

Drone strikes damage Moscow buildings

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — A rare drone attack jolted Moscow early Tuesday, causing only light damage but forcing evacuations as residential buildings were struck in the Russian capital for the first time in the war against Ukraine. The Kremlin, meanwhile, pursued its relentless bombardment of Kyiv with a third assault on the city in 24 hours.

The Russian Defense Ministry said five drones were shot down in Moscow and the systems of three others were jammed, causing them to veer off course. It called the incident a “terrorist attack” by the “Kyiv regime.”

The attack, causing only what Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin called “insignificant damage” to several buildings, brought the war home to civilians in Russia’s capital.

Two people received treatment for unspecified injuries but did not need hospitalization, he said in a Telegram post, adding that residents of two high-rise buildings damaged in the attack were evacuated.

Andrei Vorobyov, governor of the wider Moscow region, said some of the drones were “shot down on the approach to Mos-

cow.”

Ukraine made no direct comment on the attack, which would be one of its deepest and most daring strikes into Russia since the Kremlin launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than 15 months ago.

Russian President Vladimir Putin started work early Tuesday to receive information about the drone attack from various government agencies, but did not plan to address the nation in the wake of the assault, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Asked by The Associated Press whether there is concern in the Kremlin that the invasion of Ukraine is endangering Russian civilians, Peskov said only that attacks on Russia reinforce the need to prosecute the war.

Russian political analyst Tatiana Stanovaya, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center, said the Kremlin’s policy is to play down the attacks.

“You ask, why is Putin behaving like this, does he really not understand and fear the consequences?” she wrote in a Telegram post. “Apparently he isn’t afraid, and everything is built on the idea that has been voiced more than once about a patient people who

will understand everything and endure everything.”

Still, the attacks raised questions about the effectiveness of Russia’s air defense systems.

A senior Russian lawmaker, Andrei Kartapolov, told Russian business news site RBC that “we have a very big country and there will always be a loophole where the drone can fly around the areas where air defense systems are located.”

In Ukraine, Russia launched a pre-dawn air raid on Kyiv, killing at least one person and sending the capital’s residents again scrambling into shelters.

Ukrainian military analysts, though unable to confirm that Kyiv had launched the drones against Moscow, said the attack may have involved UJ-22 drones with a maximum range of about 620 miles and are produced in Ukraine.

Analyst Oleh Zhdanov said some UJ-22s are capable of reaching “Moscow and beyond,” although he noted they can fly only half as far and carry half the payload of the Iranian-made Shahed drones used in the war by Russia.

Guam continues its recovery a week after typhoon

BY ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

Guam continued to piece itself together Tuesday as construction and cleanup crews made progress restoring power and water to the U.S. island territory in the wake of Typhoon Mawar.

A week after the storm roared across the island on May 24 with 150 mph winds and torrential rains, U.S. military installations were finishing damage assessments and resuming normal operations, said Lt. Cmdr. Katie Koenig, spokeswoman for Joint Region Marianas.

“As with any storm system, every installation took great care to prepare for our mission and operations. We ensured our staff had time ahead of the typhoon to secure both their personal workspaces and their homes,” she told Stars and Stripes by email Tuesday. “No amount of preparation could have prevented the damage that was done

and all units are contributing to the restoration efforts.”

At Andersen Air Force Base, power and water are restored to most facilities and housing, said base spokeswoman Capt. Katie Mueller, but final assessments have yet to be finished.

“Some buildings did see flooding. Trees and debris are strewn about the installation and vehicles were damaged,” she said by email Tuesday. “Andersen members are coming together as a community through ongoing recovery efforts.”

Roads at Naval Base Guam were cleared as of Tuesday, and all critical facilities have generator power, Koenig said. At the recently constructed Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, some structures had wind or water damage and road access is still being secured.

Representatives of Naval Base Guam and Camp Blaz did not immediately respond to

multiple requests for comment Tuesday.

“We are pushing every avenue to ensure we return to steady-state services as quickly and safely as possible, both on and off the bases,” Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson, commander of Joint Region Marianas, said in a Tuesday email to Stars and Stripes. “We are all impacted by the destruction of Typhoon Mawar and we stand together with our regional and federal partners to ensure critical operations are not disrupted.”

Andersen’s airfield has already received multiple aircraft, including a Coast Guard C-130 Hercules and an Air Force C-17 Globemaster III, which delivered personnel, equipment and about 90 tons of aid, Mueller said. The base has also helped 175 people get off the island for permanent changes of station.

Across the island, most of the civilian population is still without power and many are without steady access to water.

Philippine president eyes a sub fleet

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

The Philippines is developing a plan to acquire submarines, the country's president said Friday after the navy's 125th anniversary celebration in Manila.

Multiple countries have offered to furnish the Philippine navy with submarines or to build them at Philippine shipyards, said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who did not identify those countries, according to his communications office.

"If they are built here and we can actually build submarines here and provide those submarines to other countries then that's another source of jobs, and of income and increased capability for our Navy," he said in a news release.

Last year, the Philippines' Department of National Defense indicated that submarine procure-

ment wasn't a priority, according to the release.

