

## In address, Biden vows to halt Russia

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Addressing a concerned nation and anxious world, President Joe Biden vowed in his first State of the Union address Tuesday night to check Russian aggression in Ukraine, tame soaring U.S. inflation and deal with the fading but still dangerous coronavirus.

Biden declared that he and all members of Congress, whatever their political differences, are joined “with an unwavering resolve that freedom will always triumph over tyranny.” He asked lawmakers crowding the House chamber to stand and salute the Ukrainians as he began his speech. They stood and cheered.

It was a notable show of unity after a long year of bitter acrimony between Biden’s Democratic coalition and the Republican opposition.

Biden’s 62-minute speech, which was split between attention to war abroad and worries at home — reflected the same balancing act he now faces in his presidency. He must marshal allied resolve against Russia’s aggression while tending to inflation, COVID-19 fatigue and sagging approval ratings heading into the midterm elections.

Aiming to build on momentum from the speech, Biden will head to Wisconsin on Wednesday in an effort to show Americans that his domestic agenda is working. His vice president and Cabinet members will fan out around the country to amplify the message.

Biden heads again to an old bridge set to be repaired — increasingly a symbol for his administration, tangible evidence of the nation that he’s working to update. This time, it’s a wrought-iron bridge that connects Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis., across the St. Louis Bay.

The bridge will be replaced using funds from the massive infrastructure plan signed into law last year, a signature piece of bipartisan legislation and proof — Biden says — that the GOP and Democrats can still work together.

In Tuesday’s speech, Biden highlighted the bravery of Ukrainian defenders and a newly reinvigorated Western alliance that has worked to rearm the Ukrainian military and cripple Russia’s economy through sanctions. He acknowledged costs to the American economy as well, but warned ominously that without consequences, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s aggression wouldn’t

be contained to Ukraine.

“Throughout our history, we’ve learned this lesson — when dictators do not pay a price for their aggression, they cause more chaos,” Biden said. “They keep moving. And the costs and threats to America and the world keep rising.”

Biden announced that the United States is following Canada and the European Union in banning Russian planes from its airspace in retaliation for the invasion of Ukraine. He also said the Justice Department was launching a task force to go after Russian oligarchs, whom he called “corrupt leaders who have bilked billions of dollars off this violent regime.”

Biden pivoted in his speech from the troubles abroad to those at home. Even before the Russian invasion sent energy costs skyrocketing, prices for American families had been rising, and the COVID-19 pandemic continues to hurt families and the country’s economy.

Biden outlined plans to address inflation by reinvesting in American manufacturing capacity, speeding supply chains and reducing the burden of child care and elder care on workers.

## Most of world sides against Moscow as attacks rage

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Most of the world lined up against Moscow in the United Nations on Wednesday to demand it withdraw from Ukraine, as invading Russian forces renewed their bombardment of the country’s second-biggest city, menaced its capital and besieged its strategic ports.

Russia reported its military casualties for the first time since the invasion began last week, saying nearly 500 of its troops had been killed and almost 1,600 wounded. Ukraine insisted Russia’s losses were far higher but did not immediately disclose its own.

Envoys from Ukraine and Russia are expected to meet Thursday in Belarus for a second round of talks aimed at ending the fighting. But there appeared to be little common ground between the two sides.

The U.N. General Assembly voted to de-

mand that Russia stop its offensive and immediately withdraw all troops, with world powers and tiny island states alike condemning Moscow. The vote was 141 to 5, with 35 abstentions.

Assembly resolutions aren’t legally binding but can have influence as a reflection of international opinion.

The vote came after the 193-member assembly convened its first emergency session since 1997. Countries that spoke up for Russia included Belarus, Cuba, North Korea and Syria.

Meanwhile, Russia pounded Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-largest city with about 1.5 million people, with another round of aerial attacks that shattered buildings and lit up the skyline with balls of fire. At least 21 people were killed and 112 injured over the past day, said Oleg Sinehubov, head of the Khar-

kiv regional administration.

Several Russian planes were shot down over Kharkiv, according to Oleksiy Arestovich, a top adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Russian attacks, many with missiles, blew the roof off Kharkiv’s five-story regional police building and set the top floor on fire, and also hit the intelligence headquarters and a university building, according to officials and videos and photos released by Ukraine’s State Emergency Service. Officials said residential buildings were also hit, but gave no details.

Ukraine found itself under threat on other fronts as well: A huge, 40-mile-long column of Russian tanks and other military vehicles stood outside Kyiv, the capital, and Russian invaders pressed their assault on the strategic port cities of Kherson and Mariupol.

# Lawmakers call for quick \$6.4B Ukraine aid

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Congressional lawmakers on Tuesday called for the immediate passage of a multibillion-dollar emergency spending package to aid Ukraine, and warned time was running out to deliver security and humanitarian assistance as Russian forces closed in on the country's capital city of Kyiv.

Frustrated by plans to fold the aid to Ukraine into a larger government funding bill next week, Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., urged his fellow lawmakers to move faster on the request from

the White House to send at least \$6.4 billion to the war-torn country.

