

Fragile truce in Gaza is extended

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — A fragile truce between Israel and Hamas entered its fifth day on Tuesday, with the militant group promising to release more hostages to delay the expected resumption of the war and Israel under growing pressure to spare Palestinian civilians when it renews its offensive.

For the first time since the cease-fire began, Israel and Hamas traded accusations of a serious violation. The Israeli military said three explosive devices were detonated near its troops at two locations in northern Gaza, and that militants at one site opened fire on the troops, who fired back. It said its troops were in positions in accordance with the terms of the truce.

Hamas, in turn, accused Israel of committing a “blatant breach of the ceasefire,” triggering retaliation by its fighters, without providing details. It said in a statement that it “was still committed to the cease-fire so

long as the enemy is committed to it,” and urged mediators to intervene.

It was not immediately clear if the exchange posed a threat to the truce. But it underscored the fragility of the truce in northern Gaza, where Israeli forces and Hamas fighters are holding their positions in close proximity to each other, each preparing for a potential resumption of fighting when the cease-fire ends.

The sides agreed to extend their truce through Wednesday, with another two planned exchanges of militant-held hostages for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. Mediators met in Qatar to try to extend the cease-fire beyond Wednesday.

But Israel has vowed to resume the war with “full force” to destroy Hamas once it’s clear that no more hostages will be freed under the deal.

CIA director William Burns and David Barnea, who heads Israel’s Mossad intelligence

agency, were in Qatar, a key mediator with Hamas, to discuss extending the cease-fire and releasing more hostages, a diplomat said on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks.

Hamas and other militants are still holding about 160 people, out of the 240 seized in their Oct. 7 assault into southern Israel that ignited the war. That’s enough to potentially extend the truce for another two weeks under the existing framework brokered by the Qatar, Egypt and the U.S., but Hamas is expected to make much higher demands for the release of captive soldiers.

Israel has vowed to end Hamas’ 16-year rule in Gaza and crush its military capabilities. That would almost certainly require expanding the ground offensive from northern Gaza — where entire residential areas have been pounded into rubble — to the south, where hundreds of thousands of displaced people

have packed into overflowing United Nations shelters.

Israel blames the soaring casualty toll on Hamas, accusing the militants of using civilians as human shields while operating in dense, residential areas.

The latest freed hostages — 9 women and a 17-year-old teenager — were being flown to hospitals in Israel, where they will be reunited with their families, the Israeli military said. Around 30 Palestinian prisoners are expected to be released as part of the deal negotiated by Qatar, Egypt, and the United States.

Tuesday’s release brought to more than 60 Israelis freed under the terms of the initial four-day truce. An additional 21 hostages were released in separate negotiations, including 17 Thais, one Filipino and one Russian-Israeli. So far, 150 Palestinians have been released from Israeli prisons. Israel has said it would extend the cease-fire by one day for every 10 additional hostages released.

Blinken aims to boost support for Ukraine at NATO

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

The top American diplomat sought to invigorate support for Ukraine on Tuesday as high-level NATO talks got underway in Brussels amid concerns about war fatigue and the durability of Western military backing.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said allies will recommit to Ukraine during the two-day meeting of NATO member foreign ministers.

“We will be strongly reaffirming our support for Ukraine as it continues to face Russia’s war of aggression,” Blinken said.

Ukrainian foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba also will attend the meeting.

The Russia-Ukraine war has sparked significant changes in NATO since it began in February 2022 with a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on three sides. Among them are new defense plans individually tailored to the defense needs along NATO’s eastern flank.

But the war also has stretched alliance ammunition stockpiles and tested member states’ political willpower to keep up the flow of weaponry, which has enabled Ukraine to battle a much larger

Russian force.

As talks started, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said recent waves of drone strikes on Ukrainian cities serve as a sign of more fighting to come.

But the uncertainty surrounding future Western military spending for Ukraine comes at a critical time in the war, which has become a virtual stalemate.

In the U.S., Ukraine has emerged as a congressional flashpoint, with some Republicans favoring scaled-back support.