Marcos gave no further details of the plan, including timing, budget or what mission Philippine subs would carry out. But defense experts agree that Subic Bay, a former U.S. naval facility with shipyards of its own, is an ideal site for submarines patrolling the South China Sea.

"Subic Bay is an excellent deep-water port and has played a key role in reprovisioning U.S. submarines deployed to the western Pacific as well as U.S. Navy sub tenders," Carlyle Thayer, an emeritus professor at the University of New South Wales, said in an email Saturday.

U.S. Navy submarines operated at Subic from the 1920s until 1992, when U.S. forces departed the Philippines.

The Philippine navy also hopes to build a submarine base

at Sangley Point, south of Manila, said Thayer, who is also a lecturer at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

The Philippines is engaged in a test of wills with China over control of stretches of the South China Sea and small islands relatively close to Philippine shores. A submarine base would prove useful in the Philippines' efforts to resist Chinese encroachment into the area, Thayer said.

China's navy maintains a constant, illegal presence inside the Philippines' 890,000-square-mile exclusive economic zone, he said.

"The acquisition of conventional submarines capable of operating in these waters would bolster the ability of the Philippines to deter China by adding uncertainty and risk to Chinese naval deployments," Thayer said.

The Philippine navy's fleet currently consists of only surface vessels. By contrast, China's submarine force will grow to 76 boats in 2030, according to estimates by the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence quoted in a Congressional Research Service report on Oct. 7, 2021.

Philippine subs would prove worrisome to the Chinese, said Grant Newsham, a senior researcher with the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies in Tokyo.

"Ask yourself, would [China] want the Philippine Navy to operate submarines? No. That tells you it's a good thing to do," he told Stars and Stripes in a May 23 email.

In addition, the U.S. Navy should resume its presence at Subic as a submarine "access point," Newsham said.

"You can never have too much access," he said.

US, allies urge North Korea to cancel 'satellite' launch

By **DAVID CHOI**
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The U.S. State Department is calling on North Korea to cancel plans to launch its first military reconnaissance satellite, saying the act would violate U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Space launch vehicles use technology "identical to, and interchangeable with" ballistic missiles and any North Korean launch using that technology would violate the Security Council's resolutions, the department said in a statement Tuesday.

"We urge [North Korea] to refrain from further unlawful activity and call on Pyongyang to engage in serious and sustained diplomacy," the statement reads.

Since 2006, the U.N. Security

Council has prohibited North Korea from nuclear weapons testing and launches using ballistic missile technology.

Pyongyang will launch its first "military reconnaissance satellite" in June, North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency reported Tuesday. The satellite will provide real-time tracking of U.S. military assets and those of its allies, according to KCNA, which quoted Ri Pyong Chol, vice chairman of North Korea's Central Military Commission.

According to a Ministry of Defense news release Monday, Japan joins the United States and South Korea in urging Pyongyang "to exercise restraint and refrain from conducting a launch."

N. Korea says any talks won't address Japanese abductees

By **HANA KUSUMOTO**
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — North Korea is willing to hold talks with Japan on improving their relationship but considers further discussions over abducted Japanese citizens "a waste of time," according to North Korean state media.

Nothing prevents the two nations from meeting, provided Japan makes "a new decision from a broad perspective of recognizing each other" and "seeks a way of improving the relations," North Korean vice-minister of foreign affairs Pak Sang Gil was quoted as saying by the Korean Central News Agency on Monday.

The abduction issue, still a sticking point in Japan, is already resolved, Pak said.

In 2002, North Korea admitted for the first time to abducting Ja-

panese nationals in the 1970s and '80s and apologized at a summit meeting with Japan, according to Japan's Foreign Ministry. Five abductees returned to Japan in October of that year, but another 12 remain unaccounted for.

Japan continues to investigate more than 800 people who might have been abducted, according to Japan's Cabinet Office.

"Without the resolution of this issue, there can be no normalization of relations between Japan and North Korea," the Foreign Ministry website states.

North Korea said it has returned all living abductees; the remainder are either dead or never entered the North.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday spoke at a Tokyo rally seeking the return of Japanese abductees.

Finland begins air drills with NATO partners

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

Finland is hosting a major air exercise with NATO partners just weeks after joining the U.S.-led alliance amid ongoing tensions with neighboring Russia.

Some 3,000 service members and 150 aircraft from 12 NATO countries as well as Sweden and Switzerland are participating in the Arctic Challenge, which began Monday, NATO said.

The American contingent consists of troops assigned to U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa and the Marine Air National Guard.

Fourteen F-15E Strike Eagle fighters and eight F-35A Lightning II fifth-generation stealth fighters, all belonging to the Air Force's 48th Fighter Wing at RAF Lakenheath, are taking part in the training from Finland's Pirkkala Air Base and Norway's Orland Air Base respectively, according to

a statement Monday by USAFE-AFAFRI-CA.

An unspecified number of U.S. KC-135R Stratotankers from the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall and the Maine National Guard's 101st Air Refueling Wing are scheduled to provide support until the exercise ends June 9, the statement added.