"What I've heard is that we're going to wait a week and deal with it," Lamborn said during a House Armed Services Committee hearing about U.S. national security objectives. "Aren't there civilians who are going to be dying in Ukraine? Aren't there soldiers who are taking up arms who are going to die? Isn't there property that's going to be destroyed? Isn't there going to be hunger in Ukraine? Why in the world can we wait a week to deal with this?"

During the hearing Tuesday, Lamborn pressed Mara Karlin, the assistant secretary of defense for strategy, plans and capabilities, to help push other lawmakers into swift action on the bill.

"We could have passed this last night on a voice vote," he said. "It's wrong for us to wait a week to do this. Do you have any influence? Can you talk to anybody and say, 'Let's bring this up today?' Let's get this going. There are people dying in Ukraine right now. There's a 40-mile convoy of Russian tanks and armor going to Kyiv."

Karlin said officials at the State and Defense departments are moving quickly to deliver supplies and support to Ukraine, including \$350 million in ammunition, Javelin anti-tank missiles, Stinger air-defense systems and other emergency military aid that the White House authorized last weekend.

The emergency spending package for Ukraine awaiting congressional approval would provide \$3.5 billion to the Pentagon and \$2.9 billion to the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development for humanitarian assistance.

## 80% of Russian forces now in Ukraine despite supply issues

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Roughly 80% of the more than 170,000 troops Russia had surrounding Ukraine for months before invading are now inside the country, though the Ukrainian resistance and supply issues have slowed their advance, a senior U.S. defense official said Tuesday.

Russian forces advancing toward Ukraine's capital of Kyiv "has made no appreciable movement" since Monday when they were approximately 15.5 miles from the center of the city, said the official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Ukrainian resistance and Russian supply issues with fuel have been slowing movement for days, though the official said the United States is now "picking up signs that [Russia is] having problems feeding their troops."

"Not only are they running out of gas, but they are running out of food," the official told reporters at the Pentagon.

The U.S. also believes Russia has exhibited a certain "risk aver-

sion" for its troops, the official said, noting Russia is "not necessarily willing to take high risks with their own aircraft and their own pilots" or their ground forces.

The U.S. has seen significant numbers of Russian troops — some of whom are Russian draftees — surrendering in Ukraine "sometimes without a fight," the official said. "A lot of these [Russian] soldiers are conscripts [who have] never been in combat before. Some of them, we believe, weren't even told they were going to be in combat."

The pause Tuesday toward Kyiv could partially be deliberate, however, as Russian troops "are possibly regrouping, rethinking and reevaluating" their approach, the official said.

"We don't know exactly why [Russia is] having the logistics and sustainment problems," the official said. "Was it a failure of planning and pre-positioning or has it been a failure in the execution? There could be lots of reasons for this, not to mention the [Ukrainian] resistance."

## Russians face further sports sanctions, not at Paralympics

*Associated Press*

DÜSSELDORF, Germany — With the exception of the upcoming Paralympics, Russian athletes were restricted from competing in more sporting events around the world on Wednesday.

Sports including biathlon and table tennis were among those to join more than a dozen other Olympic sports in excluding competitors from Russia and Belarus because of the invasion of Ukraine. The International Paralympic Committee, however, said Russians and Belarusians would be able to compete in Beijing as "neutral athletes" without national symbols.

Blanket bans have been imposed in soccer, track, basketball and hockey, among other sports, following an appeal from the International Olympic Committee to exclude Russians and Belarusians from international events.

The IOC, however, left open the possibility of allowing them to compete as neutral athletes if expulsion was not possible because of short notice.

The Winter Paralympics open Friday and numerous Russian athletes are already in the Chinese capital. The IPC has said it is working to get the Ukrainian team there, too.

Other sports bodies that have so far let Russians and Belarusians keep competing as neutral athletes include FINA, which governs swimming and other aquatic sports, and the federations for boxing, gymnastics, fencing and judo.

The governing body for British motorsports on Wednesday banned Russians from competing at events in the country, throwing into doubt Formula One driver Nikita Mazepin's ability to race in the British Grand Prix in July.

The sport's international governing body, known as FIA, had said Tuesday that Russian drivers like Mazepin can still compete, but a block on having cars in national colors would stop his team, Haas, from bringing back the Russian flag-stripe livery it removed during last week's testing.

# Hawaii objects to Navy role in defueling

By **WYATT OLSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

**FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii** — The Navy is out of compliance with a state emergency order to drain fuel from its Red Hill facility because the firm contracted to oversee the work is not free of Navy influence, the Hawaii Department of Health said Monday.

“It is critical that the work to defuel Red Hill is done safely and that the third-party contractor hired to oversee that work will operate in the interests of the people and environment of Hawaii,” Kathleen Ho, the health department’s deputy director of environmental health, said in a news release.

The Health Department issued the emergency order on Dec. 6 in the wake of widespread petroleum contamination found in the Navy’s water distribution system used by more than two dozen military housing communities on and near Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The Navy chose Simpson Gumpertz & Heger, a privately

held firm based in Waltham, Mass., to drain the fuel tanks. The Health Department in a letter to the Navy and Simpson Gumpertz on Friday contested the parameters of the contracting relationship between the service and firm.

The Navy notified the state that it only considered “engineering firms with limited to no Navy contracts,” the Health Department letter states.