The European Union also has

struggled to follow through on promises of ammunition deliveries, as Western militaries face depleted stockpiles. Meanwhile, Russia’s wartime budget shows no sign of decline.

On Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin approved a 25% spending increase for a \$415 billion national budget that devotes a record amount to the military, The Associated Press reported.

Stoltenberg said allies are obliged to keep up support, not only for Ukraine but also for Western security interests in general.

N. Korean troops back at DMZ posts

BY DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

SUWON, South Korea — Seoul is considering how it will respond now that North Korean troops have returned to border guard posts after Pyongyang scrapped a peace deal in place for the past five years.

Senior military officials met Tuesday to ensure the country is ready with countermeasures, spokesman Jeon Ha Gyu said during a news briefing at the Ministry of National Defense headquarters in Seoul.

“We will implement the necessary measures in order to be fully prepared for the protection of our people,” he said.

Seoul and Washington are reviewing “corresponding countermeasures” to respond to Pyongyang, South Korean army Col. Lee Sung-jun of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told the reporters.

Neither Jeon nor Lee elaborated on what that response could entail.

Asked by a reporter whether South Korea would deploy armed troops at the border, Jeon referred the question to U.N. Command, which is responsible for the South’s security in the Demilitarized Zone.

The command did not respond to an emailed request for comment Tuesday.

North Korean troops have occupied 11 guard posts on its side of the DMZ since Friday, the Defense Ministry said in a news release Monday.

The ministry also said it observed temporary guard posts and artillery fortifications being built on the western coast.

“Our troops have been keeping a close eye on North Korea’s provocative acts and maintain-

ing a full readiness posture so that they can punish any [North Korean] provocation immediately and strongly,” the release said.

Eleven guard posts on both sides of the border were withdrawn from or demolished after the Comprehensive Military Agreement was signed in 2018. The accord, inked by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and then-President Moon Jae-in, aimed to prevent border clashes with several measures, including no-fly zones.

Seoul partially suspended the agreement on Nov. 22, a day after Pyongyang successfully placed a military spy satellite into orbit.

In multiple reports after the launch, North Korea’s state-run Korean Central News Agency said the satellite took photos of “major target regions,” including Pyeongtaek city, home of Camp Humphreys; the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson docked in Busan, South Korea; and the White House.

In response, South Korea, which had warned the North against following through with the launch, announced it would resume reconnaissance flights banned under the peace agreement.

That decision prompted Pyongyang to scrap the accord entirely Thursday; KCNA reported the regime was no longer bound to the agreement and that it would deploy armed troops and a “new-type of military hardware” at the border.

The United States and South Korea are still analyzing the North’s satellite and have yet to conclude whether it has any “military significance,” Jeon said at Tuesday’s briefing.

Task force to drain fuel dregs at Red Hill site

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — A brief but important step in permanently defueling the defunct Red Hill fuel facility in Hawaii is slated to begin — and end — next week with the draining of the dregs in 10 massive tanks.

Joint Task Force-Red Hill, the Defense Department entity overseeing emptying of the World War II-era facility, completed removal of 99.5% of 104 million gallons of fuel on Nov. 17.

Just over 103,458,000 gallons were drained in this fall via gravity through pipes leading to a fuel depot on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The fuel was loaded into

tanker ships and transferred to San Diego, Subic Bay in the Philippines, the Port of Singapore and a pair of depots in Hawaii.

On Dec. 5, the remaining 7 feet of so-called “flowable tank bottom” fuel in each tank will be drained through much smaller lines directly on the bottom the tanks, the task force announced in a news release Monday.

The 14 tanks to be drained each hold about 120,000 gallons of flowable tank-bottom fuel, the task force said in an online video. Draining each tank will take about 14 hours and is expected to be completed by Dec. 8.

The Navy will also remove about 28,000 gallons of sludge at the bottom of the tanks.

Navy removes fuel from plane that missed runway in Hawaii

Associated Press

KANEHOE BAY, