Ronald Reagan took center stage among eight warships in the Philippine Sea as the U.S. military commenced Valiant Shield, nearly two weeks of drills that included Japan for the first time.

The biennial exercise, in its 10th iteration since 2006, began Friday and ends June 18. It brings together all six arms of the U.S. military for drills on or near Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and Palau.

The Japan Air and Maritime Self-Defense Forces are participating for the first time and are expected to bring about 4,000 troops, eight vessels and 60 aircraft into play, a Japanese government spokesperson said in

May. Some Japanese government spokespeople are required to speak to the media only on condition of anonymity.

Training includes maritime interdiction, counter-air operations, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and command and control, according to Navy Lt. Cmdr. Haider Mullick, one of the exercise's directors.

The Ronald Reagan, which left Yokosuka Naval Base on May 16 for the final time ahead of being relieved by the USS George Washington, led a flotilla Friday in the Philippine Sea that included the command ship USS Blue Ridge, the guided-missile cruiser USS Robert Smalls and the guided-missile destroyers USS Higgins and USS Rafael Peralta.

Poll: Citizens of US, allies want Ukraine peace talks

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A majority of Americans and western Europeans want allies to push for a negotiated end to the war in Ukraine while shifting the bulk of the security burden on the Continent from the United States to Europe, according to a new poll.

The survey, released this month by the Institute for Global Affairs at the Eurasia Group, sought the views of 3,360 Americans and those residing in Europe's three most powerful countries: the United Kingdom, Germany and France.

The findings are somewhat at odds with President Joe Biden's position, which has centered on the idea that it's up to Ukraine to determine how the conflict ends.

Those polled were asked to se-

lect from a series of reasons for or against a negotiated end to the war. The tallies added up to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select up to two answers.

Reasons to push for a deal included the high casualty numbers, fears that the West lacks the industrial capacity to protect itself while also supplying Ukraine, and acceptance of an imperfect victory while Kyiv still has some leverage.

In the United States, such reasons for ending the war accounted for 94% of the responses in favor of a negotiated end to the conflict, compared with 88% in Europe.

The survey was done between April 8 and April 15 and had a margin of error of 1.8 percentage points.

President's son doesn't testify as his defense rests

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — A prosecutor told jurors Monday that “no one is above the law” as he urged them to convict President Joe Biden’s son Hunter on charges that he lied about his drug use when he bought a gun in 2018.

In his closing argument, prosecutor Leo Wise told jurors to focus on the “overwhelming” evidence against Hunter Biden and pay no mind to members of the president’s family sitting in the courtroom, including first lady Jill Biden.

“All of this is not evidence,” Wise said, extending his hand and directing the jury to look at the gallery. “People sitting in the gallery are not evidence.”

The prosecutor pointed to deeply personal testimony, text messages, photos and Hunter Biden’s own words in his 2021 memoir to argue that the president’s son clearly knew he was in the throes of a crack addiction when he marked on mandatory gun-purchase form that he was not illegally using or addicted to drugs.

“The evidence was personal. It was ugly, and it was overwhelming,” Wise said. “It was also absolutely necessary.”

Defense attorney Abbe Lowell told jurors the prosecution did not meet its burden of proving its case beyond a reasonable doubt. The defense has suggested that, at the time he bought the gun, Hunter Biden did not consider himself an addict. What he wrote later in his memoir is irrelevant, Lowell argued.

Closing arguments came shortly after the defense rested its case without calling Hunter Biden to the witness stand,

Defendants are not required to testify and are often advised by lawyers not to do so because it opens them up to grilling by prosecutors on cross-examination.

Last week, the defense called three witnesses — including Hunter’s daughter Naomi — as it tried to poke holes in the case that has laid bare some of the darkest moments of Hunter’s Biden’s drug-fueled past. Hunter Biden is charged with three felonies stemming from the October 2018 purchase of a gun he had for about 11 days. Prosecutors say he lied on a mandatory gun-purchase form by saying he was not illegally using or addicted to drugs.

He has pleaded not guilty and has accused the Justice Department of bending to political pressure from former President Donald Trump and other Republicans to bring the gun case and separate tax charges after a deal with prosecutors fell apart last year.

Hunter Biden has said he has been sober since 2019, but his attorneys have said he did not consider himself an “addict” when he filled out the form.

