

Sailors counter surface drones in drills

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

BALTIC SEA — These northern waters recently served to show Navy sailors how to spot and destroy deadly surface drones, whose devastating consequences for ships have been demonstrated from the Middle East to Crimea.

The lessons were on display last month during BALTOPS, an annual NATO maritime exercise in the Baltic. Stars and Stripes observed U.S. and U.K. sailors training in rainy, rough conditions.

That effort builds on lessons learned by watching Ukrainian surface drones batter Russia's Black Sea Fleet and force its ships to stay bottled up close to shore.

It also draws on insights gleaned from surface drone and fast-boat attacks on ships by Houthi rebels in Yemen and, more recently, by Iranian forces.

The training builds the readiness the fleet will need to handle the complexities of dealing with such systems in conflict, said Lt. Nick Anderson, the weapons and anti-terrorism officer aboard the command-and-

control ship USS Mount Whitney, which also participated in the exercise.

"Kind of like a football team, if your defensive line doesn't have a plan on how to react to a play and doesn't have a shared mental model, it's much, much harder to stay coordinated in your spots," Anderson said.

BALTOPS aims to sharpen the skills of NATO navies in defending the Baltic Sea and keeping allied forces and supplies moving through the region during a crisis.

In this year's iteration, poor weather added realism to the drone training by making it more difficult to spot the low-profile craft in rain and choppy seas.

Sea state and weather conditions as well as an unmanned boat's low profile and fast speed all make the craft difficult to detect. While radar is useful, a ship's best defense against any threat at sea is sailors' eyes, likely enhanced by a pair of binoculars, Anderson said.

In the training scenario, Mount Whitney and participating allied ships practiced detecting, identifying and evading

Navy Global Autonomous Reconnaissance Craft, or GARC, from the San Diego-based Unmanned Surface Vessel Division 32, established in January.

Surface drones "are intended to be small and sneaky and to exploit blind spots," said Stacie Pettyjohn, a senior fellow and director of the defense program at the Washington, D.C.-based think tank Center for a New American Security.

While sailors may be on the lookout for other vessels, such as enemy warships, surface drones can catch them unaware, she added.

Protecting ships from explosive-laden boats has been a longtime challenge, Navy officials and analysts note, pointing to the October 2000 suicide bombing of the destroyer USS Cole as it was refueling in a Yemeni port. The attack killed 17 sailors and injured more than three dozen.

Now, the threat of inexpensive, radar-evading drone swarms is pushing the Navy to rapidly shift unmanned systems out of the lab and into active operational training while it works to develop and deploy new technologies to defend

against them.

The urgency reflects the rapidly evolving nature of naval warfare. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has shown how relatively inexpensive unmanned boats can damage or sink much larger warships, while repeated Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have forced commercial vessels and Western navies to adapt to drone and missile threats.

"They're trying to learn on the fly," Pettyjohn said. "They're deploying the prototypes into the exercises, into operations, even as they're still sort of shaping requirements."

Differentiating an attack drone from a fishing boat or other vessel, determining its intent and potentially eliminating it require coordination and clear communication between a ship's bridge and small-craft action team members manning guns on deck, said Petty Officer 2nd Class Marcus Guy, a member of Mount Whitney's small-craft action team.

That can be challenging in the heat of the moment when multiple teams are tracking and calling out the position of a potential threat, he said.

64 submariners sickened after diesel generator glitch

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

The Navy is investigating a recent generator malfunction aboard the ballistic missile submarine USS Nebraska that sickened dozens of sailors.

The incident occurred last week when crew members operated the submarine's backup diesel generator as part of a routine pier shift at Naval Base Kit-

sap-Bangor in Washington state, Lt. Zachary Anderson, a spokesman for Submarine Group 9, said in a statement Monday.

As a result, sailors and contractors were exposed to diesel exhaust fumes, sending 64 service members to local medical centers for treatment of symptoms that included coughing, headaches, dizziness, nausea and irritation of the eyes, nose

and throat, Anderson said in the statement.

Six sailors were hospitalized and later released, according to the statement. The submarine's nuclear reactor, which is unrelated to the generator, was not affected, the Navy said.

During the June 22 incident, crew members cleared the atmosphere inside the submarine, provided medical assistance

and returned the unit to normal operations, according to the statement.

Officials are working to identify the cause of the incident and will take corrective action as appropriate, Anderson said.

Nebraska is among eight Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines homeported at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, which is on Puget Sound west of Seattle.

Supreme Court upholds birthright citizenship

New York Daily News

The Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld the Constitution's promise that all those born in the United States are citizens, regardless of the status of their parents.

In a 6-3 decision, the justices rejected President Donald Trump's plan to revise the Constitution by executive order and to end citizenship at birth for newborns whose parents were here illegally or temporarily.

Chief Justice John G. Roberts spoke for the court to reject Trump's proposed limits on birthright citizenship.

"Citizenship, then and now, was the right to have rights — to freely participate in our political community," he said. "The Framers of the 14th Amendment extended that

promise to 'every free-born person in this land.' We keep that promise today."

Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, Amy Coney Barrett and Ketanji Brown Jackson joined in full. Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh concurred in the outcome based on the federal law that incorporates birthright citizenship.

But the outcome was closer than most had predicted.

Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel A. Alito and Neil M. Gorsuch dissented in agreement with Trump.

The decision is the second major defeat for Trump from a conservative court that usually supports broad presidential power.

In February, the court struck down Trump's sweeping worldwide tariffs, his sig-

nature economic policy.

Roberts said Congress, not the president, has the power to raise revenue and impose taxes, including duties on imports.

In April, Trump came to the court to hear the arguments over birthright citizenship. He sat in the gallery while the justices posed steadily skeptical questions to his solicitor general. He left after an hour having heard enough to know he was likely to lose.

It was the rare Supreme Court case which was decided based simply on the words of the Constitution.

The justices, both conservative and liberal, said they look to what the Constitution says and how its words were originally understood.

The 14th Amendment

adopted in 1868 says: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof are citizens of the United States and of the State where they reside."

The amendment overturned the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857, which declared that Black persons could not become U.S. citizens.

In its place, the Reconstruction Congress adopted the broad view of citizenship based on the place of birth, not parentage, that had been part of English law for centuries.

In his first day back in the White House, Trump signed an executive order to revise the citizenship laws. His proposal was quickly blocked by judges as unconstitutional, and it never went into effect.

High court backs trans bans from girls' teams

Los Angeles Times

The Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld laws in West Virginia and Idaho that forbid transgender athletes from competing on girls' sports teams.

In a 6-3 decision, the court said the federal Title IX law envisioned separate teams for girls and boys based on their biological sex at birth.

"Separate sports teams for biological males and biological females are reasonable," said Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh. "Given the inherent physical differences between the sexes, allowing only biological females to play on women's and girls' teams can reduce the risk of physical injury and ensure fair competition."

But his opinion does not say states such as California must

change their laws that forbid schools from discriminating based on gender.

Instead, he stressed states are free to make their own decision.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor dissented in part. She said the state should have considered transgender students on a case-by-case basis to decide whether they had an unfair advantage.

Justices Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson dissented as well.

The sole plaintiff in the court case was Becky Pepper-Jackson. Now 15, she has carried on a legal fight to compete on her school's track team in Bridgeport, W. Va. Designated male at birth, she said she is the only transgender girl competing in her state and has been the target of complaints and protests.

Limits on campaign funds for political parties struck down

Los Angeles Times

The Supreme Court on Tuesday struck down Watergate-era limits on how much political parties can spend in a coordinated campaign with their candidates.

By a 6-3 vote, the court said the restrictions on parties and their campaign ads violate the 1st Amendment.

Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh said the court was restoring broad free speech protections for parties and their candidates.

"For nearly 200 years after the ratification of the 1st Amendment, parties could spend freely to support their candidates during campaigns and could do so in coordination with the candidates," he wrote.

The decision is a victory for the National Republican Senatorial Committee and is likely to give a boost to Republicans this

year in their bid to maintain control of Congress.

The party funding limits were challenged in 2022 in a lawsuit filed by JD Vance, who was then running in Ohio for a Senate seat, along with the Republican Party committees.

Republicans argued these restrictions on parties were outdated and unwise in an era when "SuperPACs" can raise and spend huge amounts of money to promote candidates because they are independent.

In dissent, Justice Elena Kagan looked back to the history of the Watergate era.

"For over half a century, a federal statute has guarded against actual and apparent quid pro quo corruption in our political system by limiting the amount of money a donor can contribute to a candidate," she said.

Governor will pull Mich. troops from DC if used for task force

The Detroit News

WASHINGTON — Gov. Gretchen Whitmer wants to ensure that the 160 members of the Michigan Army National Guard that she deployed to Washington last month are helping to support the celebrations around the country's 250th birthday and not President Donald Trump's effort to fight crime and beautify the capital city.

In a letter Monday to the head of the Michigan National Guard, Whitmer noted she has not "and will not" deploy troops to assist with Trump's so-called Safe and Beautiful Mission that has drawn criticism from local residents and leaders.

Whitmer is seeking assurances from Maj. Gen. Paul D. Rogers, who commands the Michigan National Guard, that the 170 uniformed members that she approved to help with the America 250 celebrations through Aug. 31 are only supporting the "narrow and limit-

ed" America 250 Mission and not the controversial D.C. law enforcement mission that dates to last August.

"If the National Guard is unable or unwilling to ensure the Michigan National Guard is only supporting the America 250 Mission, appropriately defined — and is unable or unwilling to communicate consistent with that fact — then I will end Michigan's support for the America 250 mission," Whitmer wrote.

Whitmer's letter also complained that a webpage run by the National Guard's D.C. Joint Task Force describing the Safe and Beautiful Mission "incorrectly" listed Michigan as supporting this mission.

The Democratic governor's letter followed an activist's report over the weekend showing members of the Michigan National Guard on duty in the Georgetown neighborhood instead of the National Mall where most America 250 events are

taking place.

