

Definition of Ukraine victory uncertain

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — As the war in Ukraine grinds through its third month, the Biden administration has tried to maintain a set of public objectives that adapt to changes on the battlefield and stress NATO unity, while making it clear that Russia will lose, even as Ukraine decides what constitutes winning.

But the contours of a Russian loss remain as murky as a Ukrainian victory. And as the conflict heads into what is likely to be a protracted fight, the need to manage allied cooperation unity and public opinion here and abroad — balancing the probable with the possible — has become as much a priority as what is happening on the battlefield.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who said late last month that Ukraine “can win” the war against Russia, and the Biden administration would do “everything we can” to support that goal, sounded less bullish in congressional testimony last week.

“We hope that, at the end of this, that Ukraine will be a ... sovereign state with a functioning government that can protect its territory,” Austin told the Senate Appropriations Committee. Austin and other senior officials,

however, have declined to specify their idea of what that government will look like, and what territory it will include.

Whatever outcome it would eventually like to see, the administration has quickly walked back statements that went beyond the bounds of an end to the war with a sovereign Ukraine still in existence. When President Joe Biden said in late March that Russian President Vladimir Putin “cannot remain in power,” he and the White House rushed to explain it as a presidential expression of “moral outrage” rather than a policy of regime change in Moscow.

When Austin drew attention last month by saying the United States sought a “weakened” Russia, administration officials quickly added that the goal was specific to military conflict, and was to ensure Putin would think twice about invading another country.

Ukrainians themselves have been clear about their definition of winning. Their goal, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said repeatedly, is restoration of full territorial integrity, pushing the Russians back from recently claimed territory in the south and east, as well as ultimately from Crimea, annexed by Mos-

cow in 2014, and parts of the eastern Donbas region that was grabbed by Russia-backed Ukrainian separatists at the same time.

“I was elected as president of Ukraine. Not as president of mini-Ukraine, Zelenskyy said in remarks to the Chatham House think tank in London on Friday, “What matters is Ukraine’s victory,” he said, “and by Ukraine’s victory I mean something that belongs to us.”

Serious negotiations with Russia would only begin when Moscow pulls its troops back, or they are pushed from territory occupied since the invasion began Feb. 24. He also listed the return of refugees, Ukraine’s admission to the European Union and the prosecution of Russian military leaders for war crimes as necessary elements of any postwar landscape.

“I think we shouldn’t underestimate the view of the Ukrainian people, which is never to accept anything” a European diplomat said. Even if direct negotiations, now in abeyance, resume, “there is no way politically Zelenskyy can settle with the Russians” unless it includes the broad elements the Ukrainian president has articulated. The diplomat spoke on the condition of anonymity.

New Army, Air Force rule eases path for abortion leave

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

The Army and Air Force have removed a significant hurdle service women face in obtaining abortions, adopting new guidance just as the U.S. Supreme Court appears poised to overturn the landmark ruling that legalized the procedure nationwide.

Both services have removed commanders’ powers to deny leave to service members seeking abortions. In addition, soldiers and airmen now need to tell commanders only that they’re taking leave for a medical procedure.

It’s unclear how many servi-

cewomen have been denied leave to get an abortion since 1973, when the Supreme Court decided in *Roe v. Wade* that abortion is a constitutionally protected right.

But the policy change has been long sought, particularly for service women overseas or on deployment, who often faced extra time, financial and travel obstacles.

“Given the time-sensitive nature of the procedure, pregnancy termination will not require unit commander pre-approval,” the updated Army policy states. “Soldiers will keep their commander notified of any expected absences. ... (Soldiers) may

do this without providing the specifics of the underlying procedure.”

The Air Force revised its guidance in June to incorporate similar language. The change stems from an initiative to identify and address barriers to women’s careers in policies, processes and programs, said Laura Tingley, an Air Force spokeswoman.

The new guidance includes guaranteed convalescent leave for women who miscarried or delivered a stillborn child.

The Army’s policy change, announced late last month, likewise came in a directive regarding parenthood, pregnancy and

postpartum care.

“The intent is not to have someone go AWOL for two weeks and then show back up,” said Amy Kramer, the manpower and reserve affairs lead action officer for the policy.

Instead, it’s intended to impress upon commanders that they must grant immediate leave for someone seeking a pregnancy termination, she said.

But it also allows soldiers to bypass commanders. Research by reproductive rights groups has found that many military women who seek an abortion prefer to do so without notifying their chain of command.

Ship set to retire deployed to 6th Fleet

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — A Freedom-class littoral combat ship that was put on the chopping block in the Navy's most recent budget proposal has deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations, a theater where the vessels never have operated before.

USS *Sioux City*, one of nine such ships targeted for decommissioning in the Navy's 2023 budget, will support U.S. and NATO interests, 6th Fleet said Thursday in a statement.

The *Sioux City*'s deployment is an opportunity to highlight the "relevance of these ships, partic-

ularly their ability to relieve larger surface combatants" in key areas, said Cmdr. Scott Whitworth, *Sioux City*'s commanding officer.

The fleet didn't say when the *Sioux City*, commissioned in 2018, arrived in its area of responsibility, which includes Europe and Africa.