Hunter Biden hugged his uncle James Biden before entering the Wilmington, Del., courthouse Monday. First lady Jill Biden arrived shortly after and was seated in the front row of the courtroom with other family members, including James, Hunter’s sister Ashley and the president’s sister, Valerie Biden Owens.

If convicted in the gun case, he faces up to 25 years in prison, though first-time offenders do not get anywhere near the maximum.

Trump rallies voters in scorching Las Vegas

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Former President Donald Trump rallied voters in the scorching heat of Las Vegas, at points telling his supporters to ask for help if needed and appearing irritable with the teleprompters that he said were not working.

The presumptive GOP nominee’s campaign hired extra medics, loading up on fans and water bottles and allowed supporters to carry umbrellas to an outdoor rally Sunday in Las Vegas, where temperatures exceeded 100 degrees. The Clark County Fire Department said most of the medical calls were related to the heat, and six people were sent to a hospital and 24 others were treated on site.

“I don’t want anybody going on me. We need every voter. I don’t care about you. I just want your vote,” he said, adding that he was joking.

Earlier in his speech, he said the campaign would offer help to people who were feeling tired and joked that “everybody,” including the U.S. Secret Service, was worried about the safety of the crowds and not about him.

“They never mentioned me. I’m up here sweating like a dog,” he said. “This is hard work.”

Trump returned to Nevada, one of the top battleground states, for his second rally since he was found guilty in a hush-money scandal.

The unprecedented conviction of a former president has juiced Trump’s fundraising and galvanized his supporters, but it remains to be seen whether it will sway swing voters.

Temperatures in the Southwest have cooled since reaching historic highs late last week but remain above normal for this time of year and topped 100 degrees at the rally.

Campaign organizers handed out water bottles as supporters waited in line to be screened by security officers. Inside the venue, large misting fans, pallets of water and cooling tents were placed around the perimeter.

“This is a dry heat. This ain’t nothing for Las Vegas people,” Nevada GOP Chair Michael McDonald said. “But what it symbolizes for the rest of the United States — we will walk through hell” to elect Trump.

Trump to undergo probation interview before sentencing

Associated Press

Former President Donald Trump is scheduled to be interviewed by New York probation officials Monday, a required step before his July sentencing in his criminal hush money case, according to three people familiar with the plan.

Trump will do the interview via a computer video conference from his residence at the Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Fla., the people told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren’t authorized to disclose the plans publicly.

One of Trump’s lawyers, Todd Blanche, will be present for the interview. People convicted of crimes in New York usually meet with probation officials without their lawyers, but the judge in Trump’s case, Juan Merchan, said in a letter he would allow it.

The usual purpose of a pre-sentencing probation interview is to prepare a report that will tell the judge more about the defendant, and potentially help determine the proper punishment for the crime.

Merchan has scheduled Trump’s sentencing for July 11.

Vote rattles EU; Macron calls snap elections

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Far-right parties rattled the traditional powers in the European Union with major gains in parliamentary seats, dealing an especially humiliating defeat to French President Emmanuel Macron, who called snap legislative elections.

Some ballots in the vote for the European Parliament were still being counted Monday, but the outcome showed the 27-nation bloc's parliament membership has clearly shifted to the right. Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni more than doubled her party's

seats in the assembly.

And despite being hounded by a scandal involving candidates, the Alternative for Germany extreme right party still rallied enough seats to sweep past the slumping Social Democrats of Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

Sensing a threat from the far right, the Christian Democrats of EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had already shifted further to the right on migration and climate ahead of the elections — and were rewarded by remaining by far the biggest group in the 720-seat Eu-

ropean Parliament and de facto brokers of the ever-expanding powers of the legislature.

But the surge by nationalist and populist parties across Europe will make it much harder for the assembly to approve legislation on issues ranging from climate change to agriculture policy for the next five years.

Undoubtedly however, the star on a stunning electoral night was the National Rally party of Marine Le Pen, which dominated the French polls to such an extent that Macron immediately dissolved the national parlia-

ment and called for new elections to start later this month. It was a massive political risk since his party could suffer more losses, hobbling the rest of his presidential term that ends in 2027.

Le Pen was delighted to accept the challenge. "We're ready to turn the country around, ready to defend the interests of the French, ready to put an end to mass immigration," she said, echoing the rallying cry of so many far-right leaders in other countries who were celebrating substantial wins.