“While the Navy’s effort to engage a contractor with little or no prior connection to the Navy is critical to preserve the contractor’s independence, this independence can only be maintained if that contractor remains free from overriding direction and control by the Navy,” the letter states.

The department is primarily concerned that the contractor’s work will be solely based on information provided by the Navy and that state health officials will not be included in discussions and site visits, according to the letter.

The Navy began complying with most of the provisions of the order, but contested the mandate to drain all fuel from the vast, underground storage facility built during World War II. It now holds roughly 150 million gallons of fuel.

The Navy will “work cooperatively” with the Hawaii Health Department to address its concerns over contracting so that the assessment can proceed, Rear Adm. Charlie Brown, the Navy’s chief of information, said in a statement Tuesday.

“The Navy is focused on ensuring the safety and health of those impacted from the November 2021 contamination,” he said. “The Navy continues to take proactive measures that will position it to make informed and environmentally-protective longer-term decisions.”

Under the emergency order finalized on Jan. 3, the Navy was required to “submit a workplan and implementation schedule, prepared by a qualified independent third party approved by

the Department to assess the facility operations and system integrity to safely defuel the Bulk Fuel Storage Tanks.”

The Health Department laid out its objections to the Navy contract in its letter.

“The contract language does not describe any structure or protections necessary to establish the independence of the contractor,” the letter states.

The Health Department objected to “frequent close oversight by the Navy” of the contracted work.

“For example: the proposed evaluation will only be based on information provided by the Navy, the DOH is not included in any discussions or site visits to ensure that our concerns will be addressed and the number of opportunities (weekly meetings) that the Navy will have to provide comment on the progress or findings from the work being performed suggests the Navy will have a great deal of influence over the work in progress,” the letter said.

## Coast Guard cutter’s southerly sail said to be record-breaker

By **PHILLIP WALTER**  
**WELLMAN**  
*Stars and Stripes*

A Coast Guard icebreaker is laying claim to a world record, with crew members saying they sailed a little farther south than anyone else before them.

On Friday, the USCGC Polar Star reached a southern latitude of 78 degrees, 44 minutes and 1.32 seconds in Antarctica’s Bay of Whales, according to a Coast Guard statement Tuesday.

The crew of the Polar Star is working with Guinness World Records to get official confirmation of the achievement, the statement said, without stipulating how long the process would take.

The current mark was set in 2017, when the Russian expedi-

tion vessel Spirit of Enderby reached a latitude of 78 degrees, 44 minutes. A second of latitude equals 101 feet. The Spirit of Enderby is also sometimes referred to as the Professor Khromov.

The purported new world record was made possible because of a gradual melting of the Ross Ice Shelf. The Polar Star came within 500 yards of the shelf during its voyage, the Coast Guard statement said. The ship’s crew of about 160 sailed in waters that were previously part of the ice shelf and therefore were not navigable, the Coast Guard said.

The Polar Star, the United States’ only active heavy icebreaker, arrived in Antarctica last month. It was there to support a mission to resupply American scientists doing research.

## Sea trials done, USS Ford to start training, exercise

(Newport News, Va.) *Daily Press*

The carrier USS Gerald R. Ford has completed sea trials that tested recently completed modernization and maintenance work done at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia.

The milestone kicks off a period of training and intensive exercise to prepare the Navy’s newest aircraft carrier for deployment. That deployment is scheduled for the fall.

The Ford went into the yard in September, after completing shock trials. The last such tests with a carrier were on USS Theodore Roosevelt in 1987.

“Ford required only 20% of the repair work we saw with TR,” said Rear Adm. James P. Downey, program executive of-

ficer for aircraft carriers.

A key design change on Ford class carriers, including reconfigured command and control spaces, also sped modernization work at the yard, Downey said.

“Historically, about 40% of modernization work on Nimitz-class carriers goes into rip out, which involves cutting and welding,” he said. “The Navy specifically designed Ford with a flexible infrastructure, so you can build in new capabilities.”

In the months ahead, Ford will embark its air wing and begin system qualification tests, flight deck certification, three phases of air warfare training and evaluation of its combat systems readiness.

# Texas primary sets up race for governor

*Associated Press*

AUSTIN, Texas — Republican Gov. Greg Abbott will face Democrat Beto O'Rourke after voters in Texas opened what could be a lengthy, bruising primary season poised to reshape political power from state capitals to Washington.

Both easily won their party's nomination for governor Tuesday. Abbott is now in a commanding position as he seeks a third term, beginning his run with more than \$50 million and campaigning on a strongly conservative agenda in America's largest Republican state. That leaves O'Rourke facing an uphill effort to recapture the magic of his 2018 Senate campaign, when he nearly ousted Ted Cruz.

"This group of people, and then some, are going to make me the first Democrat to be governor of the state of Texas since 1994," O'Rourke told supporters in Fort Worth, where in 2018 he flipped Texas' largest red

county. "This is on us. This is on all of us." Abbott said, "Republicans sent a message."

"They want to keep Texas on the extraordinary path of opportunity that we have provided over the past eight years," his campaign said in a statement.