A spokesperson for the D.C. Joint Task Force said Monday morning that 161 members of the Michigan National Guard are currently supporting the task force, which "remains committed to safeguarding the District of Columbia and serving those who live, work, and visit the District."

National Public Radio last week noted that the deployments of troops to Washington by Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina and Kentucky's governors recently marked the first time that Democratic-led states have sent uniformed service members from their guards to D.C. since Trump set up the task force to fight crime in the city last August.

In all, more than 4,800 uniformed members of the National Guard are patrolling the National Mall, residential streets, Metro stations and commercial centers in Washington.

Bipartisan housing bill still in limbo

Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump refused to commit to signing a major bipartisan housing bill, heightening uncertainty surrounding the fate of the legislation.

Trump told reporters Monday he had yet to decide on the measure, but again denigrated it, saying it was "so unimportant" compared to a voting bill he is pressuring the U.S. Senate to pass.

The president last week scrapped a planned signing of the housing bill, which passed the House and Senate by wide margins. He said he would make a decision on whether to sign the housing bill once he receives it.

The legislation has been formally transmitted to the White House, according to a House Republican aide. The transmission of the bill starts a 10-day period, excluding Sundays, in which the president can either sign or veto it. If Trump takes no action, it will become law.

By withholding his signature on the housing bill, Trump is heightening pressure on Senate Republicans to change the chamber's rules to pass the voter ID measure. GOP leaders have said they lack the votes to approve the voting bill and also enact any rule changes.

Scrapping the signing of the housing legislation spoiled a chance for lawmakers in both parties — and the president — to tout progress toward addressing voters' affordability concerns ahead of November's midterm elections.

The bill would curb large institutional investors' ownership of single-family homes, streamline rules around factory-built housing and encourage localities to remove barriers to construction in an attempt to bring more supply to the troubled housing market.

Senate ethics panel dismisses finance, conduct complaints against Gallego

CQ-Roll Call

WASHINGTON — The Senate Ethics Committee has dismissed a complaint against Sen. Ruben Gallego following an investigation of "alleged campaign finance violations and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature," according to a letter released by the Arizona Democrat.

The probe came as Congress grappled with a wave of sexual harassment allegations and as Gallego faced scrutiny for his friendship with former Rep. Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., who resigned in April amid accusations of misconduct.

Rep. Anna Paulina Luna, R-

Fla., previously posted on X about an unidentified senator with claims of "inappropriate advances" against them, later specifying that she was referring to Gallego.

"I have now heard of 4 women who have had multiple and uncomfortable/inappropriate advances/comments/touching, etc. from Senator Gallego. This is not made up and the Senate is being awfully quiet about it," Luna wrote on X in April.

Gallego denied any wrongdoing and asked the Senate Ethics Committee to investigate him. He also denied prior knowledge of misconduct by Swalwell, a close friend for many years. Be-

fore resigning from Congress, Swalwell apologized for any "mistakes in judgment" but denied allegations against him.

In the letter released by Gallego, dated June 26, Senate Ethics members write, "The Committee did not find evidence that your actions violated Federal law, Senate Rules, or related standards of conduct."

"The dismissal by the Ethics Committee reaffirms what I have said about these accusations from the beginning: they were right-wing conspiracies peddled by far-right activists like Anna Paulina Luna, the White House, and their allies," Gallego said in a statement.

Iran intensifies talk of Hormuz control

Bloomberg News

A top Iranian official reiterated the country's determination to maintain control over maritime traffic moving through the Strait of Hormuz, raising the stakes ahead of fresh negotiations with the U.S. on ending their war for good.

In remarks to Iranian state television, Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said Iran wants to work out an agreement with Oman, which controls the other side of the vital waterway, to oversee ships passing through Hormuz. But Iran will move forward with its own plans to control traffic "if for any reason Oman is not interested in doing so," he said.

"We have warned the Omanis that other countries have no right to interfere in this matter," Gharibabadi said. He said his country will designate any temporary transit routes in the strait.

The remarks were fresh evi-

dence that Iran has no intention of returning to the status quo from before the U.S. and Israel launched their military campaign against Iran, in which ships passed freely through the strait. An interim peace agreement signed last month said Iran wouldn't charge tolls for 60 days but left open the possibility of ships being forced to pay some sort of fee after that.

That stance will add to the pressure around the next round of talks, which the U.S. has said were set to take place in Doha, Qatar, on Tuesday. Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff and son-in-law Jared Kushner are set to attend, according to the White House. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said last week in Bahrain that any tolls or fees would be unacceptable.

Iran has not confirmed the details of a fresh round of negotiations to permanently end the four-month war. Gharibabadi

said earlier that "the Americans are traveling to Doha, but we have no plans to meet with them" while at the same time conceding that delegates would be there to follow up on implementation of the interim agreement through Qatari mediators.

Speaking in the Oval Office on Monday, President Donald Trump declined to say whether he thought the new talks would lead to a breakthrough after a spate of attacks in recent days jeopardized the ceasefire between the two countries. He made clear his focus remains on keeping nuclear weapons out of Iran's hands.