Blinken in Mideast to push Gaza cease-fire proposal

Associated Press

CAIRO — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken returned to the Middle East on Monday as a proposed Israel-Hamas cease-fire deal hangs in the balance after the dramatic rescue of four Israeli hostages held in Gaza in a major military raid and turmoil in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

With no firm response yet from Hamas to the proposal received 10 days ago, Blinken started his eighth visit to the region since the conflict began in October by meeting with Presi-

dent Abdel Fattah el-Sissi of Egypt, a key mediator with Hamas.

Blinken once again called on Hamas to accept the plan, which he said has wide international support and has been accepted by Israel. "If you want a cease-fire, press Hamas to say 'yes,'" he told reporters before leaving Cairo on the trip that will take him to Israel, Jordan and Qatar.

He said the plan on the table is the "single best way" to get to a cease-fire, release the remaining hostages and improve regional security.

While President Joe Biden, Blinken and other U.S. officials have praised the hostage rescue, the operation resulted in the deaths of a large number of Palestinian civilians and may complicate the cease-fire push by emboldening Israel and hardening Hamas' resolve to carry on fighting in the war it initiated with its Oct. 7 attack in Israel.

"It's hard to say how Hamas will process this particular operation and what it will do to its determination about whether it will say yes or not," Biden's na-

tional security adviser, Jake Sullivan, said Sunday. "We have not gotten a formal answer from Hamas at this time."

In his talks with el-Sissi and Qatari leaders, whose countries are the main mediators with Hamas in the cease-fire negotiations, Blinken will stress the importance of persuading the militants to accept the three-phase proposal on the table. The plan calls for the release of more hostages and a temporary pause in hostilities that could lead to the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

Ukraine says it struck stealth jet deep inside Russia

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine on Sunday said its forces hit an ultra-modern Russian warplane stationed on an air base nearly 370 miles from the front lines.

Kyiv's main military intelligence service shared satellite photos it said showed the aftermath of the attack. If confirmed, it would mark Ukraine's first known successful strike on a twin-engine Su-57 stealth jet, lauded as Moscow's most advanced fighter plane.

In one photo, black soot marks and small craters can be

seen dotting a concrete strip around the parked aircraft. According to the Main Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine's Ministry of Defense, the strike took place on Saturday at the Akhtubinsk base in southern Russia, some 366 miles from the front line.

The Ukrainian agency said the plane, which is capable of carrying stealth missiles across hundreds of miles, was among "a countable few" of its type in Moscow's arsenal. According to reports by Russian agencies, Moscow's air force obtained

"more than 10" new Su-57s last year, and has placed an order for a total of 76 to be delivered by 2028.

A spokesman for Ukraine's military intelligence, Andriy Yusov, hours later said on Ukrainian TV that the attack may have damaged two Su-57 jets parked at the base, and also wounded Russian personnel. He did not immediately give any evidence to support the claim.

Ilya Yevlash, a spokesman for Ukraine's air force, told Ukrainian media in April that Mos-

cow was trying to keep its Su-57 fleet "at a safe distance" from Ukrainian firepower.

The strike comes after the United States and Germany recently authorized Ukraine to hit some targets on Russian soil with the long-range weapons they are supplying to Kyiv. Ukraine has already used U.S. weapons to strike inside Russia under newly approved guidance from President Joe Biden that allows American arms to be used for the limited purpose of defending Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman charged; boyfriend left to die in suitcase

FL ORLANDO — A Florida woman charged with leaving her boyfriend to die after he was zipped into a suitcase in their home will go on trial in October following a hearing.

An Oct. 7 trial date was set during a court hearing for Sarah Boone in state court in Orlando, almost four years after her arrest. Boone, 46, has pleaded not guilty to the second-degree murder charge.

Boone initially told detectives with the Orange County Sheriff's Office that she and her boyfriend, Jorge Torres, had been playing hide and seek in the residence they shared in Winter Park, Fla., when they thought it would be funny for Torres to get into the suitcase.

However, detectives charged Boone with murder after they found videos on her cellphone showing Torres yelling that he couldn't breathe in the suitcase and calling out Boone's name, according to the arrest report.

"Yeah, that's what you do when you choke me," Boone responded in one of the videos, according to the report. "Oh, that's what I feel like when you cheat on me."

