

US set for third major Philippine exercise

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

U.S. Marines and sailors will soon participate in a major land-based exercise in the Philippines alongside forces from the host nation, Japan, South Korea and the United Kingdom.

Between 1,500 and 2,000 American troops will join 12 days of regional defense training at sites across the Philippines during Kamandag, an annual exercise that begins May 26, Capt. Johnny Fischer, a spokesman for Marine Rotation Force-Darwin, said Monday.

The rotational force recently arrived in Australia's Northern Territory for a six-month deployment but has already taken part in two other Philippine exercises, including Balikatan, which began April 21 and concludes Friday.

A rifle company of up to 200

Marines from the rotational force joined Marine Exercise 2025 on Mindanao, in the southern Philippines, from March 31 to April 11.

Kamandag — a Tagalog acronym that means "Cooperation of Warriors of the Sea" — will include maritime key terrain security, defensive counterlanding live-fire drills, littoral maneuver and amphibious operations, according to a Sunday news release from the Marine Corps. There will also be humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training.

Troops will also conduct exchanges in logistics, engineering, special operations, unmanned aerial reconnaissance, marksmanship, air defense, medical readiness, and chemical, biological radiological and nuclear training, the release said.

The exercise comes amid ris-

ing tensions between the Philippine and Chinese coast guards over disputed territory in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone.

"Training shoulder to shoulder with our Philippine Marine Corps partners isn't just about building interoperability — it's about forging trust in the crucible of shared hardship and preparing together to respond with speed and precision to any crisis, anywhere, anytime," the rotational force's commander, Col. Jason Aramas, said in the release.

Interoperability is a term the military often uses to describe the ability of a country's armed forces to use another country's training methods and equipment.

Aramas recently observed U.S. Marines training on Palawan, a western Philippine island near contested South Chi-

na Sea waters.

This year's Kamandag will take place across multiple locations, including Palawan and the islands of Luzon, Tawi-Tawi and Batanes, near Taiwan, the release said.

Units from the I and III Marine Expeditionary Forces, including the 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment and the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, are also slated to participate.

"This year's KAMANDAG is a testament to the enduring partnership between the Philippine Marine Corps and the United States Marine Corps," Maj. Gen. Arturo Rojas, commandant of the Philippine marine corps, said in the release. "By operating jointly in complex environments, we are strengthening our capability to defend the archipelago and contributing to a secure and stable Indo-Pacific."

WWII-era ship sinks before it could be used for target

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

A decommissioned U.S. warship, originally selected for target practice during a joint military exercise, sank unexpectedly on its own Monday off the Philippines' western coast.

The former USS Brattleboro took on water while being positioned approximately 30 nautical miles west of San Antonio, near Subic Bay, according to a statement by Navy spokesman Lt. Carlos Gomez.

The vessel sank at 7:20 a.m. and "no personnel were injured," he said.

The ship — a former rescue patrol craft and World War II veteran — had been chosen as a

target for fighter-bomber drills during Balikatan, the largest annual joint military exercise in the Philippines.

This year's event, which began April 21 and ends Friday, includes 9,000 U.S. and 5,000 Philippine troops.

The Brattleboro was thoroughly cleaned before being towed to sea to minimize its environmental impact, Gomez said.

"As is common, the vessel was selected because it exceeded its service life and was no longer suitable for normal operations," he said.

The maritime strike portion of the exercise, which includes simulated fire missions, was not

affected by the ship's unscheduled sinking, Gomez said.

The Brattleboro earned three battle stars during WWII. It was laid down in Chicago on Oct. 28, 1943, by the Pullman Standard Car Manufacturing Co., launched in New Orleans on March 1, 1944, and commissioned on May 26, 1944, according to the Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships.

That summer, the vessel transported 26 German prisoners — captured U-boat sailors — from Bermuda to Norfolk, Va. By October, it was assisting in evacuating wounded troops during the Allied invasion of the Philippines and later performed similar duties during

the Battle of Okinawa.

After the war, the Brattleboro served 18 years as a Navy experimental vessel before being decommissioned in November 1965 and transferred to the South Vietnamese navy. After the fall of Saigon, the ship escaped Vietnam and was incorporated into the Philippine navy in 1976 as BRP Miguel Malvar, according to the Philippine News Agency.

The ship was designated as a target for Philippine FA-50PH fighter jets and U.S. F-16 Fighting Falcons, F/A-18 Hornets and F-35 Lightning IIs, said assistant exercise director Brig. Gen. Michael Logico, according to the news agency.

Japanese shipyard overhauls US vessel

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

A U.S. Navy vessel recently completed a five-month overhaul at a Japanese shipyard, a milestone for the service as it seeks to expand joint repair capabilities with allied countries.

The USS Miguel Keith, an expeditionary mobile base, wrapped up its stint at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in Yokohama on April 15, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a news release Friday.

While Japanese shipyards have provided maintenance service to U.S. warships, the Miguel Keith's overhaul marked the first time a Japanese shipyard had bid on and won a "contract of this scale"

from the U.S. Navy, according to the command.