The GOP primary for state attorney general was more competitive. Former President Donald Trump's endorsement wasn't enough to prevent incumbent Ken Paxton from being forced into a May runoff. He'll face Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, the nephew of one president and grandson of another, after neither captured a majority of the votes cast. While Paxton won more votes than Bush on Tuesday, his failure to win outright could raise questions about the power of Trump's endorsement as he seeks to reshape the party in his image in other primaries later this year.

Democrats faced challenges of their own.

Nine-term U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar was trying to avoid becoming the first Democratic member of Congress to lose a primary this year. He will instead head into a runoff against progressive Jessica Cisneros.

The primary season, which picks up speed in the summer, determines which candidates from each party advance to the fall campaign. The midterms will ultimately serve as a referendum on the first half of President Joe Biden's administration, which has been dominated by a pandemic that has proven unpredictable, along with rising inflation and a series of foreign policy crises. The GOP, meanwhile, is grappling with its future as many candidates seeking to emerge from primaries, including a sizable number in Texas, tie themselves to Trump and his lie that the 2020 election was stolen.

## Mullen touts peace and stability across Taiwan Strait

*Associated Press*

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait is "not just a U.S. interest, but also a global one," former Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen said Wednesday during a visit to Taiwan that comes amid the backdrop of Russia's war against Ukraine.

The Ukraine conflict has drawn some parallels to China's threat to use force to annex Taiwan, a self-governing island democracy it considers its own territory.

China has sought to diplomatically isolate President Tsai Ing-wen's administration, sent military aircraft into the island's buffer zone and held threatening exercises nearby. Mullen said that peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region have "never been more important."

"We come to Taiwan at a very difficult

and critical moment in world history. As President [Joe] Biden has said, democracy is facing sustained and alarming challenges, most recently in Ukraine," he said in remarks to Tsai. "Now more than ever, democracy needs champions."

Taiwan and mainland China are separated by the 100 mile-wide Taiwan Strait, and any Chinese attempt to attack or invade would entail considerable risk, along with the possibility of involving the U.S. and other regional powers in the conflict.

The U.S. provides Taiwan with defensive arms and is legally bound to ensure the island can defend itself and treat all threats to it as matters of "grave concern."

Mullen said the visit by his delegation "reflects the bipartisan nature of support for the United States' strong partnership with Taiwan."

In her remarks, Tsai emphasized that Taiwan would continue to bolster its defenses against China and said the resistance of the Ukrainian people was an inspiration.

"As a member of the international community, Taiwan not only expresses severe condemnation, but also participates in international sanctions against Russia and initiates humanitarian assistance to Ukraine," she said. "Now is the time for democracies in the world to unite, and Taiwan cannot be absent."

Separately, former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo arrived in Taiwan Wednesday evening and was met by the Foreign Ministry's chief of North American affairs. Pompeo, who earlier led the CIA, will also meet with Tsai on Thursday and address a forum, according to the Foreign Ministry.

## Cargo ship with luxury cars sinks after weeks on fire

*The Washington Post*

A two-week trans-Atlantic saga ended Tuesday with a massive ship — and thousands of luxury cars aboard — sinking about 250 miles off a Portuguese archipelago after catching fire.

Despite efforts to salvage what remained of the *Felicity Ace*, the ship and its nearly

4,000-vehicle cargo went down near the Azores Islands about 9 a.m. local time Tuesday, the Portuguese navy said in a statement.

"This morning, during the towing process, which had begun on Feb. 24, the ship *Felicity Ace* lost stability and sank some 25 nautical miles outside of the limits of Portu-

gal's exclusive economic zone, in an area with a depth of about [9,842 feet]," the navy wrote in Portuguese.

The 650-foot-long vessel, operated by Japanese shipping line Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL), was traveling from Germany to Rhode Island when a fire started in the ship on Feb. 16.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Police: Man smeared woman with feces**

**NY** NEW YORK — A man was arrested for smearing human feces on a woman inside a Bronx subway station, New York City police said in a news release.

The 43-year-old victim was sitting on a bench when a man approached her without warning and struck her in the face and the back of her head with feces, police said. Surveillance video released by police shows the assailant fleeing after the attack.

The 37-year-old suspected attacker was arrested on charges including forcible touching, menacing and harassment.

**Papers: Man hid in attic with tracking device**

**NH** SOMERSWORTH — A Pennsylvania man traveled to New Hampshire to meet a woman he met online, hid in her attic, photographed her while sleeping, stole some of her underwear and attempted to place a tracking device on her car, according to prosecutors.

Court documents indicate the man, who was arrested after police found him on the roof of the woman's home in February, met the victim on the paid subscription website OnlyFans.

Somersworth police said he broke into the woman's home, stole her house key and had a duplicate key made. He came and went from the home several times, once photographing the woman while asleep, and spent time in the attic where police found personal items including a tracking device he intended to place in the woman's vehicle, police said. He's charged with four

counts of burglary.

**State bill bans 'Carolina Squat' truck alteration**

**SC** COLUMBIA — A bill making it illegal to significantly raise the front end of a truck or other vehicle while lowering the back end passed the South Carolina Senate.

Senators voted 33-1 to ban what is commonly called the "Carolina Squat."

The bill bans having the front fender of a truck 4 inches or more above the rear fender. The first offense would be a \$100 fine, but by the third offense, the fine rises to \$300 and includes a one-year driver's license suspension.