"The meeting in Doha is going to be perhaps important, perhaps not," Trump said. "We're going to find out, but we're winning militarily. It's almost won militarily, I would say, and it's really very simple. It's the denuclearization of Iran. We don't want them to have a nuclear

weapon, and they're not going to have a nuclear weapon."

The U.S., Europe and Gulf Arab nations are increasingly concerned about charges being imposed for the use of Hormuz, which would likely add to energy costs and risk creating a precedent for other countries. Even so, Iran's ability to dictate to shippers may be limited as long as the southern Omani route remains open to traffic.

Oman has pushed back against that idea of charging fees. Sultan Haitham bin Tariq met French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris earlier Monday and the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to freedom of navigation "without conditions or restrictions, including the right of transit passage in accordance with the law of the sea."

For the time being, oil tankers have continued to navigate the strait despite the attacks.

Families dig for quake survivors in Venezuela

Miami Herald

Days after back-to-back earthquakes hit the Caribbean coast of Venezuela, desperate family members are digging through the dirt in hopes of rescuing loved ones trapped under buildings.

They are still waiting — and pleading — for rescue teams and machines capable of moving the debris.

"Rescuers are arriving at wealthier buildings with heavy machinery," Katherine Vega told the Miami Herald. "We poor people have no help, only our own hands, and it is impossible, impossible, for us to rescue them. Yet they are alive. They are screaming."

Her sister Wenderly Isabel Vega Garcia, 39, and nephew Gabriel Jose Romero Vega, 14,

are buried under the rubble of a building in La Guaira, a coastal state near Caracas that bore the brunt of the devastation in the twin June 24 quakes.

Their apartment was leveled, as was the one next door.

At least 1,719 people have died, according to Jorge Rodriguez, president of the National Assembly. Tens of thousands others remain missing, and a website is tracking over 44,000 who have yet to be located.

Dozens of countries have deployed rescue teams to assist Venezuelan authorities or pledged to send aid. Their expert rescuers and dogs are scouring through the rubble. But families of the missing and dead say there is not enough manpower or machinery to save those who may still be buried alive.

Colo. court rejects Dems redistricting measures

The Denver Post

DENVER — The Colorado Supreme Court rejected multiple proposed ballot measures Monday that would have asked voters to redraw the state's electoral maps for the 2028 election to give Democrats an advantage in seven of eight congressional districts.

For now, the two unanimous rulings knock Colorado out of the nationwide partisan redistricting wars kicked off by President Donald Trump as Republican- and Democratic-led states have jockeyed for an advantage by adopting new congressional maps.

The state Supreme Court concluded that the ballot measures violated the state's requirement that ballot proposals encompass only a single subject, rejecting claims by proponents that the

proposals "point in the same direction."

Three of the rejected ballot measures were backed by Democrats seeking to grow their congressional power in the state, while two more were backed by conservatives with similar aims for Republican candidates.

"Changing long-settled law by modifying the timing, frequency, criteria, and entity responsible for congressional redistricting represents a significant change beyond the proponents' stated central purposes (of) ... congressional redistricting by adopting a new temporary map," Chief Justice Monica Márquez wrote in one of the opinions.

Democrats and Republicans currently have a 4-4 split in representation in Colorado's U.S. House districts, with one of those considered a swing district.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Confederate flag fuels controversy at 'State Fair'

NC RALEIGH — Despite North Carolina announcing the state would not participate in the Great American State Fair in D.C. this summer, private organizations and businesses stepped up to fund and design a booth for North Carolina at the 16-day celebration of America's 250th birthday after all.

When the fair opened last week, images of said booth began circulating on social media. Some were shocked by what they saw.

Multiple TV monitors inside the booth featured a split-screen view featuring part of the North Carolina state flag on the left, and the notorious X-shape of the Confederate battle flag on the right. The Confederate flag has never been an element in the flag of North Carolina, even during the Civil War.

Now, that controversial imagery is removed from the booth, according to volunteer organizer Lorie Khatod, a strategic consultant.

Mt. Olive Pickles, one of the businesses that chose to sponsor the booth, announced on social media it would be withdrawing its support in light of the controversy.

1 dead, 1 injured after separate alligator attacks

FL ORLANDO — Two people were bitten, one killed, in separate alligator attacks in Central Florida over the weekend, according to a news release from the Florida Fish and Wildlife and Conservation Commission.

On Sunday, the Seminole

County Sheriff's Office and the FWC responded to calls about an alligator bite at the Econlockhatchee River near the Barr Street Trailhead in the Little Big Econ State Forest, FWC said.

Through their investigation, FWC learned that a woman was swimming with friends in the river when an alligator bit her, the release said.

She was taken to a nearby hospital where she died from her injuries, FWC said. Her identity was not released and the alligator was not found.

On Saturday, FWC responded to a call in Marion County about a child who was bitten on the hand by an alligator. The child was fishing from the shore at Nelson Fish Camp, the agency said.

The child was taken to a nearby hospital to be treated for their injuries, FWC said. An FWC law enforcement officer euthanized the 8-foot-7 alligator.

Mosquitoes carrying virus found in 3 counties

MN MINNEAPOLIS — Mosquitos carrying the West Nile virus have been detected in three Twin Cities metro counties and are the first samples of the insects carrying the disease to be found this year.