"The agility of littoral combat ships allows them to operate in both near-shore and open-ocean environments, enhancing our ability to provide security and stability across the European theater," Vice Adm. Gene Black, 6th Fleet commander, said in the statement.

A detachment of two MH-60S

Seahawk helicopters from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 22 supports the ship's deployment, the Navy said.

In proposing to decommission the *Sioux City* and eight similar vessels, the Navy said it was seeking to discontinue legacy programs and fund its highest priorities, according to the 2023 Budget Highlights Book.

The Navy also has proposed decommissioning 6th Fleet flagship USS *Mount Whitney* in 2026.

Three Freedom-class ships already were slated to be decommissioned in 2023, but the Navy proposed decommissioning six more, including the *Sioux City*.

Decommissioning the ships would save more than \$1.4 billion, according to Navy budget documents. The ships would be replaced with Constellation-class guided missile frigates, the Navy said.

The Navy also announced Thursday that USS *Arlington*, a San Antonio-class dock landing ship, is in Volos, Greece, for the Alexander the Great training exercise. The bilateral amphibious event will include elements of the Kearsarge Amphibious Readiness Group and the 22nd Marines Expeditionary Unit, both under the command of Task Force 61/2. It ends May 31, the Navy said.

More than 100 file claims over Red Hill water contamination

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Another 102 current and former residents of military housing in Hawaii have filed claims seeking compensation for maladies and hardships they say were caused by the Navy's petroleum-contaminated drinking water, their attorneys said Friday.

The 102 individuals filed claims Friday with the Navy's Office of the Judge Advocate, a prerequisite for filing any future lawsuits under the Federal Tort Claims Act in federal court, according to a news release by Just Well Law of Austin, Texas, and Hosoda Law Group of Honolulu, the firms representing them. Fifteen individuals, represented by the same firms, filed such claims in February. The filings launch a six-month administrative process during which the Navy and law firms will negotiate on compensation for the claims.

Thousands of residents of military housing communities on and near Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam were temporarily dis-

placed to area hotels for several months in the wake of petroleum contamination in the Navy's water distribution system discovered in late November.

Some residents, as well as pets, were sickened by the foul-smelling tap water, often accompanied by an oily sheen. The Navy traced the contamination to jet fuel that had leached into one of three wells used for its water system.

The source of the fuel is believed to be the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Facility, a vast underground storage facility built during World War II. Two fuel spills occurred last year leading up to the well contamination, one in May and another in November.

On March 7, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered the facility to be emptied and permanently closed, a process expected to take at least a year.

In a letter to the Office of the Judge Advocate on Friday, the attorneys wrote that the Navy was negligent in its failure to act after the May 6, 2021, leak "released thousands of gallons of jet fuel into the Red Hill well."

US Army Alaska set to be reflagged as 11th Airborne

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

U.S. Army Alaska will be redesignated the 11th Airborne Division with the aim of instilling a better defined "sense of identity" for soldiers as the service grapples with troop suicides in the state, the secretary of the Army told lawmakers Thursday.

U.S. Army Alaska has already instituted multiple initiatives aimed at lowering the risks of suicide or detecting those most vulnerable, even as soldiers there have been tasked with implementing the service's ambitious Arctic strategy.

"One of the things we've found that we think is contributing to what we've found in Alaska is that some soldiers there don't feel like they have a sense of identity or purpose around why they're stationed there," Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said during a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Soldiers under U.S. Army Alaska wear the "Tropic Lightning" patch of the Hawaii-based 25th

Infantry Division, but the mission sets for soldiers in each location are quite distinct. Hawaii soldiers train for fighting in humid, jungle terrain, while Alaska's soldiers are now being organized, equipped and trained as a cold-weather fighting force that can carry out the "Regaining Arctic Dominance" strategy issued by the Army in March 2021.

"We're not adding or subtracting force structure," Wormuth said. "It's really sort of more of a new sense of common identity for the soldiers up there."

Reflagging to the 11th Airborne Division taps into a "great history and heritage, and that means a lot to soldiers," Gen. James McConville, chief of staff of the Army, told the committee. The division traces its lineage to World War II, where its soldiers first saw combat in the Philippines. It has been inactivated since 1965.

The Army maintains two other airborne divisions, the 82nd at Fort Bragg, N.C., and the 101st at Fort Campbell, Ky., although the latter is a light infantry division.

'Warthogs' return to Europe for drills

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The "Warthogs" are back in Europe.

Ten Maryland Air National Guard A-10C Thunderbolt II jets arrived in Iceland on Thursday, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa said in a statement Friday.

Designed to destroy Soviet tanks during the Cold War, the iconic attack plane nicknamed for the guttural sound its cannon makes is expected to train over various parts of Europe.

They will support the U.S. Army's Swift Response, an exercise involving some 9,000 allied troops slated to last until May 20.

The training kicked off last week along with other exercises involving the U.S. military and its partners across Europe, with large concentrations of forces in the Baltic

and Black Sea regions. The drills are intended to showcase rapid mobilization.

Four of the A-10s were to head from Iceland to Norway on Friday while the other six were set to fly to North Macedonia on Saturday to support exercise operations, USAFE-AFAFRICA said.

The planes are also scheduled to make stops in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland to conduct what the Air Force calls agile combat employment. It entails the rapid dispersion and operation of aircraft from forward locations.