Bag of cash doesn't stop fraud scheme conviction

MN MINNEAPOLIS — A jury convicted five Minnesota residents and acquitted two others for their roles in a scheme to steal more than \$40 million from a program that was supposed to feed children during the coronavirus pandemic. The case received

widespread attention after someone tried to bribe a juror with a bag of \$120,000 in cash.

That juror was dismissed before deliberations began, and a second juror who was told about it also was dismissed. An FBI investigation of the attempted bribe continues, with no arrests announced.

After the verdicts were read, Assistant U.S. Attorney Joe Thompson called the attempted bribe "an attack on our criminal justice system" and told reporters that authorities would investigate with all of their resources. He made no other comment on that issue, and expressed satisfaction at the convictions in the fraud case.

No charges after monster truck downs power lines

ME TOPSHAM — A police investigator concluded no criminal charges were warranted after a lobster-themed monster truck clipped a power line, causing some scary moments with live wires falling to the ground. Two people were taken to hospitals.

Several people were injured when utility poles snapped and a transformer tumbled to the ground at the Topsham Fairgrounds. Witnesses said some people were trapped in portable toilets, which had wires on them.

Topsham Police Sgt. Mark Gilliam wrote in a report that the driver was trapped in the cockpit because of a live power line and another wire was draped over an injured man on the ground. The injured spectator, who suffered a fractured vertebra, was taken to a hospital along with a woman experienc-

ing back pain, he wrote.

The driver, Gregory Winchenbach, 51, of Jefferson, told police he couldn't see the wire from the cockpit of the custom-made monster truck, the investigator wrote.

Furry member of K-9 unit under investigation

NM SANTA FE — As a puppy, there were high hopes for Ayke to help revive the Santa Fe Police Department's K-9 program. Now, four years later, the German shepherd is in the doghouse.

He has bitten more people than any other dog in the department's K-9 unit and is the subject of an internal affairs investigation into an attack in March on one of the department's own officers. The city also is defending against a lawsuit filed by an officer who underwent plastic surgery after being attacked during a 2022 training exercise, the Santa Fe New Mexican reported.

Ayke is still on the job. Deputy Police Chief Ben Valdez wrote in an email that the department is confident the dog doesn't represent a danger to the public.

Cold Stone faces suit for lack of real pistachios

NY LEVITTOWN — Is it nuts to assume a scoop of pistachio ice cream should contain actual pistachios? Or how about real butter in a dish of butter pecan?

Such weighty questions about a favorite summertime confection could soon be decided by courts.

A federal judge in New York has given the go-ahead to a Long

Island woman's class action lawsuit that claims consumers are being duped by Cold Stone Creamery when they purchase certain flavors that "do not contain their represented ingredients."

Lead plaintiff Jenna Marie Duncan purchased her serving of pistachio ice cream from a Cold Stone Creamery store in Levittown, N.Y. According to her lawsuit, Duncan "reasonably believed that the Pistachio ice cream she purchased from defendant contained pistachio."

But Duncan later learned after reading the company's website there were no pistachios — a member of the cashew family — in the frozen dairy product, but rather "pistachio flavoring" that's defined as a mixture of water, Ethanol, Propylene Glycol, natural and artificial flavor, Yellow 5, and Blue 1, according to the lawsuit.

Rare 7-foot fish washed ashore on coast

OR GEARHART — A massive rare fish thought to only live in temperate waters in the Southern Hemisphere has washed up on Oregon's northern coast, drawing crowds of curious onlookers intrigued by the unusual sight.

The 7.3-foot hoodwinker sunfish first appeared on the beach in Gearhart on June 2, the Seaside Aquarium said in a media release. It was still on the beach on Friday and may remain there for weeks, the aquarium said, as it is difficult for scavengers to puncture its tough skin.

Photos provided by the aquarium showed a flat, round, gray fish lying on its side in the sand.

— From wire reports

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Celtics take 2-0 lead in NBA Finals

Associated Press

BOSTON — Jrue Holiday led the scoring. Derrick White added a chase-down block. Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown pitched in, too — with their passing and defense.

The Mavericks can stop worrying about who Boston's best player is. Everyone is contributing to the Celtics' quest for an unprecedented 18th NBA championship.