Mosquitos in Hennepin, Ramsey and Dakota counties tested positive for West Nile, which in mild cases can bring on a fever, headache and body aches, and occasionally a skin rash and swollen lymph glands. In the most severe cases, the illness can lead to death, though only 1 out of 150 people infected with West Nile develop a seri-

ous illness, the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District said.

Most people infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms. Symptoms usually start two to six days after being bitten by an infected mosquito, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.

West Nile is the most common mosquito-borne disease in the contiguous United States, according to the CDC.

Dog who escaped gator's jaws earns parade honor

NC SOUTHPORT — This time last year, veterinarians told Strike the Labrador retriever that he might never walk the same, let alone hunt ducks, let alone bounce balloons on his nose. This year, he's grand marshal of the Fourth of July parade.

On that day last June, an alligator snatched him off the banks of a Brunswick County pond and dragged him out 30 feet, pulling him under until his owner Bonner Herring dove in after the 10-foot reptile swinging a garden rake, pulling Strike to dry land.

Strike was resting near the edge of a pond in Brunswick County, situated on North Carolina's southeast corner, while Herring finished some chores.

"I heard Strike let out a yell and a giant splash at the same time and I was like, 'Dammit.' I just ran. I was running with everything I had."

Herring could see the beast tugging on his dog stretched 10 or 12 feet long, and by his best guess, it had wandered over from a neighboring golf course.

But when he swam out 30 feet and started thrashing, the beast

let go long enough to grab Strike and start swimming, with great effort, back to shore.

Strike took a deep puncture wound, having been tugged down by the gator's big jaws.

It took months of convalescent walks to overcome the limp, along with a steel plate and several screws in his leg. For a time, Herring had to carry Strike up stairs.

The Dog Mascot contest raised money for Southport's Fourth of July Festival, and though he saw stiff competition from a shih tzu, Strike brought in more than \$6,000 in popularity votes — taking first prize.

Health insurance rates could rise 13.7% in 2027

MD BALTIMORE — Maryland residents who buy health insurance through the Affordable Care Act marketplace could see higher premiums next year, with insurers requesting an average rate increase of 13.7% for 2027, according to filings submitted to the Maryland Insurance Administration.

The proposed increases would affect about 482,000 Marylanders enrolled in individual, non-Medicare supplemental and small-group health plans, according to the administration. The requested increases are not final and must be reviewed and approved by state insurance regulators before taking effect.

Health carriers cited rising health care costs, the loss of enhanced federal tax credits, and changes to federal marketplace rules as factors behind the proposed increases.

— From wire reports

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Paraguay defeats Germany in penalties

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — José Canale wasn't in the starting lineup in either of his previous two appearances for Paraguay in this World Cup.

He made his first start a memorable one.

Canale scored on the first sudden-death penalty kick, Orlando Gill made two key saves in the shootout and Paraguay beat Germany 4-3 on penalties Monday to earn the biggest upset of the 2026 World Cup.

It was a major triumph for the South American country of 7 million people that's surrounded by soccer giants like Argentina and Brazil. And it was the latest surprising exit by Germany, a four-time champion that has struggled at the World Cup since it last lifted the trophy in 2014.

"I think we deserved one more game and to be honest, considering everything that was said, everything we went through," Canale said. "What I want to highlight from our team is how united we are. ... Today was a game we really needed to show our true

colors."

Paraguayans celebrated in the streets of the capital, Asunción, screaming, jumping and hugging when the match ended. Some cried and dropped to their knees in disbelief, with the familiar beat of the team's song "Soy Albirrojo" reverberating through the crowd.

Paraguay became the first team to defeat Germany in a penalty shootout at the World Cup. The Germans missed three of six penalty tries, the last by Jonathan Tah, who blasted his attempt high over the crossbar in the first sudden-death round, setting up Canale for the winner. Tah's miss followed a save by German goalkeeper Manuel Neuer of Fabian Balbuena's attempt that would have won it for Paraguay.

Tah also thought he had the go-ahead goal in extra time. He headed in a corner kick by Nathaniel Brown in the 102nd minute, but officials concluded after a video review that Waldemar Anton has pushed Gill to the ground before the shot and the goal was disallowed.

The Round of 32 match ended 1-1 after extra time. Paraguay took the lead when Julio Enciso scored on a header late in the first half, but Kai Havertz equalized in the 52nd minute for Germany.

"We had to analyze every player, every detail. Thanks to that I was able to only miss two penalties," Gill said. "This is for all the people of Paraguay."

Paraguay, which entered the match ranked 41st by FIFA, became the deepest betting long shot to win a match in this World Cup. Germany came in as the 10th-ranked team in the world.

The Paraguayans will face the winner of Tuesday's match between France and Sweden in the Round of 16 on Saturday in Philadelphia.

Germany had won six of seven penalty shootouts in major tournaments, including six straight since losing to Czechoslovakia in the 1976 European Championship final.

In the only previous World Cup match between the teams, Germany beat Paraguay 1-0 in the round of 16 at the 2002 tour-

nament.