The Air Force did not say how long the A-10s, which are assigned to the 104th Fighter Squadron, are expected to remain in Europe.

The squadron was the second Air National Guard fighter unit to deploy to Europe last week.

Eight F-35 Lightning II jets from the Ver-

mont National Guard arrived last Monday at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, along with Guard personnel from the Green Mountain State to bolster NATO and support its air policing mission, USAFE-AFRICA announced last week.

The deployments coincide with Russia's ongoing war on Ukraine, which has prompted the United States to fortify NATO countries along the alliance's eastern borders.

A-10s were based in Europe for about 30 years during the Cold War. They had a permanent home at Spangdahlem for nearly 20 years before reduced defense funding and shifting priorities brought them stateside.

Warthogs have been the target of budget cuts over the years but have remained active in the Air Force fleet. They can fly lower and slower than other Air Force combat aircraft, a capability that allows them to take out tanks and other ground targets.

G-7 leaders mark VE Day stressing unity and support for Ukraine

Associated Press

LONDON — Leaders from the Group of Seven developed democracies pledged Sunday to phasing out or banning the import of Russian oil, as they met with Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, for online talks to stress their support and to display unity among Western allies on Victory in Europe Day, which marks Nazi Germany's surrender in 1945.

Cutting out Russian oil supplies "will hit hard at the main artery of (President Vladimir) Putin's economy and deny him the revenue he needs to fund his war," the G-7 countries, which include the U.S., Britain, Canada, Germany, France, Italy and Japan, said in a statement.

"We will ensure that we do so in a timely and orderly fashion, and in ways that provide time for the world to secure alternative supplies," they added.

Casting a look back at World War II, the leaders stressed unity in their resolve that Putin must not win.

"We owe it to the memory of all those who fought for freedom in the Second World War, to continue fighting for it today, for the people of Ukraine, Europe and the global community," they said.

The U.S. also announced new sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

They include cutting off Western advertising from Russia's three biggest television stations, banning U.S. accounting and consulting firms from providing services to any Russian, and piling additional restrictions on Russia's industrial sector, including cutting off Moscow from wood products, industrial engines, boilers, bulldozers and more.

The White House announced the new sanctions ahead of the May 9 Victory Day, when Russia traditionally celebrates Nazi Germany's defeat in 1945 with huge military parades.

The new round of U.S. sanctions will hit three of Russia's most popular television stations in Russia — Channel One Russia, Russia-1 and NTV — that the U.S. has said have been at the forefront of spreading misinformation about Russia's prosecution of the invasion.

The U.S. also said it imposed some 2,600 visa restrictions on Russian and Belarusian officials and issued a new visa restriction policy that applies to Russian military officials and authorities.

Ahead of the call, U.K. officials said Britain will provide an extra 1.3 billion pounds (\$1.6 billion) in military support to Ukraine to help the nation defend itself against Russian forces.

Patriotism, unease mix as Russia marks Victory Day

Associated Press

Red Soviet flags and orange-and-black striped military ribbons are on display in Russian cities. Neighborhoods are staging holiday concerts. Flowers are being laid by veterans' groups at monuments to the Great Patriotic War, as World War II is known in the country.

At first glance, preparations for Monday's celebration of Victory Day, marking the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945, seem to be the same as ever. But the mood is very different, because Russian troops are fighting and dying again. The pride and patriotism usually associated with Russia's most important holiday, marked by a huge parade of soldiers and military hardware through Red Square, is mixing with apprehension and unease over what this year's Victory Day may bring.

Some Russians fear that President Vladimir Putin will use it to declare that what the Kremlin has previously called a "special military operation" in Ukraine will now be a full-fledged war — bringing with it a broad mobilization of troops to bolster Russia's forces.

Asked Friday whether mobilization rumors could dampen the mood, Dmitry Peskov, a spokesman for President Vladimir Putin, said "nothing will cast a shadow" over "the sacred day, the most important day" for Russians.

Jill Biden pays surprise visit to Ukraine

Associated Press

UZHGOROD, Ukraine — Jill Biden made an unannounced visit to western Ukraine on Sunday, holding a surprise Mother's Day meeting with first lady Olena Zelenska to show U.S. support for the embattled nation as Russia presses its punishing war in the eastern regions.

Biden traveled under the cloak of secrecy, becoming the latest high-profile American to enter Ukraine during its 10-week-old conflict with Russia.

"I wanted to come on Mother's Day," the U.S. first lady told Zelenska. "I thought it was important to show the Ukrainian people that this war has to stop and this war has been brutal and that the people of the United

States stand with the people of Ukraine."

Biden spent about two hours in Ukraine, traveling by vehicle to the town of Uzhgorod, about a 10-minute drive from a Slovakian village that she toured on the border.

Zelenska thanked Biden for her "courageous act" and said, "We understand what it takes for the U.S. first lady to come here during a war when military actions are taking place every day, where the air sirens are happening every day — even today."

The two first ladies came together in a small classroom, sitting across a table from one another and greeting each other in front of reporters before they

met in private. Zelenska and her children have been at an undisclosed location for their safety.

The school where they met has been turned into transitional housing for Ukrainian migrants from elsewhere in the country.