Holiday had 26 points and 11 rebounds, and White sprinted down the court to swat away the Mavericks' last chance on Sunday night as Boston beat Dallas 105-98 to take a 2-0 lead in the NBA Finals.

Tatum made up for a rough shooting night with 12 assists and nine rebounds to go with his 18 points. Brown scored 21 with three steals, White had 18 points and three steals, and Payton Pritchard's only basket of the game was a banked half-court shot to beat the third quarter buzzer and give Boston an 83-74 lead.

"That's why they are the No. 1 team in the NBA with the No. 1 record," said Mavericks star Luka Doncic, who scored 32 with 11 rebounds and 11 assists — the first

NBA Finals triple-double in Dallas franchise history. "They have a lot of great players. Basically, anybody can get off."

Doncic, who was listed as questionable to play less than two hours before the opening tipoff, had his 10th career playoff triple-double. But he scored only three points in the fourth, converting a three-point play with 1:15 left as Dallas scored nine in a row to cut a 14-point deficit to 103-98.

After Derrick Jones Jr. blocked Tatum's dunk attempt, White ran down the court, joining with Brown to block P.J. Washington's potential dunk. Brown made a layup at the other end, and then Doncic missed a one-footed, running floater from 3-point range with 28 seconds left, ending Dallas' last chance at a comeback.

"It's not all on him. It's a team," Dallas coach Jason Kidd said of Doncic, who had been battling chest, knee and ankle injuries. "He put us in a position. He was really good tonight. Unfortunately, we just couldn't get over the hump. We've got to find someone to join Luka and (Kyrie Irving) in that scoring category."

Games 3 and 4 are Wednesday and Fri-

day in Dallas; Boston has not lost on the road this postseason. It was the ninth time the Celtics have won the opening pair in the NBA Finals: They have won the previous eight, and have never been forced to a Game 7 in any of them.

A day after Kidd attempted to sow dissension in the Celtics locker room by calling Brown — not Tatum, an All-NBA first-teamer — the team's best player, Boston showed why it doesn't matter. The two All-Stars combined to make 2 of 12 3-point attempts, but filled up the box score in other ways.

"How they play together is sacred, and something that can't be broken," Holiday said. "I don't prefer one or the other, I prefer both. Because they're both superstars, and they're showing it on the biggest stage in the world."

Kristaps Porzingis limped his way to 12 points for top-seeded Boston. Tatum was 6-for-22 shooting and 1-for-7 from 3-point range; the Celtics were 10-for-39 from long distance overall.

Irving, who scored 16 points, has lost 12 games in a row against the Celtics.

Only SEC, ACC teams advance to College World Series

Associated Press

Kentucky finally made it to a College World Series, and the Wildcats will be joined by at least three other Southeastern Conference teams on college baseball's biggest stage.

Tennessee, Florida and Texas A&M also punched their tickets Sunday, joining Atlantic Coast Conference teams North Carolina, Florida State and Virginia when the CWS begins Friday in Omaha, Neb.

The last spot will be filled Monday when the SEC's Georgia and ACC's North Carolina State meet in Game 3 of their NCAA super regional in Athens, Ga.

For the first time since the CWS went to an eight-team format in 1950, only two conferences will be represented. That it's the SEC and ACC is no surprise. They were by far the top two conferences in the power rankings.

Kentucky beat Oregon State 3-2 to complete the program's climb to its first CWS and put a bow on the Pac-12.

About an hour before the Wildcats won, Texas A&M finished its sweep of Oregon with a 15-9 victory. Those were the final two

competitions for the Pac-12, which has won a record 29 national titles in baseball. Oregon will play in the Big Ten next season and Oregon State will play baseball as an independent.

Nolan McCarthy scored Kentucky's go-ahead run on a wild pitch in the seventh inning and five pitchers combined on a two-hitter, albeit with nine walks.

Tennessee homered seven times in the first five innings and went on to a 12-1 victory over Evansville after the Purple Aces knocked off the No. 1 national seed Volunteers a day earlier to extend their best-of-three super regional to a third game.

Michael Robertson, Florida's No. 9 hitter, sliced a ball into the left-center gap to bring home two runs in the 13th inning and deliver an 11-10 walk-off win against Clemson.

Tennessee and Florida are in the CWS for a second straight year, and Texas A&M is in for the second time in three years after Kaeden Kent's grand slam in the nine-run seventh inning carried the Aggies past Oregon 15-9.