Paraguay had appeared in five previous knockout games but failed to score in each. It had advanced only once, winning on penalty kicks against Japan in the round of 16 at the 2010 tournament in South Africa. It fell that year to eventual champion Spain in the quarterfinals.

Monday was Germany's first knockout game since the 2014 final in Brazil, when the Germans beat Argentina 1-0. The Germans were eliminated in the group stage at the last two tournaments.

"We had very big plans for this World Cup. It's very difficult to disappoint again," Havertz said. "It was difficult to create chances and keep the pace."

Germany, whose 10 goals in the group stage was tied for the most of any team, struggled to find a way through Paraguay's 4-5-1 setup. The Germans had 78% of the possession in the first half.

Paraguay was without defender Omar Alderete, who left with an injury in the second half of its 0-0 draw against Australia. Canale started in his place.

Morocco's shootout win sends Dutch to earliest exit

Associated Press

GUADALUPE, Mexico — Ismael Saibari scored the decisive goal in a penalty shootout, and Morocco sent the Netherlands to its earliest World Cup exit, eliminating the Dutch 3-2 in penalties after a 1-1 draw Monday night.

With the shootout tied at 2-all after four rounds, Morocco goalkeeper Yassine Bounou made a strong save of Crysencio Summerville's attempt, batting it away with his left hand. Saibari then sent the winner into the low left corner as goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen went the other direction. The midfielder tore off his shirt and screamed with joy as he was mobbed by teammates.

Earlier in the shootout with Morocco trailing 1-0, Verbrug-

gen appeared to have stopped an attempt by Soufiane Rahimi, but the goalkeeper couldn't secure the ball and deflected it over the line with his leg.

"We give all the energy that we have on the field. Rahimi's goal could have not been a goal, but it went in thankfully," Morocco head coach Mohamed Ouahbi said.

The Netherlands had reached at least the Round of 16 in 11 previous World Cups, including a quarterfinal appearance four years ago in Qatar, when Morocco made a breakthrough run to become the first team from Africa to reach the semifinals. In this year's tournament, 32 teams reached the knockout stage for the first time.

Morocco moves on to face co-

host Canada in the Round of 16 on Saturday in Houston. The Atlas Lions previously beat Canada 2-1 in the group stage of the 2022 World Cup.

Morocco was on the front-foot for major stretches of the game Monday. The Netherlands instead focused on counterattacking.

"I think Morocco has gained everybody's respect now," said Ouahbi, who took over as head coach in March. "I saw (the Netherlands' style of play) as a form of respect."

Cody Gakpo scored in the 72nd minute for Netherlands. After the goal, which was assisted by Summerville, the Dutch bench ran onto the field to embrace the 27-year-old Gakpo, who broke down in tears. Gakpo

and his partner, Noa van der Bij, recently announced that they lost their unborn child.

Morocco's Issa Diop tied it in the 91st. Chemsdine Talbi sent a looping cross into the box from about 28 yards out and connected with Diop for a clean header that Verbruggen had no chance to stop. Neither team had a strong scoring opportunity in 30 minutes of extra time.

In the second half of extra time, Netherlands head coach Ronald Koeman used one of his substitutions to bring on Justin Kluivert. Kluivert was one of three Dutch players to miss his penalty.

It was the third consecutive time the Netherlands has been eliminated from the World Cup in a penalty shootout.

Martinelli's goal lifts Brazil over Japan

Associated Press

HOUSTON — With Brazil trailing for much of the game and with extra time looming, Gabriel Martinelli came through in a big way at the World Cup.

Martinelli entered the game as a second-half substitute and put an end to Japan's near-upset Monday, scoring the winning goal late in injury time to give five-time champion Brazil a 2-1 victory and a spot in the round of 16.

The result was a showcase of Brazil's Italian connections. Martinelli holds dual citizenship in Italy and Brazil, and the man who made the decision to change the team's makeup was Carlo Ancelotti, an Italian who is the first European to coach the South American country's national team.

"Above all else we wanted to freshen up the field because Martinelli has a lot of intensity as a player," Ancelotti said through a translator. "When he goes in the match he's always on his top game."

Brazil will next face either the Ivory Coast or Norway on Sunday in East Rutherford, N.J., in the round of 16.

"We can never be content with what we're doing," Ancelotti said. "We're doing a good job. We are performing. But you can never be content because we want to play better. We want to play at the highest level."

Casemiro had earlier equalized for Brazil on a header in the 56th minute off an assist from Gabriel Magalhães after just missing another chance two minutes earlier. The shot sailed just out of the reach of the outstretched hand of Japan goalkeeper Zion Suzuki and into the net.

Kaishu Sano stole a misplaced pass at midfield and took it down the field before a right-footed shot from above the half circle put Japan ahead in the 29th minute.

"There is not not making mistakes because nobody is perfect," Ancelotti said. "But you have to overcome it and you have to push it forward. The team did a good job of that in the second half."

Vinicius Júnior, who has scored four goals so far in this year's tournament, had a chance to put Brazil on top in the 58th minute but his shot from the left box was deflected by Suzuki and

went off the far post.