The visit allowed Biden to conduct the kind of personal diplomacy that her husband would like to be doing himself.

President Joe Biden said during his visit to Poland in March that he was disappointed he could not visit Ukraine to see conditions "firsthand" but that he was not allowed, likely due to security reasons.

The White House said as recently as last week that the president "would love to visit", but

there were no plans for him to do so at this time.

The meeting came about after the two first ladies exchanged correspondence in recent weeks, according to U.S. officials who declined to provide further details because they were not authorized to discuss the ladies' private communications.

As she arrived at the school, Biden, who was wearing a Mother's Day corsage that was a gift from her husband, embraced Zelenska and presented her with a bouquet.

After their private meeting, the two joined a group of children who live at the school in making tissue-paper bears to give as Mother's Day gifts.

NYC subway shooting suspect indicted

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A federal grand jury has indicted a man suspected of shooting up a New York City subway train last month — an attack that wounded 10 people and rattled a city already experiencing a rise in violent crime.

The panel charged Frank James, 62, on Friday with committing a terrorist attack or other violence against a mass transportation

system and discharging a firearm during a violent crime. Both counts carry a maximum sentence of life in prison. The weapons count has a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence.

James was arrested on April 13, about 30 hours after authorities said he drove from Philadelphia and unleashed smoke bombs and dozens of bullets in a train full of morning commuters as it approached a Brooklyn station. The shooting victims ranged in age from

16 to 60; all were expected to survive.

Authorities said James' bank card, cell phone and a key to a van he had rented were found at the shooting scene. Police also said they found the handgun used in the shooting and traced it to James.

James is jailed without bail. An arraignment hasn't yet been scheduled, according to the U.S. attorney's office for New York's Eastern District.

Tribes credited for elevating vaccines in rural Ariz. areas

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Mary Francis had no qualms about being a poster child for COVID-19 vaccinations on the Navajo Nation, once a virus hot spot. The Navajo woman's face and words grace a digital flyer asking people on the Native American reservation to get vaccinated "to protect the shidine'e (my people)."

"I was happy to put the information out there and just building that awareness and in having folks feel comfortable enough, or curious enough, to read the material," said Fran-

cis, who lives in Page, Ariz., near the Utah border, and manages care packages and vaccine drives for a Navajo and Hopi relief fund.

In a pandemic that has seen sharp divides between urban and rural vaccination rates nationwide, Arizona is the only state where rural vaccine rates outpaced more populated counties, according to a recent report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Public health experts believe the trend was mainly fueled by a group that lost a disproportionate number of lives

to COVID-19: Native Americans.

Tribal communities were left more vulnerable to the virus because of underlying health issues like diabetes and heart disease, as well as multiple generations sharing a home. Cases and deaths piled on despite curfews, weekend lockdowns, mask mandates and business shutdowns. By April 2020, the Navajo Nation — which encompasses parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah — declared it had been hit harder by the coronavirus than any other tribe.

The devastating loss, partic-

ularly of elders, drove a push for vaccinations as an act of selflessness. Holly Van Lew, co-leader of a federal Indian Health Service task force rolling out vaccines nationwide, credits Navajo Nation officials with constantly emphasizing that message.

"It really comes from a different perspective. Instead of 'You should get your COVID-19 vaccines too,' (it's) 'We should all as community members protect each other,'" said Lew, a clinical pharmacist at the Phoenix Indian Medical Center.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Goodwill find turns out to be ancient Roman bust

TX SAN ANTONIO — A marble bust that a Texas woman bought for about \$35 from a Goodwill store is temporarily on display at a San Antonio museum after experts determined it was a centuries-old sculpture missing from Germany since World War II.

The bust, which art collector Laura Young found at Goodwill in 2018, once belonged in the collection of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, according to the San Antonio Museum of Art, which is temporarily displaying the piece until it is returned to Germany next year.

The ancient Roman bust dates to the first century B.C. or first century A.D. and historians believe it may depict a son of Pompey the Great, who was defeated in civil war by Julius Caesar, the museum said. The sculpture was last seen in Aschaffenburg, Germany, and experts believe a soldier took the sculpture and brought it to the United States, the museum said.

Ex-deputy accused of stealing wedding gifts

AZ CHANDLER — A retired sheriff's deputy posed as a guest at two Phoenix-area weddings to steal boxes of cards containing thousands of dollars, and is under investigation in a series of similar crimes, authorities said Friday.

Landon Earl Rankin, 54, was arrested in the thefts at private venues and was being held without bond, according to Chandler police and court and jail records.

According to police, the two

stolen boxes of wedding cards each contained between \$3,000 and \$6,000.

During their investigation of the two thefts, police learned of at least seven similar crimes in other Phoenix-area jurisdictions, said Sgt. Jason McClimans, a Chandler police spokesman. Rankin is now under investigation in those cases, and Chandler police have heard from "four or five" additional newlywed couples regarding possible additional thefts, McClimans said.

Poacher killed a bear, dumped it off bridge

ME LAGRANGE — Authorities in Maine said someone illegally killed a bear and dumped it off a bridge, and they're working with a nonprofit group to offer a reward to help find out who did it.

The Maine Warden Service received a complaint about the dead black bear in Lagrange. Their investigation found that the bear had been shot and dumped off the bridge.