Georgia forced a third game against North Carolina State by bouncing back from

a 17-run loss Saturday to beat the Wolfpack 11-2.

The last time Tennessee was the No. 1 national seed, in 2022, it lost a three-game super regional to Notre Dame in Knoxville. The Volunteers weren't going to let that happen against the No. 4 regional seed Purple Aces.

They unleashed the power that has made them the top home run-hitting team in the nation, with Christian Moore connecting for his 34th leading off the bottom of the first and Dean Curley and Dalton Bargo going back-to-back in the second. Bargo and Moore went deep again and Billy Amick and Cal Stark also homered before the barrage ended. The seven homers were a Tennessee postseason single-game record.

Bargo, the Vols' sophomore designated hitter, will be returning to his hometown for the CWS after transferring from Missouri.

Florida prevailed in its 5-hour, 3-minute game after the Tigers' Cam Cannarella kept it going with a tying homer in the ninth and the defensive play of the tournament in the 10th. Alden Mathes hit a go-ahead home run in the top of the 13th.

Larson takes NASCAR Cup Series lead

Associated Press

SONOMA, Calif. — The Indianapolis 500 is over and the worried wait to see if Kyle Larson's participation in that event would cost him a shot at winning a NASCAR championship has been resolved.

So it's back to business as usual for NASCAR's busiest driver.

That means a lot more races and, of course, more winning.

Larson celebrated NASCAR approving his participation in the playoffs with his third Cup victory of the season — a Sunday win at his home track. The victory for Larson, who grew up 80 miles away from Sonoma Raceway in Elk Grove, was his second on the rolling road course in picturesque wine country. It is the fifth win on a road course for NASCAR's 2021 Cup champion and moved him to the top of the current series standings.

It was a welcome reward after a grueling month of May in which Larson became the fifth driver to attempt to run the Indianapolis 500 and NASCAR's Coca-Cola 600 on the same day. Rain at both events made his at-

tempt at "The Double" a bust and put him in danger of not being granted a waiver to remain eligible for the NASCAR playoffs.

It took until June 4 for NASCAR to grant Larson the waiver. Then he took his first two consecutive days off in months to lay by the pool in the California sun, do some wine tasting in familiar territory and then win at Sonoma.

"My life is so hectic that I never feel like I get a normal week for myself. It gets a little bit more hectic now that I am just NASCAR racing and sprint car racing," Larson said. "It was really nice for me to get to come here this week and just get to do nothing for one day, and then go be a normal tourist on Thursday. It's just a very relaxing week."

Jeff Gordon, the vice chairman of Hendrick Motorsports, said Larson and the No. 5 team were never rattled during the wait for a waiver.

"I didn't see it affecting the majority of the team," said Gordon. "As far as how it trickled down the team, I didn't see where they were really (both-

ered). They seem to be business as usual. I think the best medicine in any of those situations is getting back to the racetrack.

"Especially when they got here, home track for Kyle, a track they enjoy racing at, I think that put a lot of that to rest."

Larson led 19 of the 110 laps and passed defending race winner Martin Truex Jr. with eight laps remaining to uphold the win in his No. 5 Chevrolet. It is his 20th win since joining Hendrick in 2021, which ranks third in the organization behind Gordon and Jimmie Johnson.

Truex was going to finish second in a Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing, but ran out of gas before he reached the finish line. He was scored 27th as a pair of tow trucks followed him to the finish.

That gave second to Michael McDowell in a Ford for Front Row Motorsports. Chris Buescher was third in a Ford for RFK Racing and Chase Elliott of Hendrick was fourth. He was followed by Ross Chastain of Trackhouse, who had last-lap contact with Kyle Busch that dropped Busch

from fifth to 12th.

Denny Hamlin, the Cup Series points leader at the start of the race, had his day come to an abrupt end just two laps into the event when his Toyota engine failed, sending him to a last-place finish at Sonoma for the second consecutive year.

Hamlin said he had zero warning the engine was about to blow. He started 25th and was 29th when his engine failed.

"No. Nothing. It's just the gearing is a little weird for the track," Hamlin said. "It's a lot of high-end RPM stuff, but the same as everyone else and I'm just not really sure. They'll look at it and figure it out, but certainly not ideal."