Meanwhile, American exercise controllers from the 414th Combat Training Squadron at Nevada's Nellis Air Force Base are supporting local planners at Lulea Air Base in Sweden, and U.S. Marines will provide advanced ground-based radar capabilities throughout the exercise, the statement said.

The Finnish air force is directing the training, which is being carried out at sites in Finland, Sweden and Norway. Its focus is on ensuring partners can work together with various aircraft across swaths of the high north.

The exercise has been held every two

years since 2013, with this year's being the biggest to date, Col. Henrik Elo of the Finnish air force was quoted by Agence France-Presse as saying.

In addition to the United States, Norway, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom will supply F-35s.

Other aircraft from partner countries being used include Rafale and Mirage combat jets from France, German and British Eurofighter Typhoons, and Belgian, Dutch and Danish F-16s, according to NATO.

Finland shares an 830-mile border with Russia. After decades of nonalignment, it officially joined NATO in April because of concerns sparked by the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The country had been a partner of the transatlantic military alliance since the 1990s and regularly participated in drills and some peacekeeping missions with NATO allies, such as Kosovo.

Kosovo troops beef up positions after clashes

Associated Press

PRISTINA, Kosovo — Troops from the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo on Tuesday used metal fences and barbed wire barriers to beef up positions in a northern town following clashes with ethnic Serbs there that left 30 international soldiers wounded.

The peacekeepers sealed off the municipality building in Zvecan where unrest on Monday sent tensions soaring, raising fears of instability and flareup in the Balkan hotspot amid increased

Western efforts to resolve a long-simmering dispute.

Kosovo is a former province of Serbia whose 2008 declaration of independence Belgrade does not recognize. Ethnic Albanians make up most of the population, but Kosovo has a restive Serb minority in the north of the country bordering Serbia.

The United States and most European Union nations have recognized Kosovo's independence from Serbia, while Russia and China have sided with Belgrade. China on Tuesday ex-

pressed its support for Serbia's efforts to "safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity" and Moscow has repeatedly criticized Western policies in the dispute.

Tensions first increased over the past weekend, after ethnic Albanian officials elected in votes overwhelmingly boycotted by Serbs entered municipal buildings.

When the Serbs tried to block them, Kosovo police fired tear gas to disperse the crowd.

In response, Serbia put the

country's military on the highest state of alert and sent more troops to the border with Kosovo. The Serbs protested again on Monday, insisting both ethnic Albanian mayors and Kosovo police must leave northern Kosovo.

The confrontations worsened when Serbs attempted to enter the municipal offices in Zvecan, 28 miles north of the capital Pristina.

They clashed first with Kosovo police and then with the international peacekeepers who deployed in Zvecan.

Teen shot for being at wrong door walks at brain injury event

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Ralph Yarl — a Black teenager who was shot in the head and arm after mistakenly ringing the wrong doorbell — walked at a brain injury awareness event in his first major public appearance since the shooting.

The 17-year-old suffered a traumatic brain injury when he was shot while trying to pick up his younger brothers in April, the Kansas City Star reported.

Yarl walked with family, friends and

other brain injury survivors Monday at Going the Distance for Brain Injury, a yearly Memorial Day race at Loose Park in Kansas City, Mo.

"It takes a community. It takes a family. It takes a support group, all of that," Yarl's mother, Cleo Nagbe, said ahead of the race. "Let's raise more awareness to stop the things that cause brain injuries and should not be causing them, especially gun violence."

As many as 1,000 people raced through

the park, including many in neon green T-shirts who registered to be part of "Team Ralph," said Robin Abramowitz, executive director of the Brain Injury Association of Kansas and Greater Kansas City.

"It's important for Ralph to see that he is not alone," Yarl's aunt, Faith Spoonmore, said. She added that Yarl has debilitating migraines and issues with balance. He is also struggling with his emotions, mood changes and the trauma of the shooting.

9 people hurt in shooting near beach in Florida city

Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — Nine people were injured when gunfire erupted along a beachside promenade in Hollywood, Fla., sending people frantically running for cover at the crowded beach on Memorial Day.

Police and witnesses said the shooting began as a group of people fought in front of a busy stretch of shops on the Hollywood Oceanfront Broadwalk at about 7 p.m. Monday.

The sound of gunshots sent witness Alvie Carlton Scott III ducking for cover behind a tree before he fled on foot at the command of a police officer. Another witness, Jamie Ward, said several young men were fighting when one of them pulled a gun and started firing.

The shooting upended busy holiday weekend festivities at the popular beach destination where there was already a heavy police presence to oversee the big crowds.

Police spokesperson Deanna Bettineschi said four children between the ages of 1 and 17 were hit, along with five adults between 25 and 65.

All of the victims were in stable condition, a hospital spokeswoman said.

At least one person was in custody, but police were looking for more suspects, Bettineschi said.

Hollywood Mayor Josh Levy said that he was “deeply saddened and angered” by the shooting. Dozens of officers are assigned to the beach on busy holiday weekends and that meant there was an immediate response and multiple people were detained, Levy said in a statement.