The bill now heads to the House. If it becomes law, it wouldn't go into effect for six months, and police would write warning tickets for six months after that.

**Alcohol sales limited during spring break**

**FL** MIAMI BEACH — An alcohol ban designed to curb heavy late night drinking among spring breakers in Miami Beach will be in effect for two weeks in March, officials said.

Miami Beach City Commissioners voted to prohibit the sale and consumption of alcohol after 2 a.m. between March 7 and March 21 along the city's entertainment district, commonly referred to as South Beach, the Miami Herald reported. The current last call is 6 a.m. for alcohol sales throughout much of the city.

Miami Beach Mayor Dan Gelber and commissioners favoring the ban said it is necessary to free up police resources and ensure public safety during the height of

spring break.

**7 hurt when race car crashes into pit row**

**GA** COCHRAN — Seven people were hurt after a race car veered off the track at a Georgia speedway and crashed into a pit area, authorities said.

The wreck at the Cochran Motor Speedway happened last weekend as track crews were getting the track ready for an open practice, the track said in a news release.

Video from the track showed the car knocked down a wall before ending up in the pits.

All seven people were taken to area hospitals, and only two remained hospitalized earlier this week.

**Man charged for 'Bear' sculpture vandalism**

**IL** CHICAGO — A young man was charged for allegedly vandalizing a popular Chicago sculpture known as "The Bean" by spray-painting it with graffiti last week, police said.

The 18-year-old man was arrested and charged with criminal damage to public property under \$500 and battery, the Chicago Sun-Times reported.

Chicago police said the man was spraying graffiti onto the sculpture at Millennium Park when a 20-year-old man confronted him. The suspect ran from the scene but the man followed him before the suspect allegedly kicked the 20-year-old, police said.

The bean-shaped sculpture by artist Anish Kapoor is formally known as "Cloud Gate" and

weighs 110 tons.

**Police officer arrested for robbing casino**

**NV** LAS VEGAS — Las Vegas police said one of their own officers was arrested for attempting to rob a casino.

Authorities said they received a report about a robbery at a casino but that security had detained a suspect.

Responding officers identified the suspect as Caleb Rogers, 33, an officer who was off duty.

Rogers was booked into jail for burglary with a firearm, assault with a deadly weapon and two counts of robbery with a deadly weapon.

Authorities said Rogers was suspended without pay pending a criminal and an internal investigation.

**County to have devoted courthouse therapy dog**

**ME** HOULTON — An Aroostook County courthouse is poised to be the first in the state to have a dedicated therapy dog to provide emotional support for people dealing with traumatic experiences.

A yellow Labrador puppy named Holiday has begun up to two years of training with Purpose Pups, with a goal of becoming a calming presence in a stressful environment.

Aroostook County District Attorney Todd Collins told the Bangor Daily News that courthouse dogs can help traumatized children and victims of crime. They can also provide emotional support for law enforcement officers, first responders and others, too.

— From wire reports



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# MLB cancels season-opening series

Associated Press

JUPITER, Fla. — Major League Baseball's financial fight cost regular-season games for the first time in 27 years when often acrimonious talks to end a management lockout collapsed Tuesday and Commissioner Rob Manfred scrapped March 31 openers.

With owners and players unable to agree on a contract to replace the collective bargaining agreement that expired Dec. 1, Manfred canceled the first two series for each of the 30 teams, cutting each club's schedule from 162 games to likely 156 at most. A total of 91 games were erased.

"We exhausted every possibility of reaching an agreement before the cancellation of games," Manfred said during a news conference in the left-field corner of Roger Dean Stadium as fans outside the spring training home of the Miami Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals chanted: "We want baseball!"

Five miles away and 90 minutes later, the players' associ-

ation held its own news conference at a hotel, with union head Tony Clark and chief negotiator Bruce Meyer flanked by pitchers Max Scherzer and Andrew Miller — both members of the union's eight-man executive subcommittee — and Noah Syndergaard seated among about a dozen players in the audience.

"This has been making in the years, seeing things that have happened over the course specifically of this last CBA," Scherzer said, "things that have happened to different players in certain situations, that we absolutely have to have corrections."

Manfred vowed players will not receive salary or major league service for games missed, exacerbating already visceral anger of the roughly 1,200 players locked into a contest of will against 30 controlling owners. Manfred maintained daily interleague play made rescheduling impossible.

"To say they won't reschedule games if games are canceled or they won't pay players for those games that are canceled is solely

their position," Meyer said. "We would have a different position."

Talks that began last April went nowhere, and MLB locked out players Dec. 2 in the sport's first work stoppage since 1995. There were just six economic negotiating sessions over the next 2½ months in New York, but more intensive talks began Feb. 21 in Florida.

After 13 negotiating sessions over 16½ hours Monday, the sides recessed at 2:30 a.m. having made progress but still far apart on key economic issues.

Tone changed with the daylight, and the league sent the players what it termed a "best offer" on the ninth straight day of talks. The union held a Zoom call of 30-40 players and reacted angrily with a rejection. Both sides said they were leaving town, and there was no date scheduled for bargaining to resume.

At 5:07 p.m. of the lockout's 90th day, Manfred declared the opposite of "play ball!"