Operation Game Thief, a private nonprofit that works with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to stop poaching, is offering a \$4,000 reward in the case.

Man indicted for forging deeds to steal property

NC WINSTON-SALEM — A Georgia man has been indicted on charges that he used the identities of seven North Carolina residents to forge deeds and have their property fraudulently transferred to him, officials said.

The Winston-Salem Journal reported Isaiah Robert Louise

Baskins Jr., of Macon, Ga., was indicted by a Forsyth County, N.C., grand jury for common law forgery, identity theft, and separate counts of accessing government computers to defraud and preparation to commit housebreaking. The indictments allege that between December 2018 and September 2019, Baskins used the names and addresses of six people and the Social Security card of another person to forge deeds that he presented to the register of deeds to transfer their property to him.

7 saved from sinking boat at US-Canada border

NY AKWESASNE — Seven people were rescued from a sinking boat carrying Indian citizens trying to enter the United States illegally in northern New York, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials said.

The rescue happened in Akwesasne near the Canadian border when a boat carrying seven people was seen taking on water in the Saint Regis River, CPB said in a news release.

Six of the people were citizens of India ranging from 19 to 21 years old, CPB said. They were arrested and charged with improper entry. The seventh, a U.S. citizen, was charged with smuggling.

Feds seek mega-mansion seizure in corruption case

CA LOS ANGELES — The federal government wants to seize a mega-mansion in an exclusive area of Los Angeles that it claims was purchased with millions in bribe money paid to the former

finance minister of Armenia and his sons, it was announced.

A complaint filed in federal court seeks the forfeiture of the 33,652-square-foot mansion in Holmby Hills.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice complaint, the home was purchased for \$14.4 million in 2011 by a trust on behalf of Gagik Khachatryan and his two sons, who are all facing criminal charges in Armenia.

The U.S. government contends that wealthy and influential businessman Sedrak Arustamyan, who also is charged in Armenia, paid Khachatryan and his family more than \$20 million in bribes in exchange for favorable tax treatment of his businesses and that some of that money went into buying the Holmby Hills estate.

2 semitrailers strike same viaduct hour apart

IL JOLIET — Two semitrailers crashed into the same railroad viaduct in Joliet an hour apart, police said.

Joliet officers responded to the viaduct over a street for a crash, WFLD-TV reported.

A semitrailer driven by a 59-year-old Plainfield man was northbound on North Scott Street in the right lane when the top of the truck struck the viaduct, causing the trailer to tip on its side, police said.

While officers were working that crash another semitrailer, driven by a 44-year-Crest Hill man, struck the same viaduct.

Neither driver was injured. Both were cited for failing to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

— From wire reports



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Longshot Rich Strike wins Kentucky Derby

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Anyone anticipating a return to normalcy in the Kentucky Derby got a dose of crazy Saturday when an 80-1 shot came charging up the rail to win at Churchill Downs.

With favorite Epicenter and Zandon engaged in a duel at the front, Rich Strike stole the show with the second-biggest upset in the Derby's 148-year history.

The chestnut colt beat 4-1 favorite Epicenter by three-quarter of a length. Zandon finished another three-quarters of a length back in third.

"I about fell down in the paddock when he hit the wire," winning trainer Eric Reed said. "I about passed out."

Rich Strike paid \$163.60 Only Donerail in 1913 had a higher payout of \$184.90.

"What a crazy Derby," said trainer Kenny McPeck, whose horses finished eighth and ninth.

Rich Strike wasn't even in the Derby until Friday when Hall of Fame trainer D. Wayne Lukas scratched Ethereal Road, making room for the chestnut colt who had just two previous wins in his career.

"We found out about 30 seconds before the deadline on Friday," owner Rick Dawson said. "It put us in the race and really we always felt if we just got in we've got a shot."

Rich Strike ran 1 1/4 miles in 2:02.61. After

taking a bite out of his much costlier competition, he playfully chomped on the pony guiding him to the winner's circle.

"I can't believe it after Epicenter's effort," said losing trainer Steve Asmussen, who fell to 0 for 24 in the Derby. "I got beat by the horse that just got in."

Jockey Sonny Leon and Rich Strike had just two horses beat in the early going. Leon eventually guided his mount between horses and to the inside rail. Rich Strike made a deft move around Messier in the stretch and went right back to the rail intent on picking off Epicenter and Zandon.

"When I was in the last 70 yards, I said, 'I think I got this race,'" Leon said.

Both Leon, from Venezuela, and Reed were in their first Derby. Reed endured a tragedy five years ago when he lost nearly two dozen horses in a barn fire at his training center in Lexington.

He briefly considered the fire might be a signal for him to leave the sport.

"People I hadn't seen, people I haven't talked to in years, my best friends were there in the morning to pick me up," Reed recalled. "It let me know there's so much good out there, and then I just decided I wasn't going to let it take me out."

Leon regularly rides on some of the country's smallest circuits, where the horse flesh is inexpensive and the purse money modest.

But he matched wits with such veteran riders as Joel Rosario, aboard Epicenter, and Mike Smith, aboard Messier.

Leon's rail ride was reminiscent of jockey Calvin Borel's stealth move aboard Mine That Bird in 2009. Mine That Bird sprang what was then the Derby's third-biggest upset, paying \$103.20 to win.