Casemiro left in the first minute of second-half stoppage time with what appeared to be a leg injury.

Brazil had two chances to even the score early in the second half before breaking through. On the first one, Suzuki blocked a header from Bruno Guimarães in the 52nd minute. Soon after, Casemiro's header bounced off a defender's head and Suzuki's face. Suzuki finished with four saves.

Brazil great Neymar didn't play Monday after making his first appearance for the team since 2023 in the last game against Scotland. He played only 14 minutes in that 3-0 win after missing the first two group matches at the World Cup with a right calf injury.

"I was seriously considering putting him on the pitch," Ancelotti said. "In the end, we did not need him."

Japan has never won a knockout match at the World Cup, going 0-4 in the round of 16 — including also taking the lead the last two times in 2018 and 2022 before losing.

The win was Brazil's 12th in

15 games against Japan. The teams have also played to two draws while Japan got its first win in the series in a friendly in Tokyo in October.

"The gap between us is closing now," Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu said through a translator. "Brazil is a top-tier team and we're definitely approaching that level."

Then he mentioned the loss in Qatar four years ago before adding: "We have to up our game."

This was a matchup between two countries with deep ties, with Brazil being home to about 2.7 million Japanese descendants, which is the largest Japanese population outside of Japan.

Those ties extend to soccer where Brazil superstar Zico moved to Japan in 1991 to play for Kashima Antlers and help build Japan's professional soccer network. He coached the Japan national team from 2002-06, leading the team to the World Cup in 2006.

That team lost to Brazil 4-1 in the only previous meeting between the teams at the World Cup.

Blazers trade with Grizzlies for former All-Star Morant

Associated Press

Ja Morant is headed to Portland, after the Trail Blazers and Memphis completed a trade Monday night that sees the Grizzlies starting anew and gives the two-time All-Star a chance to revive his career.

Portland sent forwards Jerami Grant and Kris Murray to the Grizzlies as part of the deal.

It's a big swing by the Trail Blazers and could suggest Portland — with new owner Tom Dundon, whose Carolina Hurricanes just won the Stanley Cup — might not be done making moves. Morant adds to a logjam at point guard right now for

Portland, with Jrue Holiday, Damian Lillard and Scoot Henderson also on the current roster.

Morant has averaged 22.4 points for his career but has played only 79 games over the last three seasons because of injuries and suspensions — including a 25-game banishment after he was seen on a livestream holding a gun while he was in the passenger seat of a vehicle. That came not long after an eight-game suspension for flashing a gun in a Denver-area nightclub, also captured on social media.

The suspensions, combined, cost Morant — who was Rookie

of the Year after being the No. 2 selection in the 2019 draft, as well as the league's Most Improved Player in 2021-22 when he appeared to be on a path toward superstardom — about \$9 million in lost salary. He said in April 2025 that he's made his peace with being a lightning rod for constant criticism.

"I'm kind of used to it," Morant said at that time. "I was pretty much a villain for two years now. Every little thing, if somebody can say something negative about me, it's going to be out there. So, yeah. I don't care no more."

Grant averaged 18.6 points

last season for Portland and will be joining his sixth team by going to Memphis. Murray averaged 5.8 points this past season for the Trail Blazers.

Morant's MIP-award year in 2021-22 saw Memphis win 56 games, tying a franchise record. That team was built around a young core four of Morant, Dillon Brooks, Jaren Jackson Jr. and Desmond Bane.

And now, they're all gone. Brooks played only one more season with the Grizzlies after that and has changed teams twice since, Bane went to Orlando last summer and Jackson was traded to Utah in February.

Suzuki, Cubs top Padres for another walk-off

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Seiya Suzuki hit a game-ending single off Mason Miller in the ninth inning, and the Chicago Cubs beat the San Diego Padres 3-2 on Monday night.

Dansby Swanson and Pete Crow-Armstrong started the decisive rally with a pair of singles off Jason Adam (2-2). Miller then came in and surrendered Alex Bregman's single to center, loading the bases.

Michael Busch followed with a fly ball to left, and Jase Bowen cut down Swanson when he attempted to score on the play. Suzuki then sent Bowen all the way back to the ivy-covered wall with a drive to left. Bowen tried to make a leaping catch, but was unable to haul it in.

It was Suzuki's second career game-ending hit and Chicago's major league-leading 10th walk-off win this season.

San Diego opened a 2-0 lead when Miguel Andújar scored on Xander Bogaerts' double in the fourth. The Cubs got one back on Michael Conforto's RBI single in the fourth, then Suzuki tied it at 2 with a sacrifice fly in the fifth.

White Sox 8, Orioles 2: Colson Montgomery hit a go-ahead double in the eighth inning, Jacob Gonzalez drove in three runs and visiting Chicago beat Baltimore.

With the game tied at 2, Sam Antonacci was hit by a pitch before Montgomery doubled him home. Randal Grichuk followed with a single to center field that scored Montgomery and gave the White Sox a 4-2 lead.