"Against that backdrop of growing revenues and record

profits for owners of the league," Clark said, "players seek and deserve nothing more than fundamental fairness."

Baseball's ninth work stoppage will be the fourth causing regular-season games to be canceled, leaving ballparks quiet from Fenway Park to Dodger Stadium.

Caught in the crossfire of the money fight, players said they would only discuss — but not commit to — possible on-field changes that Manfred says are needed, such as pitch clocks and the elimination of defensive shifts. An expanded postseason was another casualty — for now.

"Manfred gotta go," tweeted Chicago Cubs pitcher Marcus Stroman.

The bulk of fan ire on social media was aimed at Manfred, who was spotted practicing his golf swing between bargaining sessions by an Associated Press photographer Tuesday. Others were upset that Manfred was laughing and jovial with reporters at his news conference announcing the cancellation.

## Fans dismayed by labor dispute, loss of games

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Nathan Rueckert's personal finances are loosely tied to Major League Baseball, thanks to the 20 years or so he has spent building his company that produces handcrafted artwork catered to fans.

That's not why Tuesday was a very bad day.

At heart, Rueckert simply loves baseball. And like most baseball fans, he reacted with a mix of resignation, dismay, sadness and anger when MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred announced that opening day on March 31 was canceled because the players' union and management couldn't strike a labor deal in time to end a 90-day lockout.

"I just think of all the father-

son moments that are going to be missed," said Rueckert, who operates Baseball Seams Co. from his home in South Dakota. "All those opportunities that are robbed by a season that might not even exist. Especially with the state of the country and the world, baseball is such a great distraction.

"People want to go to the ballpark, have a hot dog and get rid of stress."

For fans, MLB's decision to cancel games only adds to their stress. And anger. Or, maybe most concerning — apathy.

It's the latest setback for a sport that's had arguably the worst luck of the biggest U.S. sports leagues — which include the NFL, NBA, NHL and MLB

— when it comes to COVID-19. The pandemic started in mid-March of 2020, immediately shutting down spring training less than three weeks before opening day and causing the season to be shortened by more than 100 games.

No other league lost a bigger chunk of its schedule.

There wasn't much that could be done about a pandemic. Labor squabbles over how to allocate money in a \$10 billion industry are a different story. Now, for the second time in three seasons, at least some regular-season games won't be played.

"The people need the games after getting through COVID-19 to lift our spirits and get back to

normal," said Toronto Blue Jays fan Bill Farina, who lives in Palm Harbor, Fla., and was watching a Senators-Lightning NHL game. "I am disappointed in baseball. They don't care about the fans, and fans are going to leave them behind.

"Why would they stay and support these guys just to get burned?"

St. Louis Cardinals fan Hunter Kniffin is among many who wonder if the game can survive a lengthy work stoppage. He was a teenager during the 1994-95 strike that wiped out a World Series and about 70 regular season games for each team.

"It could be a lot harder to bounce back this time," said Kniffin.

# Duke tops Pitt in Coach K's last road game

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Mike Krzyzewski is attempting to stay in the present, even as the days slip by and the going-away presents and “last” milestones keep piling up. Even as retirement looms whenever Duke’s season — and Krzyzewski’s remarkable coaching career — ends at some point over the next five weeks.

So Krzyzewski didn’t bother to tell his players he was walking onto the court as the visitor for the final time when the fourth-ranked Blue Devils faced Pittsburgh on Tuesday night. Doing so would make it about him, and that is the one thing Krzyzewski is trying to avoid above all else.

“I didn’t talk to them about ‘it’s my last road game, guys win it for me,’” Krzyzewski said. “I want it to be their moment.”

Freshman guard Trevor Keels scored a career-high 27 points, Paolo Banchemo added 21 and Duke clinched at least a share of its 13th Atlantic Coast Conference regular-season title under Krzyzewski with an 86-56 win over the Panthers.

The Blue Devils (26-4, 16-3) wasted little time making sure Krzyzewski would pick up his ACC-record 201st road win, taking a 13-point lead before the game was four minutes old and cruising.

**No. 2 Arizona 91, No. 16 Southern California 71:** Benedict Mathurin scored 19 points and Kerr Kriisa added 18 to help the visiting Wildcats wrap up their first Pac-12 Conference regular-season title in four seasons with a rout of the Trojans.

Justin Kier scored 12 points as Arizona

(26-3, 16-2) rebounded from a double-digit loss at Colorado over the weekend.

**TCU 74, No. 6 Kansas 64:** Mike Miles Jr. had 19 points and six assists as the host Horned Frogs solidified their once-shaky NCAA Tournament résumé with a second consecutive win over a top-10 team.

TCU (19-9, 8-8 Big 12) secured the game during a stretch when Miles made a strong move around KJ Adams Jr. for a layup, and then made a three-pointer to extend the lead to 59-49 with 7:44 left.

**No. 7 Kentucky 83, Mississippi 72:** Oscar Tshiebwe had 18 points and 15 rebounds, Sahvir Wheeler added 16 points and the Wildcats won their home finale over the Rebels.

TyTy Washington Jr. added 14 points off the bench for Kentucky (24-6, 13-4 Southeastern Conference), which shot 60% from the field. The Wildcats finished unbeaten at home.