Reed had no argument with the bettors ignoring his colt, whose victory surely inspired little guys everywhere.

"Small trainer, small rider, small stable, he should have been 80-1," Reed said. "And so anybody that's in this business, lightning can strike."

Rich Strike was purchased by Dawson, who races as RED TR-Racing LLC, for \$30,000 last fall when the colt was entered in a low-level claiming race by his former owner.

Calumet Farm head Brad Kelley might be rueing that decision now. Calumet Farm has won a record eight Kentucky Derbies, but none since 1968, when Forward Pass was placed first via disqualification.

Rich Strike earned \$1.86 million for his first stakes victory. The colt lost to Zandon in his most recent start last month and was beaten by Epicenter in the John Battaglia Memorial in March.

Simplification finished fourth and Mo Donegal was fifth.

Heinen starts Pens' surge in defeat of Rangers

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Danton Heinen's first playoff goal in three years just past the midway point of the third period broke a tie to lift the Pittsburgh Penguins to a 7-4 victory over the New York Rangers on Saturday night to take a 2-1 lead in their first-round Eastern Conference series.

Pittsburgh blew a three-goal first-period lead but recovered behind the play of third-string goaltender Louis Domingue and Heinen, who jumped on a loose puck near the New York goal line and flicked a shot by Alexandar Georgiev 11:02 into the third.

Evan Rodrigues had two goals and assisted on another for the Penguins, who won despite any member of the top line of Sidney

Crosby, Jake Guentzel and Bryan Rust not recording a point until Guentzel's empty-netter with 2:14 to play sealed it. Jeff Carter also scored twice for the Penguins while Brock McGinn started the scoring on a wild night with his first goal of the playoffs.

Domingue made 32 saves and even recorded an assist in his second playoff start.

Avalanche 7, Predators 3: Gabriel Landeskog scored twice in the second period, and top-seeded Colorado took a commanding 3-0 lead in the first-round Western Conference series over host Nashville.

Landeskog also had two assists. Nazem Kadri and Devon Toews each added a goal and an assist, and Artturi Lehkonen and

Nathan MacKinnon scored a power-play goal apiece as the Avs went 4-for-5 on the man advantage to push the Predators to the brink of elimination. Cale Makar had three assists.

Capitals 6, Panthers 1: Ilya Samsonov rebounded after allowing an early goal to make 29 saves, and host Washington bounced back to take a 2-1 series lead against Presidents' Trophy-winning Florida.

Alex Ovechkin scored a power-play goal and assisted on another and the Capitals blew out the Panthers in Game 3. Chants of "Sammy! Sammy!" gave way to "Ovi! Ovi!" in the third period of the convincing victory.

T.J. Oshie deflected Ovechkin's shot for one power-play goal, and Marcus Johansson,

Trevor van Riemsdyk and Garnet Hathaway also scored for Washington, which shook off a 5-1 loss in Game 2 and an early deficit in Game 3.

Stars 4, Flames 2: Joe Pavelski scored twice and got the game-winner on the first power-play goal in the series as host Dallas took a 2-1 lead in the first-round Western Conference playoff series.

The Stars were 0 for 10 with an extra skater, though one of those power plays had been for only 4 seconds earlier in Game 3, before Pavelski's tiebreaking goal with 9:55 left made it 3-2.

Radek Faksa scored the first goal for Dallas, and Roope Hintz added an empty-net tally just before the final buzzer. Miro Heiskanen had two assists.

Astros nip Tigers, run win streak to 6

Associated Press

HOUSTON—Jose Altuve homered early, and Michael Brantley tripled in a two-run eighth to help the Houston Astros run their winning streak to a season-best six games with an 3-2 victory over the Detroit Tigers on Saturday.

The win was manager Dusty Baker's 2,004th, passing Bruce Bochy (2,003) for 11th on the all-time list. Baker became the 12th manager in MLB history and first Black man to reach 2,000 wins on Tuesday night.

"That's pretty cool," Baker said of passing Bochy, the former San Francisco Giants manager and a good friend. "It was going to come sooner or later. I'm glad it came sooner rather than later. Now I can quit keeping lineup cards."

The Astros trailed 2-1 in the eighth when Altuve singled with one out and scored on a triple to right field by Brantley to tie it. The Tigers intentionally walked Yordan Alvarez with two outs before Michael Fulmer (1-1) walked Yuli Gurriel to load the bases.

Another walk to Kyle Tucker scored Brantley to put Houston up 3-2.

"You're going to have these days," Fulmer said. "We're on a skid like this and everybody does their job except me. It's just tough. I tried to get back in the zone, tried to make adjustments. Obviously didn't make them."

Fulmer's performance ended a streak of 21 straight games without allowing a run dating to Sept. 5, 2021, which was the second-longest active streak in the majors.

Bryan Abreu (1-0) pitched a scoreless eighth for the win and closer Ryan Pressly threw a perfect ninth for his fourth save.

"He looked very sharp today ... we love saves with no drama," Baker said. "It's good for the heart and definitely good for the soul."