Hamlin, who was scored with a 38th-place finish, has finished outside the top 30 at Sonoma for three consecutive years.

It wasn't much better for Ty Gibbs, his teammate at Joe Gibbs Racing, who hit the wall 16 laps into the race and finished just one spot better than Hamlin in 37th.

"I just made a mistake and took us out of this day," Gibbs said.

Power wins for first time in 2 years at Road America

Associated Press

ELKHART LAKE, Wis. — Will Power pondered retirement last year as his wife battled a near deadly staph infection that had the Australian wondering if he needed to focus on his family's future.

"She almost died," Power said. "You start thinking, 'Yeah, I'm going to have to stop now, take care of my son.'"

His wife has recovered and Power is back in victory lane.

Power was joined by wife Liz and son Beau in victory circle Sunday after he earned his first win in two years. He ended a 34-race winless streak and

moved to the top of the IndyCar points standings.

The 43-year-old pulled ahead for good on the 49th of 55 laps and beat teammate Josef Newgarden by 3.2609 seconds on the 14-turn, 4.014-mile course to win for the first time since the Detroit Grand Prix on June 5, 2022. Power has a five-point lead over reigning IndyCar champion Alex Palou as he seeks his second championship in three years.

Power won the 2022 title, but was distracted by his wife's health issues during last year's winless season.

"I have to say I'm a better

driver again this year than I was in '22 when I won the championship," Power said. "Last year was sort of a stall-out here. Not much I could do. Spending a lot of time at home, looking after Liz, making sure everything was going well for her. (Now I'm) back to Liz helping me. She is a big part of my preparation. She does a lot for me. We're back as a team again."

Power won for the 42nd time in the series to tie Michael Andretti for fourth on the all-time wins list. They trail A.J. Foyt (67), Scott Dixon (58) and Mario Andretti (52).

Newgarden was second and Scott McLaughlin third to give Team Penske a podium sweep— its first since 2017. Newgarden finished second in a backup car one day after spinning off the track and crashing his Chevrolet hard into a barrier during the final stages of qualifying Saturday.

"It was a real team effort to put a new car together," Newgarden said. "Everybody pitched in... really rewarding, I think, for the entire crew when you have to go through something like that, put it all together, we finish 1-2-3, it's as good as it can get."

Mets rally in 9th to split London Series

Associated Press

LONDON—Catcher Luis Torrens turned Nick Castellanos' bases-loaded roller in front of the plate into a game-ending double play, and the New York Mets beat the Philadelphia Phillies 6-5 on Sunday for a split of their two-game London Series.

New York rallied from a 4-3 ninth-inning deficit against José Alvarado (1-3), who blew a save for the second time in 13 chances.

Mark Vientos hit an RBI single on a two-hopper that third baseman Alec Bohm tried to barehand. Pete Alonso forced in a run when he was hit on his left thigh by a cutter, and catcher J.T. Realmuto allowed a run-scoring passed ball that put the Mets ahead 6-4.

Reed Garrett (6-2) got an out but allowed two batters to reach in the bottom half. Bryce Harper loaded the bases with a single off Drew Smith, and Bohm forced in a run with a walk.

Castellanos broke his bat when he tipped the ball in front of the plate, and Torrens grabbed it before stepping back on the plate for a forceout as pinch-runner Garrett Stubbs tried to slide home. Torrens then threw to first, where Alonso fell as he stretched for the final out, giving Smith his second save.

Yankees 6, Dodgers 4: Trent Grisham hit a go-ahead, three-run homer, Aaron Judge and Oswaldo Cabrera also went deep

and host New York rallied for a victory over Los Angeles to prevent a three-game sweep in a series viewed as a possible World Series preview.

Starting because Juan Soto missed his third straight game due to forearm soreness, Grisham drove a fastball from Tyler Glasnow (6-5) about a dozen rows into the right-field seats for a 5-3 lead in the bottom half of the sixth inning. Fans in the sellout crowd of 48,023 had chanted "We Want Soto!" when Grisham came to the plate after infield hits by Alex Verdugo and Judge that bounced off fielders' gloves.

Guardians 6, Marlins 3: Tyler Freeman hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the seventh inning and visiting Cleveland beat Miami.

Gabriel Arias also went deep and José Ramírez doubled and drove in his major league-leading 62nd run for the AL Central-leading Guardians, who improved to 42-22 and took the series.