The \$12 million project included replacing 56,000 square feet of nonskid decking and over 300 feet of flight deck catwalk handrails, installing four new galley ovens, repainting the ship's hull and further deck replacement and preservation, the release said.

The commander of the U.S. Ship Repair Facility and Japan Regional Maintenance Center, Capt. Wendel Penetrante, said contracting with the Japanese shipyard allowed his organization to continue maintenance on three other warships at Yokosuka Naval Base.

"We were even able to complete one of those availabilities

3 days early and respond to two unplanned voyage repairs," he said.

U.S. law generally prohibits American warships from undergoing major overhauls or repairs in foreign shipyards. But the Miguel Keith contract was exempt because the project took less than six months to complete and the ship wasn't due in the U.S. within 15 months, according to INDOPACOM.

The command did not immediately respond to an email requesting additional information.

The Navy achieved a similar milestone March 12, when the South Korean shipyard Hanwha Ocean on Geoje Island

completed a seven-month overhaul on the dry cargo ship USNS Wally Schirra.

The commander of U.S. Naval Forces Korea, Rear Adm. Neil Koprowski, described that overhaul as a "landmark achievement," in a March 13 news release from U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Last week, Secretary of the Navy John Phelan visited shipyards in Japan and South Korea as part of his first international tour since taking office.

Among his top priorities was exploring options for further cooperation for military ship repair and commercial ship building, he told Stars and Stripes aboard the USS George Washington at Yokosuka on April 28.

Ukraine gets go-head to buy F-16 equipment, services

By LARA KORTE
Stars and Stripes

Ukraine has the State Department's go-ahead for a \$310.5 million deal with the U.S. for training and equipment related to its F-16s, a purchase that will also foster greater cooperation with the Air Force, according to the agency.

The proposed sale, approved last week and pending final au-

thorization from Congress, will improve Ukraine's ability to meet threats by ensuring that its pilots are well-trained, the department said in a statement.

The sale, which includes aircraft upgrades, personnel training, software and logistics support, comes shortly after the two nations signed a deal that will give the U.S. access to

Ukraine's vast minerals and natural resources cache.

The announcement also came amid reports that Ukrainian forces had shot down two Russian Su-30 fighter jets using Magura-7 sea drones equipped with modified U.S.-made missiles, pulling off what Ukraine said is a military first.

Ukrainian military intelligence released footage of one

of the strikes, which it said happened May 2.

During a meeting with President Donald Trump on the sidelines of Pope Francis' funeral at the Vatican in April, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that he wanted to strengthen his country's air defenses and do so by purchasing American weapons.

US Navy has awarded Electric Boat another \$12 billion

Hartford Courant

The U.S. Navy announced Wednesday that it has awarded another \$12.4 billion to General Dynamics Electric Boat as payment for two previously authorized Virginia class submarines, as well as salary increases for shipyard workers.

The Navy's agreement to boost pay comes as Electric Boat hires at unprecedented levels in an effort to meet ag-

gressive Pentagon goals for modernization of the U.S. nuclear submarine fleet in the face of China's rapid naval expansion and its aggressive moves in the Indo-Pacific.

U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, ranking member of the Seapower Subcommittee of the U.S. House Armed Services Committee, called the money for wages "a welcomed development for our effort to hire and retain a highly-

skilled shipyard workforce in southern New England."

In addition to the salary money, the contract award includes billions of dollars more for completion and modification of two submarines approved in last year's budget.

The shipyard has been hiring at a furious pace — 5,300 in 2023, 4,100 in 2024, and another 3,000 projected this year — to meet the Navy's production

schedule. In addition to the nuclear-powered Virginia class attack submarines, EB is building the massive nuclear powered Columbia class ballistic missile submarines, which the Pentagon has made its priority project.

The Navy wants more than 60 Virginia submarines at more than \$4 million each and a dozen Columbias, which cost more than \$9 million a ship.

Trump says he'll reopen, expand Alcatraz

Associated Press

NEW YORK — President Donald Trump says he is directing his government to reopen and expand Alcatraz, the notorious former prison on a hard-to-reach California island off San Francisco that has been closed for more than 60 years.

In a post on his Truth Social site Sunday evening, Trump wrote that, “For too long, America has been plagued by vicious, violent, and repeat Criminal Offenders, the dregs of society, who will never contribute anything other than Misery and Suffering. When we were a more serious Nation, in times past, we did not hesitate to lock up the most dangerous criminals, and keep them far away

from anyone they could harm. That’s the way it’s supposed to be.”

“That is why, today,” he said, “I am directing the Bureau of Prisons, together with the Department of Justice, FBI, and Homeland Security, to reopen a substantially enlarged and rebuilt ALCATRAZ, to house America’s most ruthless and violent Offenders.”

Trump’s directive to rebuild and reopen the long-shuttered penitentiary was the latest salvo in his effort to overhaul how and where federal prisoners and immigration detainees are locked up. But such a move would likely be an expensive and challenging proposition. The prison was closed in 1963 due to crumbling

infrastructure and the high costs of repairing and supplying the island facility, because everything from fuel to food had to be brought by boat.

Bringing the facility up to modern-day standards would require massive investments at a time when the Bureau of Prisons has been shuttering prisons for similar infrastructure issues.

The prison — infamously inescapable due to the strong ocean currents and cold Pacific waters that surround it — was known as the “The Rock” and housed some of the nation’s most notorious criminals, including gangster Al Capone and George “Machine Gun” Kelly.

It has long been part of the

cultural imagination and has been the subject of numerous movies, including “The Rock” starring Sean Connery and Nicolas Cage.

Still in the 29 years it was open, 36 men attempted 14 separate escapes, according to the FBI. Nearly all were caught or didn’t survive the attempt.

The fate of three particular inmates — John Anglin, his brother Clarence and Frank Morris — is of some debate and was dramatized in the 1979 film “Escape from Alcatraz” starring Clint Eastwood.

Alcatraz Island is now a major tourist site that is operated by the National Park Service and is a designated National Historic Landmark.

Trump suggests some trade deals may come this week

Bloomberg News

President Donald Trump suggested that his administration could strike trade deals with some countries as soon as this week, offering the prospect of relief for trading partners seeking to avoid higher U.S. import duties.

“It could very well be,” Trump told reporters on Sunday when asked whether any trade agreements were coming this week. He didn’t specify any

countries.

“We’re negotiating with many countries, but at the end of this, I’ll set my own deals — because I set the deal, they don’t set the deal,” Trump said aboard Air Force One.

“You keep asking the same question: ‘When will you agree?’ It’s up to me, it’s not up to them,” he added.

Trump also signaled that his aides are having conversations with counterparts from China,

the biggest target of Trump’s trade policies.

China has been the focus of Trump’s tariff campaign, leading Beijing to retaliate against U.S. levies, which now run as high as 145% on Chinese goods. China has been hinting at a possible thaw in recent days, while Trump told NBC News in comments broadcast Sunday that he’s willing to lower U.S. tariffs at some point.

In response to a question on

Air Force One, Trump said he has no plans to speak with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump’s sweeping tariff policies have whipsawed global markets in recent weeks, sparking fears of an economic downturn and weighing on the U.S. dollar.

Last week, data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis showed U.S. gross domestic product contracted for the first time in three years.

US says it'll pay undocumented immigrants \$1,000 to leave

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s administration said Monday that it is going to pay immigrants who are in the United States illegally and return to their home country voluntarily \$1,000 as it pushes forward with its mass deportation agenda.

The Department of Homeland Security said in a news release that it’s also paying for travel assistance and that those

people who use an app called CBP Home to tell the government that they plan to return home will be “deprioritized” for detention and removal by immigration enforcement.

“If you are here illegally, self-deportation is the best, safest and most cost-effective way to leave the United States to avoid arrest,” Secretary Kristi Noem said. “DHS is now offering illegal aliens financial travel assistance and a stipend to return to

their home country through the CBP Home App.”

Trump made immigration enforcement and the mass deportation of immigrants in the U.S. illegally a centerpiece of his campaign, but the implementation of the policy is a costly, resource-intensive endeavor.

While the Republican administration is pushing Congress for a massive increase in resources for the Immigration

and Customs Enforcement department responsible for removing people from the country, it’s also pushing people in the country illegally to “self-deport.”

It has coupled this self-deportation push with television ads threatening action against people in the U.S. illegally and social media images showing immigration enforcement arrests and migrants being sent to a prison in El Salvador.

Israel approves plan to capture all of Gaza

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israel approved plans Monday to capture the entire Gaza Strip and remain in the Palestinian territory for an unspecified amount of time, two Israeli officials said, a move that, if implemented, would vastly expand Israel's operations in Gaza and likely bring fierce international opposition.

The new plan, which was approved in an early morning vote by Israeli Cabinet ministers, also calls for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to move to Gaza's south. That would likely amount to their forcible displacement and exacerbate an already dire humanitarian crisis.

Details of the plan were not formally announced, and its exact timing and implementation were not clear. Its approval came hours after the Israeli military chief said the army was calling up tens of thousands of reserve soldiers.

The plan may be another measure by Israel to try to pressure Hamas into making concessions in ceasefire negotiations.

A third person, a defense official, said the new plan would not begin until after President Donald Trump wraps up his expected visit to the Middle East this month, allowing for the possibility that Israel might agree to a ceasefire in the meantime. All three officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were discussing military plans.

Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005 after a decades-long occupation and then imposed a blockade on the territory along with Egypt. Capturing and potentially occupying the territory again for an indefinite period would not only further dash hopes for Palestinian statehood, it would embed Israel inside a population that is deeply hostile to it and raise questions about how Israel plans to

govern the territory, especially at a time when it is considering how to implement Trump's vision to take over Gaza.

Since Israel ended a ceasefire with the Hamas militant group in mid-March, Israel has unleashed fierce strikes on the territory that have killed hundreds. It has captured swaths of territory and now controls roughly 50% of Gaza. Before the truce ended, Israel halted all humanitarian aid into the territory, including food, fuel and water, setting off what is believed to be the worst humanitarian crisis in nearly 19 months of war.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostages. Israel says 59 captives remain in Gaza, although about 35 are believed to be dead.

Israel's offensive has displaced more than 90% of Gaza's population and, Palestinian health offi-

cials say, killed more than 52,000 people there, many of them women and children. The officials do not distinguish between combatants and civilians in their count.

The Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza said Monday that the bodies of 33 people killed by Israeli strikes have been brought to hospitals over the past 24 hours. The Israeli military offered no immediate comment on the strikes.

The Israeli officials said the plan included the "capturing of the strip and the holding of territories." The plan would also seek to prevent Hamas from distributing humanitarian aid, a role that Israel says strengthens the group's rule in Gaza. It also accuses Hamas of keeping the aid for itself, without providing evidence. Aid workers deny there is a significant diversion of aid to militants, saying the U.N. strictly monitors distribution.

Trump blasts Mexico for rejecting offer on troops

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — President Donald Trump on Sunday said Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum rejected his proposal to send U.S. troops to Mexico to help thwart the illegal drug trade because she is fearful of the country's powerful cartels.

The comments by Trump came a day after Sheinbaum confirmed that Trump pressed her in a call last month to accept a bigger role for the U.S. military in combating drug cartels in Mexico. Trump said it was "true" that he proposed sending the troops to Mexico and lashed into Sheinbaum for dismissing the idea.

"Well she's so afraid of the cartels she can't walk, so you know that's the reason," Trump said in comments to reporters aboard Air Force One on Sun-

day. "And I think she's a lovely woman. The president of Mexico is a lovely woman, but she is so afraid of the cartels that she can't even think straight."

The U.S. military presence along the southern border with Mexico has increased steadily in recent months, following Trump's order in January to increase the army's role in stemming the flow of migrants.

The U.S. Northern Command has surged troops and equipment to the border, and sought expanded authority for U.S. Special Forces to work closely with Mexican forces conducting operations against cartels.

But Sheinbaum said that U.S. troops operating inside Mexico was going too far.

She said on Saturday that she told Trump their two countries "can work together, but you in your territory and us in ours."

Music mogul Combs' sex trafficking trial begins

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The federal sex trafficking trial of Sean "Diddy" Combs, the hip-hop entrepreneur whose wildly successful career has been dotted by allegations of violence, began on Monday in New York City with jury selection that could last several days. Opening statements by lawyers and the start of testimony are expected next week.

Several dozen prospective jurors got a brief description of the sex trafficking and racketeering conspiracy charges against Combs from the judge, Arun Subramanian, who reminded them that Combs had pleaded not guilty and was presumed innocent.

As the judge spoke, Combs sat with his lawyers. He wore a sweater over a white collared shirt and gray slacks, which the judge had allowed rather than jail clothing. Combs, 55, has been

held in a grim federal lockup in Brooklyn since his arrest last September. His hair and goatee were almost fully gray because dye isn't allowed in jail.

Unlike other recent celebrity trials, Combs' court case won't be broadcast live because federal courtrooms don't allow electronic recordings inside. The trial is expected to take at least eight weeks. If convicted, he faces the possibility of decades in prison.

Several prospective jurors indicated they had seen news reports featuring a key piece of evidence in the case: a video of the hip-hop mogul hitting and kicking one of his accusers in 2016.

The 17-page indictment against Combs alleges that Combs engaged in a two-decade pattern of abusive behavior against women and others, with the help of people in his entourage and employees from his network of businesses.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Cops: Man killed deputy after son killed by police

OH CINCINNATI — A man who struck and killed a county deputy with his car Friday is the father of a teen who was shot and killed by a Cincinnati police officer a day earlier as officers were responding to a call about a stolen car, police said. Authorities said the crash appeared to be intentional.

The driver of the car, Rodney Hinton Jr., 38, was charged with aggravated murder in the deputy's death, police said.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine said in a statement that he was "sickened by what appears to be an intentional act of violence."

A few hours before the crash, Hinton and other family members met at the police chief's office and watched a police body camera video showing an officer shoot the teen, said Michael Wright, an attorney hired by the family of 18-year-old Ryan Hinton.

Ryan Hinton was shot twice and killed by police Thursday during a chase. The officer who fired told investigators that the suspect pointed a gun at him, said Cincinnati's police chief. Police shared photos Friday of a semiautomatic handgun that they said he was carrying and another gun that was found in the car.

Small plane crashes into neighborhood, killing 3

CA SIMI VALLEY — A small plane crashed into a neighborhood in Simi Valley on Saturday afternoon, killing two people and a dog aboard

the aircraft and damaging two homes in the Wood Ranch section of the community, authorities said.

The plane crashed into the backyard and dining room of Arman Hovakemian's home. Hovakemian told the Los Angeles Times that he was doing yard work when he noticed the plane above, circling lower and lower in the hillside neighborhood.

He ran inside to get his wife, Armineh, and their Pomeranian dog, Koko, and they fled the property. A loud bang followed and the fuselage landed where he had been standing in the yard just moments before, he said.

Wreckage of the single-engine Van's RV-10, which is a popular home-built plane sold in kit form, could be seen between the two homes. Both homes sustained structural damage and were impacted by the fire, authorities said. Simi Valley Police Department said the pilot, a passenger and a dog in the aircraft died.

Driver in tour van crash licensed in different state

MT WEST YELLOWSTONE — Idaho State Police said Saturday that the driver of the tour van involved in a deadly collision with a pickup truck was licensed in California and the company that organized the trip was Ctour Holiday LLC, a large tour operator that provides international travel services.

The pickup truck driver and six people in the Mercedes van were killed in the crash, which occurred Thursday evening on U.S. Highway 20 near Henry's Lake State Park in eastern Ida-

ho as the tour group was headed to Yellowstone National Park.

Police identified the pickup driver as 25-year-old Isaih Moreno of Humble, Texas. They have not said whether the driver of the van was among the dead.

The van passengers included 12 people of Chinese nationality and one Italian. Police said they were working closely with Ctour Holiday and in contact with the two countries' consulates.

Man sentenced in attack on Muslim boy, mother

IL JOLIET — An Illinois landlord who killed a 6-year-old Muslim boy and severely injured the boy's mother in a brutal hate-crime attack days after the war in Gaza began was sentenced Friday to 53 years in prison.

Joseph Czuba, 73, was found guilty in February of murder, attempted murder and hate-crime charges in the 2023 death of Wadee Alfayoumi and the wounding of his mother, Hanan Shaheen.

Judge Amy Bertani-Tomczak sentenced Czuba to 30 years in the boy's death and another 20 years consecutively for the attack on Shaheen. The judge also sentenced him to three years imprisonment for hate crimes.

Second person charged with arson in wildfire

NJ PINE BARRENS — A second person has been charged with arson in the wildfire in New Jersey's Pine Barrens that has grown into the state's second-largest fire in nearly two decades.

Prosecutors said Friday that a

17-year-old was arrested and charged with arson, aggravated arson and hindering apprehension. His name was not released because he is a juvenile.

The fire that has been burning for nearly two weeks is 80% contained, according to the state Forest Fire Service. The blaze in southern New Jersey's Ocean County has spread across 24 square miles. No injuries have been reported.

Joseph Kling, 19, from Waretown, was charged with arson April 24. Prosecutors said Kling and a few other people took wood pallets from a recycling center, drove to a heavily wooded area and used gasoline to start the fire.

Olympic track medalist faces battery charges

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — An Olympic track medalist is charged with punching a woman, a hurdler who also competed in the Olympics.

A Broward County Sheriff's Office arrest report said Fred Kerley, 29, allegedly hit Alaysha Johnson with a closed fist at a hotel on Thursday. Kerley is charged with misdemeanor battery in the incident that left Johnson with a bloody nose.

Kerley won a silver medal in the 100-meter race at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo and a bronze medal in the same event at the Paris Olympic Games in 2024, where Johnson also competed. The arrest report said they previously had a relationship and got into a heated argument at the hotel where they were staying before a track meet in the area.

— From wire reports

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Curry, Hield lift Warriors past Rockets

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Buddy Hield became an unlikely playoff hero for the Golden State Warriors, leading the team early in Game 7 against the Houston Rockets before Stephen Curry took over late.

Curry scored 14 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter, Hield made nine 3-pointers and scored 33 points, and the Warriors advanced to the Western Conference semifinals with a 103-89 win over the Rockets on Sunday night.

"We were lucky to get out of this series," Golden State coach Steve Kerr said. "That was an incredibly impressive display of resolve."

The Warriors will face the Timberwolves on Tuesday night in Minnesota.

After not scoring in Game 6, Hield had a scorching first half with six 3-pointers and 22 points to carry Golden State to a 12-point lead, with Curry scoring just three points before the break. Then Curry took over in

the closing minutes and performed his signature "night night" gesture as the Warriors put Houston away.

"This was not just a lights-out shooting performance for Buddy," Kerr said. "It was a two-way performance. I thought his defense was fantastic."

Golden State became the seventh No. 7 seed in NBA history to advance to the semifinals and eliminated the Rockets in the playoffs for a fifth time. It sent James Harden-led Houston packing four times between 2015 and 2019.

None of the players from those teams remain with the Rockets, leading Fred VanVleet to say before the series that "this ain't that team."

Draymond Green, who helped beat Houston in Game 7 in 2018 to advance to the NBA Finals, mentioned VanVleet's quote before continuing.

"It's that organization though," he said. "We like coming to the city playing in these situations. It's been good to us."

Hield was 9-for-11 from 3-point range, setting an NBA record for a Game 7 and making more 3s than the Rockets, who were 6 of 18 from long range.

"Just trying to seize the moment and relish the moment and just be in the moment at the same time," Hield said. "Just trying to be myself. But tonight was fun."

Curry added 10 rebounds and seven assists.

Amen Thompson scored 24 points to lead Houston, which forced Game 7 with two straight wins but couldn't put away the experienced Warriors.

"We had our chances in this series," Houston coach Ime Udoka said. "We all expected to continue to be playing, so it's a letdown. It's going to sting now, but use it as motivation and let's all come back better."

Golden State led by eight entering the fourth and opened the quarter with a 5-0 run, capped by a 3 from Curry, to make it 75-62.

The Rockets scored the next

six points, but the Warriors used a 7-2 spurt with four points from Curry to make it 82-70 with about seven minutes left.

Pacers 121, Cavaliers 112:

Tyrese Haliburton made a go-ahead 3-pointer midway through the fourth quarter that sparked a decisive burst for visiting Indiana, which stunned top-seeded Cleveland in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Haliburton finished with 22 points and 13 assists, and he also made key plays on the defensive end, blocking a 3-point attempt by Max Strus with 2:12 left and converting it into a layup for a 10-point lead.

Andrew Nembhard added a playoff career-high 23 points and made five 3-pointers for the fourth-seeded Pacers, who finished 19 of 36 beyond the arc. The Cavaliers, who were second in the NBA during the regular season with 15.9 3s per game, were 9 of 38.

Donovan Mitchell led Cleveland with 33 points.

Lowry scores late in 2OT, caps Jets' rally past Blues

Associated Press

WINNIPEG, Manitoba — Adam Lowry scored on a tipped shot 16:10 into the second overtime and the Winnipeg Jets rallied to beat the St. Louis Blues 4-3 on Sunday night to advance to the second round of the NHL playoffs.

Cole Perfetti had two goals, Vladislav Namestnikov also scored, and Kyle Connor and Neal Pionk each had three assists for Winnipeg, which scored twice in the final two minutes of regulation to tie the score. Connor Hellebuyck finished with 26 saves.

Lowry deflected Pionk's shot from the right point late in the second overtime to end the third-longest Game 7 in NHL history at 96:10.

"It's incredibly special," Lowry said. "I probably dreamt it was a little nicer than just going off my leg, but it's one of those things, on the outdoor rink, in the driveway, you dream about being the hero in a Game 7 and giving yourself a chance to continue chasing a Stanley Cup."

The Jets next face Dallas starting Wednesday at home.

Jordan Kyrou, Mathieu Joseph and Radek Faksa scored for St. Louis. Jordan Binnington had 43 saves.

Winnipeg won the franchise's first Presidents' Trophy after having a league-best 56-22-4 regular-season record and were the favorites against the eighth-seeded Blues. They needed a late comeback to avoid getting

knocked out in the first round for a third straight year.

"To lose in those first rounds, those were heartbreaking," said Jets first-year coach Scott Arniel, who was the club's associate coach the previous two seasons. "Last year, obviously with the season we had (52 wins), to do it this year we didn't want to go out. That was one of the messages I said to these guys, 'Bring your best game forward and have no regrets.' And that's what it was all about."

Winnipeg was down 3-1 in the third period when Namestnikov scored with 1:56 remaining after his shot went in off St. Louis defenseman Ryan Suter.

With Hellebuyck pulled for an extra skater, the Jets appeared to tie it 50 seconds later,

but a review ruled the puck didn't cross the goal line.

Perfetti then scored his second redirected goal of the game with 3 seconds remaining to lift 15,225 frenzied white-clad fans out of their seats.

"Even down 3-1, there was no doubt," Perfetti said. "We had belief in one another and belief that we were going to come back. I'm just so proud of this group and so proud to be a part of it."

Winnipeg went on the power play 6:20 into the first overtime when Blues captain Brayden Schenn was called for delay of game. The Jets tried to pound the puck in the crease, but Binnington covered it. He also stopped Nikolaj Ehlers on a breakaway.

Royals hit club-record 7 HRs to top Orioles

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Maikel Garcia hit two of Kansas City's franchise-record seven home runs, a rare long-ball barrage that enabled the Royals to beat the Baltimore Orioles 11-6 on Sunday.

Bobby Witt Jr. broke a 5-5 tie with a seventh-inning solo shot off Yennier Cano (0-1), and Vinnie Pasquantino followed with drive into the right-field seats. Cano had not allowed a run in his previous 12 outings this season.

Jonathan India hit his first home run with Kansas City, and Luke Maile and Michael Massey also went deep for the Royals. Massey's ninth-inning shot set the club record for home runs in a game.

"It felt great," said India, who hit 63 homers in his first four seasons with Cincinnati before he was traded to KC in November. "I put a good swing on a good pitch. Thank goodness they have a short fence out there. I thought it was just a ball in the gap."

The Royals entered with a major league-low 18 homers in their first 34 games. They hadn't hit as many as six in a game since 2020.

"Pretty remarkable," manager Matt Quatraro said. "We made so much how we struggled offensively. A day like that is very satisfying."

Jackson Holliday went deep twice for Baltimore in his first career multihomer game. Ryan O'Hearn and Cedric Mullins each hit a solo shot.

Cardinals 6-5, Mets 5-4: Victor Scott II robbed Juan Soto of a three-run homer and later hit a tiebreaking double, leading host St. Louis to victory over New York for a doubleheader sweep.

The Cardinals won the opener 6-5. Willson Contreras drove in three runs on three hits, including a homer, and Brendan Donovan had two hits and two RBIs.

The nightcap was tied at 4-all

in the fourth inning when Soto drove a fastball to straightaway center. Scott ran back to the wall and leaped, and his glove was over the fence when he snatched the ball.

In the sixth, Scott's two-out double off Max Kranick (2-1) scored Yohel Pozo from first base.

Twins 5, Red Sox 4: Harrison Bader hit a go-ahead double off the Green Monster in the eighth inning, and Minnesota took the weekend series against Boston.

Byron Buxton hit a game-opening homer on the first pitch for the Twins, who won consecutive road games for just the second time this season.

The Red Sox had a scare when a line drive off the bat of Carlos Correa skipped off the glove and nose of ace Garret Crochet on its way to second base for a groundout. Crochet stayed in the game.

Padres 4, Pirates 0: Stephen Kolek pitched 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ scoreless innings in his first major league start and combined with four relievers for visiting San Diego's eighth shutout of the season and a victory over Pittsburgh for its fifth straight win.

Kolek was recalled from Triple-A El Paso before the game. He made 42 relief appearances for the Padres last season as a rookie. He allowed four hits, struck out four and walked two.

Xander Bogaerts had three RBIs for the Padres, who scored all their runs in the first two innings off Andrew Heaney (2-3).

Athletics 3, Marlins 2: Rookie Nick Kurtz tripled with one out in the ninth inning and scored on a pinch hit by Tyler Soderstrom to lift the visiting Athletics to a victory over Miami.

Kurtz sent an 0-1 pitch from Anthony Bender (1-1) down the left-field line and Soderstrom singled up the middle two pitches later as the Athletics improved to an AL-best 13-7 on the road.

Brewers 4, Cubs 0: Freddy Peralta pitched six sharp innings to help host Milwaukee beat Chicago, with the Brewers' lineup breaking through after an injury knocked out left-hander Shota Imanaga in the sixth inning.

The game was scoreless when Imanaga (3-2) strained his left hamstring while heading toward first base in an unsuccessful attempt to complete a 1-6-3 double play. Julian Merryweather came in and gave up four runs, two of which were inherited from Imanaga.

Guardians 5, Blue Jays 4: Tanner Bibee pitched five innings before leaving because of leg cramps, Gabriel Arias had three hits and two RBIs, and visiting Cleveland beat Toronto.

Bibee (3-2) came to the mound to warm up for the bottom of the sixth but appeared to be in discomfort, lifting his legs several times and calling the trainer out of the dugout.

Rangers 8, Mariners 1: Corey Seager and Adolis García hit two-run singles to highlight host Texas' six-run third inning, Jacob deGrom won his second start in a row and the previously run-starved Rangers beat Seattle to end a season-high four-game losing streak.

DeGrom (2-1) allowed one run and three hits in five innings. His 89 pitches were seven shy of his season high. He had three strikeouts to surpass 1,700 for his career, the 13th active major leaguer to reach the milestone.

Rays 7, Yankees 5: Jonathan Aranda homered and added a two-run single, boosting visiting Tampa Bay over New York to end the Rays' eight-game stretch of scoring four runs or fewer.

Tampa Bay matched its season high with 16 hits, including four by No. 9 hitter Taylor Walls and three each by Travis Janowski, Yandy Díaz and Aranda. Brandon Lowe hit a two-run

single and speedy Chandler Simpson scored from second on an infield hit.

Diamondbacks 11, Phillies 9 (10): Josh Naylor hit an RBI single in visiting Arizona's three-run 10th inning, and the Diamondbacks topped Philadelphia to salvage the finale of their weekend series.

Geraldo Perdomo and Corbin Carroll each had three RBIs for Arizona, which led 7-2 after five innings.

White Sox 5, Astros 4 (7): Luis Robert Jr. tied it with an RBI single with two outs in the sixth inning, stole second base and scored the go-ahead run on Edgar Quero's single as host Chicago rallied to beat Houston in a game shortened to seven innings by rain.

The game was delayed for 80 minutes before being called. It was the White Sox's second series victory of the season and their first series win against the Astros since July 2021. Chicago had lost or split its last six series with Houston.

Tigers 13, Angels 1: Trey Sweeney and Kerry Carpenter each homered and had four hits, and they combined to drive in 11 runs as visiting Detroit pounded Los Angeles to win three of four in the series.

Reese Olson (4-2) tossed 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ shutout innings, allowing three hits and three walks while striking out eight. Brennan Haniffee allowed a run in 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings. Beau Brieske and Will Vest closed it out.

Giants 9, Rockies 3: Willy Adames homered twice and drove in three runs, helping host San Francisco beat Colorado.

Nationals 4, Reds 1: Luis García Jr. homered during visiting Washington's three-run seventh inning, and the Nationals beat Cincinnati.

Braves 4, Dodgers 3: Austin Riley hit two two-run homers, and host Atlanta stopped Los Angeles' seven-game winning streak.

Logano earns first Cup win of season

Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Reigning NASCAR Cup champion Joey Logano overcame a lot to finally get his first victory this season.