“People come to enjoy a holiday weekend on the beach with their families and to have people in complete reckless disregard of the safety of the public and to have an altercation with guns in a public setting with thousands of people around them is beyond reckless,” he said. “The Hollywood Police Department will leave no stone unturned. We do not appreciate when people come into our city with guns and have an altercation in the midst of a public setting here.”

Videos posted on Twitter on Monday evening showed emergency medical crews responding and providing aid to multiple injured people.

Testimony kicks off for synagogue attack trial in Pa.

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Prosecutors on Tuesday described how a heavily armed suspect barged into a Pittsburgh synagogue and shot every worshipper he could find in the deadliest antisemitic attack in U.S. history.

Robert Bowers’ federal trial got underway more than four years after the shooting deaths of 11 worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue.

Twelve jurors and six alternates — chosen Thursday after more than 200 candidates were questioned over a month — are hearing the case. They include 11 women and seven men.

“The depths of the defendant’s malice and hate can only be proven in the broken bodies” of the victims and “his hateful words,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Soo C. Song said during her opening statement.

Some of the survivors dabbed tears, while Bowers, seated at the defense table, showed no reaction.

The defense was expected to present its opening statement before the prosecution began calling witnesses.

Bowers, 50, could face the death penalty if convicted of some of the 63 counts he faces in the Oct. 27, 2018, attack, which claimed the lives of worshippers from three congregations who were sharing the building, Dor Hadash, New Light and Tree of Life. Charges include 11 counts each of obstruction of free exercise of religion resulting in death and hate crimes resulting in death.

Members of the three congregations arrived at the courthouse in a school bus and entered together.

Prosecutors have said Bowers made antisemitic comments at the scene of the attack and online.

In proceedings before and during juror questioning, the defense has done little to cast doubt on whether Bowers was the gunman and has instead focused on preventing his execution.

Bowers, a truck driver from the Pittsburgh suburb of Baldwin, had offered to plead guilty in return for a life sentence, but federal prosecutors turned him down. Bowers’ attorneys also recently said he has schizophrenia and brain impairments.

As an indication that the guilt-or-innocence phase of the trial seems almost a foregone conclusion, Bowers’ lawyers spent little time during jury selection asking how potential jurors would come to a verdict.

Uganda leader signs anti-gay bill

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda — Uganda’s president has signed into law anti-gay legislation supported by many in this East African country but widely condemned by rights activists and others abroad.

The version of the bill signed by President Yoweri Museveni doesn’t criminalize those who identify as LGBTQ+, a key concern for some rights campaigners who condemned an earlier draft of the legislation as an egregious attack on human rights.

But the new law still prescribes the death penalty for “aggravated homosexuality,” which is defined as cases of sexual relations involving people infected with HIV, as well as with minors and other categories of vulnerable people.

A suspect convicted of “attempted aggravated homosexuality” can be imprisoned for up to 14 years, according to the legislation.

Parliamentary Speaker Anita Among said in a statement that the president had

“answered the cries of our people” in signing the bill.

“With a lot of humility, I thank my colleagues the Members of Parliament for withstanding all the pressure from bullies and doomsday conspiracy theorists in the interest of our country,” the statement said.

LGBTQ+ rights campaigners say the new legislation is unnecessary in a country where homosexuality has long been illegal under a colonial-era law criminalizing sexual activity “against the order of nature.” The punishment for that offense is life imprisonment.

The United States had warned of economic consequences over legislation described by Amnesty International as “draconian and overly broad.” In a statement from the White House later Monday, President Joe Biden called the new law “a tragic violation of universal human rights — one that is not worthy of the Ugandan people, and one that jeopardizes the prospects of critical economic growth for the entire country.”

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Woman acted to denigrate Ukraine militia

MI DETROIT — Police in Michigan said a woman vandalized two Detroit-area religious centers in hopes people would blame a Ukrainian militia.

The 35-year-old Clinton Township woman has been charged with spray-painting a Nazi symbol and the phrase “Azov” on a Royal Oak synagogue on April 28. She’s also been charged in a March 15 arson at a Scientology center in Farmington Hills, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Royal Oak Detective Dan Pelletier testified that the woman told him that she was trying to commit hate crimes that would be blamed on the Azov Regiment, a Ukrainian militia. Russian officials have repeatedly portrayed Azov as a Nazi formation.

Pelletier said the woman lived in Serbia for two years and returned to Michigan in March. Her family has said she was homeless and has threatened them. The detective said the woman told him that she was trying to commit hate crimes that would be blamed on Azov so people would become angry at U.S. involvement in the Ukraine-Russia war.

Man dies from fall after breaking hospital window

CA SAN JOSE — A man in police custody died in Northern California after he broke a hospital’s window with a metal oxygen tank and fell off a ledge following an altercation with an officer and a nurse, authorities said.

The man was in custody be-

cause he had allegedly violated a court order, according to San Jose police. Officers took him to the hospital for an unspecified pre-existing medical condition.

The man is accused of assaulting an officer and threatening to hit the officer and a nurse with the oxygen tank, police said. They left the room and called for more help.