Tigers 10, Brewers 2: Jake Rogers hit a three-run homer to cap an eight-run fifth inning, Tarik Skubal (8-1) struck out 10 in his eighth win of the season and host Detroit rolled to a victory over Milwaukee.

The eight-run inning was a season high for the Tigers, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Gio Urshela and Zach McKinstry each contributed a two-run single. Riley Greene fin-

ished with two doubles and an RBI.

Orioles 9, Rays 2: Grayson Rodriguez took a perfect game into the sixth inning, Adley Rutschman hit a grand slam and drove in six runs, and visiting Baltimore beat Tampa Bay.

Anthony Santander also homered for the Orioles, who lead the majors with 102. Baltimore has taken the first three games of the four-game set, and has won 13 of 17 overall.

Red Sox 6, White Sox 4 (10): David Hamilton homered and doubled to help visiting Boston rally past Chicago in 10 innings.

Jarren Duran reached on an error by reliever Michael Soroka (0-7) in the 10th, and Cedanne Rafaela scored on Jamie Westbrook's sacrifice fly. Rob Refsnyder singled to bring in another run as Boston (33-33) returned to .500.

Nationals 8, Braves 5: Keibert Ruiz homered as part of a seven-run fourth inning and host Washington defeated Atlanta, spoiling the major league debut of Hurston Waldrep.

Twins 11, Pirates 5 (10): Manuel Margot hit an RBI triple to start a seven-run outburst in the 10th inning, and visiting Minnesota ended a five-game losing streak with a win over Pittsburgh.

Mariners 6, Royals 5 (10): Julio Rodríguez hit a tiebreaking single in the 10th inning, Cal Raleigh added a two-run single and

visiting Seattle held off Kansas City to avoid getting swept for the first time this season.

Padres 13, Diamondbacks 1: Knuckleballer Matt Waldron combined with two relievers on a five-hitter, and Ha-Seong Kim and Jake Cronenworth each hit a three-run homer for host San Diego in a rout of Arizona.

Cardinals 5, Rockies 1: Alec Burleson homered, Masyn Winn drove in two runs and host St. Louis beat Colorado for a split in the teams' four-game series.

Rangers 7, Giants 2: Marcus Semien launched a two-run homer after getting hit in the helmet by a pitch, Adolis García stole home and host Texas avoided being swept by manager Bruce Bochy's former team with a win over San Francisco.

Cubs 4, Reds 2: Ian Happ drove in three runs with a bases-loaded double in the first inning and Shota Imanaga (6-1) had another strong start as visiting Chicago ended Cincinnati's seven-game winning streak.

Blue Jays 6, Athletics 4 (10): Isiah Kiner-Falefa hit a bases-loaded double in the 10th inning and finished with five RBIs as visiting Toronto beat Oakland.

Angels 9, Astros 7: Logan O'Hoppe hit a two-run homer with one out in the ninth to complete a four-hit game, and host Los Angeles rallied for a victory over Houston despite Jose Altuve tying a career high with four hits.

Scheffler wins Memorial for 5th PGA Tour title this year

Associated Press

DUBLIN, Ohio — Winning has become a habit for Scottie Scheffler, except there was nothing typical about his victory Sunday at the Memorial.

He made only one birdie. He closed with a 2-over 74, his highest final round in two years. And victory wasn't assured until Scheffler had the mettle to put a firm stroke on a downhill putt from 5 feet above the hole to take out the break.

It went right in the heart for a one-shot victory over Collin Morikawa, and a hand-

shake with tournament host Jack Nicklaus. Their exchange said it all.

"You're a survivor," Nicklaus told him. "Thanks," Scheffler said. "Yeah, you made this place brutal today."

Scheffler endured more stress than he wanted and got the victory everyone has come to expect, his fifth of the season — one week into the month of June — as he heads for another tough test next week in the U.S. Open.

Muirfield Village was so demanding with its ultra firm greens and swirling

gusts throughout the afternoon that only six players broke par and the average score was a fraction under 75.

Scheffler, who started four shots ahead, never lost the lead. He never felt safe, either, not with Morikawa and Adam Hadwin on his heels all afternoon, and on a back nine where making par felt like hard work. Par is what it took on the 18th hole.

"This is a tough place to close out," Scheffler said. "I didn't do a whole lot great today, but I did enough."