**No. 10 Wisconsin 70, No. 8 Purdue 67:** Chucky Hepburn banked in a tiebreaking three-pointer with 1.5 seconds left and finished with a career-high 17 points as the host Badgers beat the Boilermakers and clinched a share of the Big Ten regular-season title.

Wisconsin (24-5, 15-4 Big Ten) has won five straight and now has at least a share of its 20th Big Ten regular-season title. A victory Sunday at home against Nebraska would give the Badgers their first outright conference title since 2015.

**No. 11 Villanova 76, No. 9 Providence 74:** Caleb Daniels scored 20 points, Eric

Dixon scored 15 and Collin Gillespie had 14 as the Wildcats beat the visiting Friars in a fantastic Big East matchup.

Justin Minaya buried a three-pointer with 32 seconds left that pulled Providence within 69-68. But Villanova (22-7, 15-4) survived the Friars’ press and sealed the win from the free-throw line.

**No. 13 Tennessee 75, Georgia 68:** Josiah-Jordan James scored a career-high 23 points, including back-to-back three-pointers that gave the Vols the lead early in the second half, and they overcame a slow start to defeat the host Bulldogs.

Kennedy Chandler had 16 points for Tennessee (22-7, 13-4 Southeastern Conference).

**No. 14 Houston 71, Cincinnati 53:** Fabian White Jr. had a career-high 28 points and 10 rebounds as Houston beat visiting Cincinnati and clinched the American Athletic Conference regular-season title.

Josh Carlton had 15 points and nine rebounds for the Cougars (25-4, 14-2 AAC).

**Nebraska 78, No. 23 Ohio State 70:** Bryce McGowens scored 26 points, Alonzo Verge Jr. had 13 points and 11 assists, and the Cornhuskers defeated the host Buckeyes.

Nebraska (9-21, 3-16 Big Ten) bested a ranked opponent for the first time under third-year coach Fred Hoiberg.

**Air Force 58, San Jose State 54:** Lucas Moerman recorded 10 points and 12 rebounds to help the host Falcons snap a nine-game losing streak.

A.J. Walker had 15 points for Air Force (11-17, 4-13 Mountain West Conference).

# Barnes, Trent rally to push Raptors past Nets

Associated Press

TORONTO — Scottie Barnes had 18 points and 10 rebounds, Gary Trent Jr. scored 24 and the Toronto Raptors rallied to beat Brooklyn 109-108 on Tuesday night for their second win over the struggling Nets in two days.

Pascal Siakam fouled out with 18 points and Malachi Flynn scored 15 for the Raptors, who were coming off a 133-97 victory in Brooklyn on Monday.

Thaddeus Young and Khem Birch each had 11 points for Toronto. Trent went 9-for-9 at the free-throw line.

James Johnson scored 19

points, Seth Curry had 18 and LaMarcus Aldridge added 16 for the Nets. Cam Thomas had 11 and Goran Dragic scored 10.

**Mavericks 109, Lakers 104:** Luka Doncic scored seven of his 25 points in the fourth quarter, Jalen Brunson added 22 points and Dallas rallied to win at Los Angeles.

Dorian Finney-Smith had 16 points and nine rebounds for the Mavericks, who hung on for their eighth win in 10 games after blowing a huge early lead.

Dallas trailed 100-94 with seven minutes to play before scoring 11 consecutive points in

a rally kicked off by Brunson’s fourth three-pointer. Doncic went 9-for-21 and looked less sharp than in most previous games during his monthlong scoring tear, but made enough big baskets to win it.

**Timberwolves 129, Warriors 114:** Karl-Anthony Towns had 39 points and nine rebounds for host Minnesota, which had its offense humming inside and out in a victory over sputtering Golden State in a potential playoff series preview.

**Celtics 107, Hawks 98:** Jayson Tatum had 33 points, eight rebounds and seven assists to

help Boston rally in the second half and beat visiting Atlanta.

Derrick White and Grant Williams each added 18 points off the bench. Marcus Smart finished with 16 points and four assists.

**Clippers 113, Rockets 100:** Ivica Zubac had 22 points and 12 rebounds, and Los Angeles pulled away in the third quarter and cruised to a win at Houston.

**Wizards 116, Pistons 113:** Kyle Kuzma scored 21 points and Thomas Bryant added 16, and Washington won its 14th straight home meeting with Detroit.

# Flames win for 12th time in 13 games

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Matthew Tkachuk scored 72 seconds into the game and the streaking Calgary Flames beat Minnesota 5-1 on Tuesday night for their second consecutive victory over the Wild.

Andrew Mangiapane, Elias Lindholm, Tyler Toffoli and Mikael Backlund also scored for the Flames, who have won 12 of 13. Johnny Gaudreau had two assists to add to his team-leading point total.

Jacob Markstrom made 32 saves for the win. He was also in net when Calgary routed Minnesota 7-3 at home on Saturday.

“We knew they were going to come out strong tonight,” Mangiapane said. “Obviously they’re a good team. We just had to worry about ourselves and be prepared and build off our game.”

**Red Wings 4, Hurricanes 3 (OT):** Lucas Raymond scored a power-play goal with eight seconds remaining in overtime and host Detroit ended Carolina’s five-game winning streak.