The man broke the window with the oxygen tank while he was alone in the hospital room and jumped out onto a ledge, the police department said. The officer and two hospital security guards went back into the room to stop the man’s escape attempt, but he fell 20 feet from the ledge.

Cruise ship passengers terrified after rough seas

SC CHARLESTON — A cruise ship that navigated rough seas off the South Carolina coast over the Memorial Day weekend has resumed sailing on its next cruise, Carnival Cruise Lines said.

Terrified passengers on the Carnival Sunshine took to social media to post video of water pouring through a flooded hallway on a cabin level and pictures of on-board stores in shambles, with merchandise strewn about on the floor as large waves swelled on the sea.

Passenger Daniel Taylor said the crew “left us blind, not reassuring us what was going on, where we were heading to, what the plan was,” WCIV-TV reported.

The Carnival Sunshine’s return to Charleston, S.C., from the Bahamas was delayed by prolonged bad weather and rough seas in the area, the Miami-based company said in a

statement to The Associated Press.

No serious injuries were reported.

Paramedic charged with abusing drugged woman

KS IOLA — A Kansas paramedic has been charged with sexually assaulting a woman while she was taking a cocktail of painkillers and sedatives.

Adam Ferguson, 42, of Iola, is free on a \$20,000 bond after he was charged with three counts of aggravated sexual battery.

The complaint alleged the assault happened while the woman was incapable of giving consent because of the effect of morphine; Tylenol; Toradol, an anti-inflammatory drug that frequently is used as a post-surgical painkiller; the sedative Ativan; the narcotic painkilling drug Dilaudid; and Versed, an anti-anxiety drug that causes drowsiness.

Ferguson was terminated, according to city administrator Matt Rehder.

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation said in a news release that the case remains under investigation.

Bear that attacked young children found, euthanized

PA MOUNTAIN TOP — Authorities said a bear that attacked and injured two young children playing in the driveway of a northeastern Pennsylvania home has been captured and euthanized.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission said two bears, a male and a female, had been caught overnight in live traps set following the attack in Wright

Township near Mountain Top. A 5-year-old and a 14-month-old were treated for bites and scratches at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital and released.

Game commission officials said DNA tests on the children’s clothing were compared with samples collected from the trapped bears and indicated the female bear was responsible for the attack. That bear was euthanized and the male bear was relocated to a more remote area, officials said.

Texas OKs allowing public schools to hire chaplains

TX AUSTIN — Texas would allow public schools to use campus safety money to hire chaplains to counsel students under a bill approved by state lawmakers and sent to Republican Gov. Greg Abbott.

The measure approved on the one-year anniversary of the school shooting in Uvalde that killed 19 students and two teachers, comes amid a push by the Republican-majority Legislature to open the door for more religion in public schools.

Supporters of the bill said the chaplains can provide critical counseling to help prevent school shootings by addressing student mental health, and address other problems such as drug use.

Critics said the measure violates student religious freedom and allows an entryway for campus evangelizing while exposing students to what may be unconventional or biased counseling methods when dealing with issues such as sexuality, sexual behavior or suicidal thoughts.

— From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit www.stripes.com.

Reporting
World, National
and Military News

NBA Finals set: It's Heat vs. Nuggets

Associated Press

Cancel that flight plan, Denver. Turns out, the NBA Finals are starting in the Mile High City after all.

And Jimmy Butler was proven right.

Finally, we have a title-series matchup: The Miami Heat, champions of the Eastern Conference even after getting in as only the No. 8 seed, will take on the Western Conference champion Nuggets in Game 1 of the NBA Finals. The series starts in Denver on Thursday night.

The Heat got there by winning Game 7 of the East title series in Boston on Monday night. It came one year to the day after the Celtics won a Game 7 on Miami's floor to win the East title a year ago.

"Next year, we will have enough and we're going to be right back in the same situation, and we're going to get it done," Butler vowed that night.

The Heat made those words prophetic.

The Nuggets had a flight to

Boston tentatively scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, just in case they would be facing the Celtics — who would have had home-court advantage in the title series.

But the Heat had other ideas, won the deciding game to avoid becoming the first team in NBA history to fall after claiming a 3-0 series lead, and Nikola Jokic and the Nuggets now await. The Heat are in the Finals for the seventh time and seeking their fourth championship; the Nuggets are in the Finals for the first time in franchise history.

"When we wake up tomorrow morning, we know who we're playing," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said Monday, a few hours before the Celtics and Heat tipped off in Game 7. "We know who we're preparing for and we can kind of turn the page and really focus in on that. The Eastern Conference finals has been a hell of a series."

Malone will try to win an NBA title for the first time, and if Denver prevails he'll become

the 36th coach in league history to win a championship. Miami's Erik Spoelstra is seeking his third title as a head coach; if he wins it, he'd join only Phil Jackson, Red Auerbach, Heat President Pat Riley, John Kundla, Gregg Popovich and Steve Kerr as three-time champion coaches.

Denver hasn't faced any real trouble yet in these playoffs. The Nuggets are 12-3 in the playoffs, winners of their last six games — and grabbed control of their matchups against Minnesota in Round 1, Phoenix in Round 2 and the Lakers in the West finals right away.