It came a week after Team Penske teammate Austin Cindric's win at Talladega, where Logano had a fifth-place finish that became 39th after a post-race inspection found an issue with the spoiler on his No. 22 Ford. There was also Logano's expletive-laden rant on the radio toward his teammate in the middle of that race that the two smoothed out during the week. Oh, and he started 27th at Texas after a bad qualifying effort on the 1½-mile track.

But Logano surged ahead on the restart in overtime Sunday to win in the 11th race this year. He led only seven of the 271 laps, four more than scheduled.

"After what happened last week, to be able to rebound and come right back, it's a total '22'

way of doing things. So proud of the team," Logano said.

On the final restart after the 12th caution, Logano was on the inside of his other teammate, Ryan Blaney. But Logano pulled away on the backstretch and stayed easily in front the final 1½ laps, while Ross Chastain then passed Blaney to finish second ahead of him.

"Just slowly, methodically," Logano said of his progression to the front. "Just kept grinding, a couple here and a couple there and eventually get a win here."

Logano got his 37th career victory, getting the lead for the first time on lap 264. He went low to complete a pass of Michael McDowell.

"I mean there's always a story next week, right," Logano said. "So I told my wife last week before we left, I said watch me go win this one. It's just how we do stuff."

On a caution with 47 laps left, McDowell took only two tires

and moved up 15 spots to second. He ended up leading 19 laps, but got loose a few laps after getting passed by Logano and crashed to bring out the caution that sent the race to OT.

"We were giving it everything we had there to try to keep track position," McDowell said. "Joey got a run there, and I tried to block it. I went as far as I think you could probably go. When Blaney slid in front of me, it just took the air off of it and I just lost the back of it. I still had the fight in me, but I probably should have conceded at that point."

Fiery end for Hamlin

Denny Hamlin had finished on the lead lap in 21 consecutive races, but a fiery finish on lap 75 ended that streak which had matched the eighth-longest in NASCAR history. Hamlin was the first car out of the race.

After the No. 11 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota lost power, something blew up when Ham-

lin recycled the engine. There were flames coming out from under the car and it was engulfed in smoke by time it rolled to a stop on the inside of the track and he climbed out unharmed.

Odds and ends

Hamlin, William Byron, Kyle Larson and Chase Elliott remained the top four in season points. ... Elliott left Texas last spring with his first victory after 42 races and 18 months without one. He hasn't won since, and now has another long winless drought — this one 38 races and now nearly 13 months after finishing 16th. ... A crew member for Christopher Bell crawled in through the passenger side of the No. 20 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota and was fully in the car to reconnect an air hose the driver's helmet during a caution in the second stage. It took twice climbing into the car to resolve the issue.

Piastrì claims fourth F1 win of season at Miami GP

Associated Press

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — The first time Oscar Piastrì arrived at the Miami Grand Prix as a Formula 1 driver, he was in the slowest car in the field and only narrowly avoided finishing last.

Fast-forward two years and Piastrì and McLaren Racing have come full circle.

Piastrì maintained his advantage in the F1 championship fight by winning at Miami on Sunday for his fourth win through six races this season. Piastrì has won three consecutive F1 races for McLaren Racing, where he and teammate Lando Norris are trying to dethrone four-time defending champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull.

McLaren has won Miami the last two years, with Norris on

top last season for his first career F1 victory.

"It's just incredible, the hard work that's gone in," Piastrì said of McLaren. "I remember two years ago here in Miami, we were genuinely the slowest team. I think we got lapped twice and to now have won the Grand Prix by over 35 seconds to third is an unbelievable result of the hard work of every single person."

Piastrì is the first McLaren driver to win three consecutive F1 races in 28 years; Mika Hakkinen did it with a win in the 1997 season finale and then victories in the first two races of 1998.

He widened his lead over Norris in the driver standings to 16 points, while Verstappen trails Piastrì by 32 points.

Norris' win at Miami last sea-

son snapped Verstappen's two-year winning streak at the course surrounding Hard Rock Stadium.

Verstappen, who announced the birth of his first child Friday morning, has been determined to disprove the myth that fatherhood would make him a more conservative driver. It was evident as he darted away at the start and then aggressively held off Norris' challenge for the lead.

The Red Bull and McLaren were side-by-side and Norris was trying to edge ahead of the Dutchman, but he ran off track and lost four spots. Norris said Verstappen forced him off track and there was nothing he could do but try to avoid running into a wall — but F1 took no action against Verstappen.

"What can I say? If I don't go

for it, people complain. If I go for it, people complain," Norris said. "You can't win. But it really just how it is with Max — it's crash or their pass."

Verstappen was unapologetic after fading to fourth and insisted he raced within the rules.

"I mean, I had nothing to lose, so I also wanted to have a bit of fun out there," Verstappen said, adding McLaren's strong start to the season is "not frustrating at all."

Norris recovered from the early incident and picked his way back toward the front, but not before Piastrì took control away from Verstappen on the 14th of 57 laps. McLaren has decided it will allow Piastrì and Norris to race each other cleanly without team orders, and Norris was cleared to challenge his teammate for the victory.