Raymond’s 16th goal came on a rebound of Tyler Bertuzzi’s shot. Carter Rowney, Michael Rasmussen and Dylan Larkin scored in regulation for the Red Wings. Alex Nedeljkovic made

27 saves.

Sebastian Aho, Jesper Fast and Jordan Staal scored for the Hurricanes. Antti Raanta stopped 38 shots.

**Golden Knights 3, Sharks 1:** Reilly Smith scored twice and host Vegas defeated San Jose to give coach Peter DeBoer his 500th career win.

The victory snapped a two-game skid for the Golden Knights. They are third in the Pacific Division with 64 points, one back of the Los Angeles Kings and six behind the front-running Calgary Flames.

Keegan Kolesar also scored for Vegas. Robin Lehner returned after missing five games and made 16 saves.

**Avalanche 5, Islanders 3:** Andre Burakovsky scored the third-period tiebreaker for host Colorado just 59 seconds after New York had a go-ahead goal reversed.

Burakovsky has scored in three consecutive games and also added an assist for the Avalanche, who have won four straight. Nathan MacKinnon, Gabriel Landeskog and Devon Toews also had goals for Colorado, and Darcy Kuemper made 28 saves.

Toews added two assists against his former team.

**Lightning 5, Senators 2:** Brayden Point had a goal and three assists, Steven Stamkos extended his goal streak to five games and host Tampa Bay rebounded from an early two-goal deficit to beat Ottawa.

Point has five goals and 11 points during a seven-game point streak, and has a goal in three straight games. Stamkos has scored six times and added a pair of assists during his run.

Nikita Kucherov, Corey Perry and Mikhail Sergachev also scored for the Lightning, who moved past Florida into first place in the Atlantic Division. Andrei Vasilevskiy made 25 saves.

**Ducks 4, Bruins 3:** Trevor Zegras scored a power-play goal with 21.6 seconds remaining to lift host Anaheim over Boston.

Rickard Rakell, Isac Lundestrom and Adam Henrique scored in the first period, and John Gibson made 31 saves for the Ducks, who had lost their last two games and five of the past seven in regulation.

Nick Foligno and Brandon Carlo each had a goal and an assist for the Bruins, who had their five-game winning streak halted. David Pastrnak also scored, and Linus Ullmark al-

lowed four goals on 28 shots.

**Oilers 3, Flyers 0:** Leon Draisaitl had a goal and two assists, Connor McDavid added a goal and an assist and Mikko Koskinen made 39 saves to lead Edmonton to a win at Philadelphia.

Kailer Yamamoto also scored for the Oilers, who improved to 17-0-0 when scoring first. Draisaitl and McDavid are tied for the NHL lead with 77 points.

**Blue Jackets 4, Devils 3:** Boone Jenner and Patrik Laine both scored and had an assist, Jake Christiansen got his first career goal and Columbus came from behind to beat visiting New Jersey.

Oliver Bjorkstrand added a goal and Jakub Voracek had two assists for the Blue Jackets, who beat the Devils at home for the seventh straight time dating to 2018. Elvis Merzlikins stopped 30 shots in his 19th win.

**Jets 8, Canadiens 4:** Mark Scheifele scored twice and added an assist to help host Winnipeg spoil a spirited Montreal comeback.

Pierre-Luc Dubois had a goal and two assists, and Paul Stastny, Andrew Copp, Adam Lowry, Nate Schmidt and Evgeny Svechnikov also scored for the Jets. Connor Hellebuyck made 31 saves.

## Russian athletes will be allowed to compete in Paralympics

Associated Press

A decision by the International Paralympic Committee on Wednesday to allow Russians and Belarusians to compete as “neutrals athletes” generated a heart-wrenching reply only hours after it was announced.

Russian athletes had already been slated to compete as RPC, short for Russian Paralympic Committee, as punishment for the state-sponsored doping scandal at the 2014 Sochi Olympics and a subsequent cover-up.

The IPC added more restrictions on the Russians when the

Paralympics open on Friday. Belarus was sanctioned for its part in aiding Russia with the invasion and war against Ukraine.

But there was no expulsion. And that hit a nerve.

At a news conference in Beijing hours after the decision, a reporter who said he worked for the Kyiv Post asked IPC president Andrew Parsons what he would say to the family of young biathlete Yevhen Malyshev.

Malyshev was killed this week in Ukraine, but the exact

circumstances of his death are unclear. The International Biathlon Union said Wednesday he “died this week serving in the Ukrainian military.”

The Kyiv Post reporter held up the young man’s photograph as he questioned Parsons.

“I cannot even start to imagine the pain that his family is feeling at the moment,” Parsons said. “I can only tell them that my deepest thoughts are with them. This is absolutely not fair. It is disgusting. It is against humanity.”

Parsons repeatedly defended

the decision not to expel Russian and Belarusian athletes, saying the rules of the IPC did not allow it. The IPC is based in Germany, and he said any expulsion “would be overturned in the German court of law.”

“The principle of political neutrality and the genuine belief in the transformative power of sport must be our North Star, our strength or perhaps our lifeboat,” Parsons added.

IPC spokesman Craig Spence acknowledged the distaste many feel for allowing Russians and Belarusians to compete.