Two-time MVP Jokic averaged a triple-double against both the Suns and the Lakers, and enters these finals averaging 29.9 points, 13.3 rebounds and 10.3 assists per game.

One of his signature moves of late has been pointing to his ring finger while looking at his family; he's now four wins away from the piece of jewelry he wants most.

"Nikola is still a humble, selfless person and he cares about home, he cares about family, he cares about his horses — the guy is just who he is," Malone said. "I couldn't have more respect for him as a man because of that."

A week ago, Miami was in position to do what Denver did — get to the finals with a sweep. It's almost like the Heat forgot they were a 44-38 team that needed two play-in games just to get into the playoffs; they ousted No. 1 overall seed Milwaukee in Round 1, got past New York in Round 2 and then avenged last season's loss to Boston in the East finals by somehow going onto the Celtics' home floor and winning a Game 7 to avoid the permanent stench of being the first team in NBA history to waste a 3-0 series lead.

"Sometimes you have to suffer for the things that you really want," Spoelstra said. "And this group has shown fortitude. ... We still have more to do."

Butler, Miami end Boston's improbable run at history

Associated Press

BOSTON — No unprecedented comeback, no last-tick miracle, no cavalcade of higher seeds is going to prevent these Miami Heat from playing for the NBA title.

Eastern Conference finals Most Valuable Player Jimmy Butler scored 28 points, and Caleb Martin had 26 points and 10 rebounds to help the eighth-seeded Heat beat Boston 103-84 in Game 7 on Monday night and advance to the NBA Finals for the second time in four seasons.

A year after losing a seventh game to the Celtics, Miami recovered from blowing a 3-0 lead in the series and advanced to face the Western Conference champion Nuggets.

Game 1 is Thursday night in

Denver, where the top-seeded Nuggets have been waiting since sweeping the Los Angeles Lakers on May 22.

"We stayed together as a group. As a team, we talked about going and getting a tough one on the road. We did just that," Butler said. "But we're not satisfied. We're excited. We're happy. But we've got one more to get."

Bam Adebayo scored 12 points with 10 rebounds for Miami, which is the first No. 8 seed to reach the NBA Finals since the 1999 New York Knicks.

To get there, the Heat had to recover after losing the play-in opener against Atlanta and beat Chicago in a second-chance play-in. They eliminated the

top-seeded Milwaukee Bucks in five games, then the fifth-seeded Knicks in six.

They put Boston in a 3-0 hole — a deficit no NBA team has ever come back from. Three losses later, Miami was on the brink of the wrong kind of history.

"Sometimes you have to suffer for the things that you really want," coach Erik Spoelstra said. "This group has shown fortitude, when there are inevitable letdowns and failures, to have that perseverance to pick yourself up, to have that collective spirit to keep on forging ahead until you get to accomplish what you want to."

Game 6 hero Derrick White scored 18 for Boston, which was hoping to become the first NBA team in 151 tries to advance af-

ter falling behind 0-3 in a best-of-seven series. Jaylen Brown scored 19 with eight rebounds but went 1-for-9 from three-point range and committed eight turnovers.

Jayson Tatum, who scored a Game 7 record 51 points against Philadelphia in the conference semis, had 14 points with 11 rebounds after turning his ankle on the first play of the game and limping through 42 minutes.

"When we were down 3-0, the thing was: How do we want to be defined?" said Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla, who took over the team on the eve of training camp when Ime Udoka was suspended for inappropriate workplace behavior. "I thought they showed a lot of character by even getting to this point."

Knights rout Stars, reach 2nd Final

Associated Press

DALLAS — William Karlsson, William Carrier and Jonathan Marchessault are finally getting another chance in the Stanley Cup Final, after the first one that came so quickly for the Vegas Golden Knights.

They are going back after making sure they didn't need another game against the Dallas Stars in the Western Conference finals.

Karlsson scored two goals and had an assist while Carrier and Marchessault also scored for the Knights in a 6-0 rout Monday night over the Stars, who had extended the West finals to six games after losing the first three.

"We've worked hard as a group. That was the goal since year one, to come back here," Marchessault said. "Our best game is yet to come. That's the mentality we need to have."

Reilly Smith, Brayden McNabb and Shea Theodore were also part of that inaugural 2017-18 Knights season that end-

ed in a Cup Final, when they won Game 1 against the Washington Capitals before losing four in a row.

"That first year was a whirlwind and we maybe took it for granted," said Karlsson, who like Marchessault and Smith has played in all 83 playoff games for the franchise.

Keegan Kolesar and Michael Amadio each had a goal and an assist for Vegas, which hosts Game 1 of the Stanley Cup Final against Florida on Saturday night.

The Knights led the Western Conference in the regular season with 51 wins and 111 points. The Panthers completed a four-game sweep of Carolina in the East finals last Wednesday, but their 40 wins and 92 points in the regular season were the fewest among the 16 teams that began these playoffs.