Miguel Cabrera doubled in the third inning to join Hank Aaron and Albert Pujols as the only players in MLB history to have at least 3,000 hits, 500 homers and 600 doubles in their careers. Cabrera, who got his 3,000th hit April 23, drove in two runs with that double to pass Frank Robinson (1,812) for 19th on the all-time RBIs list with 1,813.

Marlins 8, Padres 0: Joe Dunand, the nephew of Alex Rodriguez, homered on the third pitch he saw as a big leaguer and then doubled as visiting Miami ended a six-game losing streak with a win over San Diego.

Jorge Soler hit his first career grand slam and Pablo López pitched eight strong innings for the Marlins.

Braves 3, Brewers 2: Ronald Acuña Jr. hit a fifth-inning homer for the game's first run, Max Fried outpitched Corbin Burnes and host Atlanta held off Milwaukee.

Fried (4-2) allowed one run on four hits with one walk and eight strikeouts in seven innings to end the Brewers' four-game winning streak.

Acuña's homer off Burnes (1-2) was his second in two games as he continued to prove he has fully recovered from knee surgery.

Hunter Renfroe led off the seventh with his sixth homer.

Giants 13, Cardinals 7: Wilmer Flores hit a grand slam in the first inning and matched his career high with six RBIs as host San Francisco snapped a five-game losing streak with a win over St. Louis.

Mauricio Dubón and Darin Ruf also homered for the Giants.

Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina reached 1,000 career RBIs.

White Sox 3, Red Sox 1 (10): José Abreu hit a go-ahead double in the 10th after Chicago tied it an inning earlier, helping the visiting White Sox beat Boston for their fifth straight win.

Leury García had two singles and a game-tying sacrifice fly in the ninth for Chicago (13-13), which reached .500 for the first time since April 21.

Rockies 4, Diamondbacks 1: Yonathan Daza, José Iglesias and Connor Joe hit consecutive, two-out, run-scoring singles in the ninth inning to help visiting Colorado rally past Arizona.

Colorado trailed 1-0 entering the ninth and pieced together four runs off Diamondbacks closer Mark Melancon (0-3). C.J. Cron and Ryan McMahon led off the inning with singles before Melancon retired the next two batters. Daza, who entered the game as a pinch-hitter in the seventh, lined a ball up the middle to tie the game. Iglesias followed with a go-ahead single and Joe capped the rally with a single up the middle that sent home two runs.

Blue Jays 8, Guardians 3; Guardians 8, Blue Jays 2: Owen Miller delivered a two-run double and Franmil Reyes homered and had two RBIs, helping host Cleveland beat Toronto and earn a doubleheader split.

Miller's double was part of a three-run first. Reyes hit a solo shot in the third and singled home Amed Rosario in the fifth. The Guardians were playing in their MLB-high third doubleheader, all at Progressive Field.

In the opener, George Springer and Rai-

mel Tapia each drove in three runs in the first four innings against ace Shane Bieber.

Twins 1, Athletics 0: Jorge Polanco homered in the sixth inning and four Minnesota pitchers made it stand up, sending visiting Oakland to its eighth straight loss.

The Twins pitchers combined to strike out 15 while allowing just three hits.

Dodgers 7, Cubs 0; Dodgers 6, Cubs 2: Clayton Kershaw dominated over seven innings in the opener, Mookie Betts drove in five runs in the nightcap, and visiting Los Dodgers swept a doubleheader against Chicago.

Betts smacked a three-run double in the second inning of Game 2 against Keegan Thompson to cap a four-run rally, and he added a two-run homer in the ninth. The Dodgers' only other hit was a single in the ninth by Freddie Freeman. The NL Central leaders drew nine walks on the way to their 17th win in 22 games.

Kershaw (4-0) scattered five hits while striking out two and walking one.

Reds 9, Pirates 2; Pirates 8, Reds 5: Pittsburgh emergency catcher Josh VanMeter had a rough time in his first try behind the plate since he was a teenager, and host Cincinnati took advantage to end a nine-game losing streak in the opener of a doubleheader.

In the nightcap, Ke'Bryan Hayes hit a two-run homer and Yoshi Tsutsugo and Diego Castillo had back-to-back home runs as Pittsburgh earned a split.

In the opener, Pirates starting catcher Roberto Pérez was helped off the field with a left hamstring injury after falling while rounding second base in the top of the eighth. Backup catcher Andrew Knapp had been ejected in the bottom of the sixth.

Nationals 7, Angels 3: Josh Bell, Yadiel Hernandez and Nelson Cruz went deep, Maikel Franco drove in three runs and visiting Washington snapped a three-game losing streak with a win over Los Angeles.

Rays 8, Mariners 2: Brandon Lowe hit two solo homers off Seattle starter Marco Gonzales for the seventh multi-homer game of his career, Manuel Margot hit his first grand slam and visiting Tampa Bay won its sixth straight.

Margot, who hit a game-winning, three-run homer in the ninth inning on Friday night, capped an eighth inning meltdown by Seattle reliever Diego Castillo. He hit the first pitch into the left field bullpens. Castillo failed to record an out and allowed five earned runs.

Bucks edge Celtics after frantic finish

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Giannis Antetokounmpo found a way to get better shots and recapture his peak form just in time to help the defending champion Milwaukee Bucks regain the lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

But it was the Boston Celtics' bad timing that made the difference in the end.