Kyle Teel and Antonacci capped the scoring by reaching home on an error by Orioles third baseman Blaze Alexander in the ninth. Alexander, who had one error in his first 67 games of the season, has four in his last five games.

Pirates 11, Phillies 7: Esmerlyn Valdez and Jared Triolo both hit home runs to help

visiting Pittsburgh escape an early five-run deficit, and Endy Rodriguez closed the deal with a three-run homer in the ninth for a win over Philadelphia.

The Phillies fought back with two runs in the eighth to cut the lead to one run, but Rodriguez homered on a two-out pitch off reliever Chase Shugart in the ninth. Mason Montgomery closed for the Pirates.

Philadelphia jumped on starter Braxton Ashcraft (8-3) for five runs. Trea Turner and Brandon Marsh each homered in the first inning, and Bryce Harper hit his 20th of the season in the third inning.

Blue Jays 2, Mets 1: George Springer capitalized on two miscues to circle the bases with a Little League homer, Trey Yesavage (4-3) pitched into the seventh inning and host Toronto beat bumbling New York, snapping a six-game losing streak.

Former Blue Jays infielder Bo Bichette played in Toronto as a visitor for the first time after signing with the Mets last winter. The sellout crowd of 41,634 gave Bichette a standing ovation before his first at-bat.

Bichette went 0-for-4 as New York (35-50) fell 15 games under .500 for the first time since 2018.

Brewers 5, Reds 3: Joey Ortiz had a two-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning to give host Milwaukee a comeback victory over Cincinnati.

Held to one hit through five innings by Nick Lodolo, the Brewers tied it against Chase Petty with two runs in the sixth and Brice Turang's solo homer, his 12th, in the seventh.

Aaron Ashby (11-1) tossed a scoreless eighth for his major league-leading 11th victory, and Trevor Megill finished with a perfect ninth for his 11th save in 13 opportunities.

Tigers 7, Yankees 3: Casey Mize (3-5) matched a career high with 10 strikeouts over seven innings and visiting De-

troit capitalized on shoddy defense by slumping New York in a victory.

Missing injured sluggers Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton, the Yankees lost their fifth straight and have been held to three hits or fewer in four consecutive games during a single season for the first time in franchise history.

Red Sox 6, Nationals 3: Wilson Contreras hit a three-run homer, Caleb Durbin added a home run of his own and host Boston beat Washington to extend its winning streak to a season-high five games.

Contreras opened the scoring for the Red Sox with his 18th homer of the year for a 3-1 lead before Durbin followed with a solo shot to left two batters later. Contreras had his night cut early, however, after being ejected in the third inning for mocking the ABS challenge helmet tap on a checked swing strikeout.

Rangers 6, Guardians 3: Cameron Cauley tripled in the seventh inning for his first hit in his major league debut before scoring the go-ahead run on a single by Nicky Lopez to help visiting Texas beat Cleveland for its fifth straight victory.

Justin Foscue followed with a two-out double that scored Lopez from first to make it 4-2. That chased Guardians rookie Parker Messick (7-5), who allowed four runs and eight hits in 6⅓ innings.

Twins 5, Astros 4: Royce Lewis and Victor Caratini hit back-to-back homers, Zebby Matthews (4-5) pitched seven innings of one-run ball and visiting Minnesota held off a late rally by Houston for a victory.

The Twins led 5-1 before Travis Adams gave up a two-run homer to Taylor Trammell with two outs in the ninth. Yoendrys Gómez entered and immediately served up Cam Smith's second home run of the game before retiring Joey Loperfido on

a grounder for his ninth save.

Marlins 10, Rockies 7: Griffin Conine hit his first home run since April 8, a three-run shot in the fifth off the third-deck facade in right field, as visiting Miami rallied for a win over Colorado.

Sandy Alcantara (9-4) went 5⅓ innings and surrendered five runs. The right-hander became the third pitcher in team history to finish 6-0 in a calendar month. The late José Fernández accomplished the feat in May 2016 and Chris Hammond in June 1993.

Mariners 6, Angels 2: Cole Young hit two home runs to back eight innings of two-run ball from George Kirby (7-7) as host Seattle came from behind to beat Los Angeles.

Dominic Canzone also went deep to help the Mariners (43-43) get back to .500 and stay a half-game behind first-place Texas in the AL West.

Diamondbacks 5, Giants 4: Geraldo Perdomo hit a three-run double, Ketel Marte and Nolan Arenado added solo homers and host Arizona stayed undefeated against San Francisco this season, holding on for a win.

Eduardo Rodriguez (7-2) gave up just one run on five hits in seven innings to continue one of the best seasons of his career. The veteran left-hander struck out one and lowered his ERA to 2.21 for the season.

Dodgers 9, Athletics 4: Shohei Ohtani hit a three-run homer to support Eric Lauer in his conventional return to the starting rotation as visiting Los Angeles beat the Athletics.

Lauer (4-5) allowed three runs and nine hits in six innings, seven days after pitching six hitless innings of bulk relief and getting the win against Minnesota. The left-hander struck out two and walked one in his sixth appearance for the Dodgers and fifth start since they acquired him from Toronto for cash on May 17.