Adin Hill stopped 23 shots for his second career playoff shutout — both against the Stars. The other was 4-0 in Game 3 last Tuesday, that put the Knights

within one win of clinching the series before Dallas overcame 1-0 and 2-1 deficits in both Games 4 and 5.

"We kept them to the outside almost all night," Hill said. "It was probably my easiest game of the playoffs so far tonight."

Instead of having to face a do-or-die Game 7 at home against the Stars, coach Bruce Cassidy and the Knights got off to another fast start and never left any doubt about the outcome of this series that included three overtime games. They already had 16 of their 29 shots and a 3-0 lead after the first period.

"It was definitely our best game of the playoffs and it came at the right time," Cassidy said. "You don't want to let a team off the mat. After getting a 3-0 lead, there was some chatter about that."

It was the most lopsided playoff loss for the Stars since the franchise moved south from Minnesota before the 1993-94 season.

"You just expect more from

yourself in a game like this," said Stars forward Joe Pavelski, the 38-year-old veteran still without a Stanley Cup after 17 seasons.

The Stars got captain Jamie Benn back after his two-game suspension for a cross-check to the neck area of Vegas captain Mark Stone early in Game 3. But Benn got only one shot on net in his 12½ minutes and was on the ice for two of Vegas' first three goals.

The Knights led for good when Carrier scored 3:41 into the game after a puck poked from behind the net in the vicinity of three Dallas players. Carrier skated across the crease and put a backhander in the net, the ninth time this postseason the Knights scored in the first five minutes of a game.

Karlsson's power-play goal came midway through the first period and made it 2-0.

"Real disappointed for our group for the way our season ended," Stars coach Pete DeBoer said. "It was a case of Vegas going to another level."

Blaney ends drought, gives Penske weekend sweep

Associated Press

CONCORD, N.C. — Jumping into the crowd to celebrate a big race victory appears to have become a Team Penske thing.

Ryan Blaney held off William Byron to win the rescheduled Coca-Cola 600 on Monday at Charlotte Speedway, giving team owner Roger Penske a sweep of the Memorial Day weekend's top races in the United States.

Josef Newgarden won a record-extending 19th Indianapolis 500 on Sunday for Team Penske. Like Newgarden, Blaney jumped out of his car and climbed into the crowd to celebrate the win with fans.

"I only did it because Josef did it," Blaney said. "I was pretty fired up. I don't get that excit-

ed very often, but I was super pumped. I loved how Josef did it Sunday. ... I said, 'I am going to go in the stands like Josef did and have some human contact.'"

Blaney compared it to jumping into a mosh pit at a metal concert.

A few moments later, he tried to hold back tears with the weight of a 59-race winless streak lifted from his shoulders.

"You start to get to feel like you can't win anymore," Blaney said. "We hadn't won in a while and that can get hard. I want to thank the 12 (team) for believing in me."

Blaney took the lead from Byron on a restart and led the final 26 laps to win his first Cup Series race since the Coke Zero

Sugar 400 at Daytona in August of 2021.

Byron finished second, followed by Martin Truex Jr., Bubba Wallace and Tyler Reddick.

Truex said Blaney's emotions are understandable.

"He's under a lot of pressure to perform," Truex said. "They've won a lot of races since his last race. I'm sure he questioned himself through some point during that streak that he was on. He's had many opportunities to win and they've slipped away. Those are the hardest to think about so he's probably thinking, 'we finally did it.'"

It is the first time Team Penske has swept the Indianapolis-Charlotte doubleheader.

"The pressure was on us to try

to sweep the weekend," said Blaney, who said he texted Newgarden after the Indy 500 win. "So that was the goal. Fortunately, we executed well enough to get it done."

The 5½-hour race included five wrecks in the final 50 laps, including one with 26 to go when last week's All-Star race winner Kyle Larson spun and took out defending Cup champion Joey Logano, Kyle Busch and Christopher Bell.

Blaney had passed Byron on the previous restart, and then got the jump on him again on the final restart and ran away with the checkered flag.

It was a rain-soaked weekend at Charlotte, which washed out practice and qualifying and postponed the race to Monday.

Stroman 1-hits MLB-best Rays in Cubs' win

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Marcus Stroman raised both arms and pounded his glove as the crowd at Wrigley Field roared following the final out.

He had silenced the team with the best record in baseball. And he did it with a performance he will never forget.

Stroman threw a one-hitter, and the Chicago Cubs beat the major league-leading Tampa Bay Rays 1-0 on Monday.

Stroman (5-4) dazzled in his fourth complete game and second shutout in nine major league seasons. His only other shutout was against the Cubs during his 2014 rookie season with Toronto.

“Throwing a CG at Wrigley, that’s like one of the top moments of my career,” Stroman said. “The energy. When I walk out there 40 minutes before the game, there’s a massive cheering section already.”

Stroman gave them plenty to cheer once he stepped on the mound.

He set a season high with 105 pitches and matched one with eight strikeouts. The right-hander walked one in winning his third straight start and helped the Cubs bounce back from a weekend sweep by Cincinnati.