Antetokounmpo bounced back from a rare subpar performance by scoring 42 points and making the go-ahead basket with 44.3 seconds left in a 103-101 victory Saturday. The Bucks lead the best-of-7 series 2-1, with Game 4 on Monday night in Milwaukee.

"I know what my strengths are" Antetokounmpo said. "Just try to read what's in front of me and just play with my instincts. Sometimes I'm going to make the right play and sometimes I'm going to make the wrong play, but as long as I play within my strengths, we're going to be in a good place."

The victory wasn't secure until replays confirmed that Al Horford's potential tying putback — capping a wild sequence after Marcus Smart intentionally missed a free throw — came just after the buzzer.

"I saw Al tip it, and I saw the red outline go off on the backboard," Bucks center

Brook Lopez said. "It was very close."

The Celtics trailed 103-100 when officials determined Smart was fouled by Jrue Holiday just before attempting a potential tying three-pointer with 4.6 seconds remaining. Because it was a nonshooting foul, Smart got just two free-throw attempts.

Smart made the first free throw, then missed the second intentionally — flinging a shot that went hard off the backboard before hitting the rim.

That's when things got wild.

Smart got the rebound, but missed his putback attempt. Boston's Robert Williams charged toward the basket and sent the ball up and off the glass. Horford was waiting on the right side with a putback attempt that also went off the glass. Horford then got his own rebound and banked it in, but his final shot came just after the buzzer sounded.

"Missed it perfectly," Smart said. "Nobody was ready, (but) our guys were. Got it up on the rim. We had a few chances at it. Just didn't work out for us."

The Celtics said they believed Smart should have had an opportunity to tie the game at the line. Boston coach Ime Udoka and Smart said it should have been a shooting foul on Holiday.

"You can clearly see it," Udoka said. "I saw it in person, but also on the film. I just

went and looked at it. It's a shot. He's curling into his shot. He's getting fouled on the way up. Bad missed call."

Holiday disagreed.

"Honestly, it looked like he was still facing the sideline," said Holiday, who scored 25 points. "That's not a shooting motion. He wasn't facing the rim."

Jaylen Brown led the Celtics with 27 points and 12 rebounds. Horford had 22 points, 15 rebounds and five assists.

Boston trailed by 14 late in the third quarter and was facing a 13-point deficit with less than 10 minutes left before storming back. The Celtics pulled ahead 100-99 and took their first lead since early in their third quarter on Brown's two free throws with 1:49 remaining.

Both teams failed to score on their next possessions before Antetokounmpo put Milwaukee back ahead. Antetokounmpo then blocked Brown's driving layup attempt, leading to Holiday's basket that made it 103-100 with 11.2 seconds remaining.

Antetokounmpo's winning plays in the final minute highlighted his bounce-back performance.

After shooting 38.5% (20-for-52) in the first two games of this series, Antetokounmpo went 16 of 30 on Saturday.

Warriors roll past Grizzlies, Morant is injured late

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Now, Ja Morant and the Memphis Grizzlies are calling out the Golden State Warriors for causing unnecessary injury.

Morant reinjured his troublesome right knee late in the game when Jordan Poole grabbed it as they fought for a loose ball late in the Warriors' 142-112 victory that embarrassed the Grizzlies on Saturday night and gave Golden State a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference semifinals.

Morant left Chase Center without speaking to reporters but posted and later deleted a video of the play on his Twitter feed with the words "broke the code," a reference Warriors coach Steve Kerr had used five

days earlier when Dillon Brooks' hard foul in Game 2 sidelined Gary Payton II.

Poole and Andrew Wiggins swarmed Morant as he dribbled at the top of the three-point arc when Morant struggled to keep possession — and Poole described it as "a basketball play."

"When we doubled him, I hit the ball, I was going for the ball. Obviously, you don't want to see anybody get hurt, I'm not even that type of player," Poole said. "I respect everybody. Obviously hopefully he gets better and we can see him out there next game."

Brooks was suspended for his Flagrant 2 foul in the first quarter Tuesday night when he pounded the head of a driving Payton, who landed awkwardly

and fractured his left elbow. He will be sidelined indefinitely, also with ligament and muscle damage.

Kerr said the play was "dirty" and broke an NBA "code" injuring someone and threatening his career, while Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins and his Grizzlies players defended their hard-nosed style as not dirty at all.

Draymond Green and Golden State kept cool from the opening tip — methodically running away with it. Memphis forward Kyle Anderson got ejected with 6:19 left for arguing an offensive foul.

Stephen Curry scored 30 points, Klay Thompson had 21 and nine rebounds and Golden State shut down Morant's sup-

porting cast.

A three by Morant just before the halftime buzzer got the Grizzlies to 64-57 at the break and gave him 17 of his 34 points after a 47-point performance in Game 2. But Morant couldn't do it alone for Memphis, and he was done after rubbing his tender right knee and limping off with 6:19 to play before heading to the locker room.

"He's getting evaluated now. Nothing further. We just watched the replay," Grizzlies coach Taylor Jenkins said. "He was going after a dribble and Jordan Poole actually grabbed his knee and yanked it, which kind of triggered whatever happened, so I'm actually going to be very curious to see what happens after that."