The only hit Stroman allowed was when Wander Franco delivered a flare for a clean single to

left leading off the seventh. Stroman walked Brandon Lowe and got out of that jam by getting Randy Arozarena to fly out and Josh Lowe to ground into a double play. The only other Rays runner to reach base was when Luke Raley was hit by a pitch leading off the third.

“He just had really good stuff,” Rays manager Kevin Cash said. “When you have the stuff that he has, and the late movement with the sinker, we were very prepared and aware of what he was going to do. But sometimes all that awareness, it doesn’t matter if the pitcher’s executing like he did today.”

Royals 7, Cardinals 0: Josh Staumont and Mike Mayers came within six outs of the first combined perfect game in major league history before Nolan Arenado lined a leadoff single in the eighth inning of visiting Kansas City’s win over St. Louis.

Staumont, a 29-year-old right-hander, served as the opener in a planned bullpen game for the Royals. He made his first major league start in his 167th appearance and struck out two in a 1-2-3 inning, throwing 14 pitches.

Mayers, a 31-year-old left-hander, made his third appearance for the Royals this season after eight starts at Triple-A Omaha. He retired 18 consecu-

tive batters before Arenado lined a 1-0 slider to left on his 72nd pitch.

Athletics 7, Braves 2: Ryan Noda hit a three-run homer that spoiled Michael Soroka’s long-awaited return to the majors from two separate tears of his right Achilles tendon, and host Oakland beat Atlanta to snap an 11-game losing streak with its 11th win of the season.

A’s right-hander Paul Blackburn came off the injured list to make his season debut, striking out six with a pair of walks in four innings. He allowed four hits and one run as the Athletics (11-45) won for only the second time in 16 games. Lucas Erceg (1-0) pitched three shutout innings of hitless relief with four strikeouts for his first major league win.

Angels 6, White Sox 4: Brandon Drury and Matt Thaiss homered as visiting Los Angeles spoiled Liam Hendriks’ return for Chicago.

Hendriks pitched the eighth in his first big league appearance since he was diagnosed with stage 4 non-Hodgkin lymphoma. The Angels scored two runs on Zach Neto’s sacrifice fly and Mike Trout’s RBI single.

Guardians 5, Orioles 0: Logan Allen allowed three hits in seven strong innings, and visiting Cleveland broke through for four runs in the seventh on the

way to a victory over Baltimore.

Yankees 10, Mariners 4: Aaron Judge hit two homers and robbed Teoscar Hernández of one in the field with a leaping catch at the wall, leading visiting New York past Seattle.

Dodgers 6, Nationals 1: J.D. Martinez hit a three-run homer and Freddie Freeman had a two-run double during a six-run fifth inning as host Los Angeles defeated Washington.

Rangers 5, Tigers 0: Nathan Eovaldi won his sixth straight decision, Corey Seager hit a three-run homer with four RBIs and visiting Texas defeated Detroit.

Diamondbacks 7, Rockies 5: Pavin Smith hit a go-ahead, three-run homer, Drey Jameson threw 3⅓ innings of impressive relief in his return to the big leagues and host Arizona rallied from a four-run deficit to beat Colorado.

Twins 7, Astros 5 (10): Rookie Royce Lewis homered and drove in four runs in his season debut and Ryan Jeffers hit a two-run shot in the 10th inning as visiting Minnesota beat Houston.

Giants 14, Pirates 4: Rookie Patrick Bailey had four RBIs on his 24th birthday as host San Francisco routed Pittsburgh, which slipped under .500 for the first time since the opening weekend of the season.

No. 2 Medvedev loses to 172nd-ranked qualifier in French Open

Associated Press

PARIS — Second-seeded Daniil Medvedev was stunned in the first round of the French Open on Tuesday, losing in five sets to Thiago Seyboth Wild, a 23-year-old from Brazil who is ranked just 172nd and was playing only his second match in the main draw of any Grand Slam tournament.

Seyboth Wild needed to go through qualifying rounds at Roland Garros just to earn a spot in the men’s bracket but looked very much like he belonged on Court Philippe Chatrier, hitting big forehands and keeping his nerve down the stretch to win 7-6 (5), 6-7 (8), 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

“I mean, I’ve watched Daniil play for like my entire junior career until today. I’ve always dreamed about playing on this court against these kinds of players. ... It’s a dream come true,” Seyboth Wild said.

Employing a high-risk, high-reward style, Seyboth Wild compiled a 69-45 edge in total winners, including 47-15 on the forehand side.

Medvedev, the U.S. Open champion two years ago, was never known for his prowess on red clay — he began his French Open career with a 0-4 record. But he’s been showing signs of improvement, reaching the quarterfinals in Paris in 2021 and the fourth

round last year, and claiming a title on the surface in Rome this month.

He just could never quite get the upper hand against Seyboth Wild during a match that lasted 4 hours, 15 minutes.

Medvedev, who was treated by a trainer for a nosebleed in the third set, didn’t help himself by double-faulting a career-high 15 times.

This already had been a breakthrough trip to Paris for Seyboth Wild: He had tried eight previous times to qualify for a major tournament and failed to do so eight times, winning a total of just one match in all of those appearances.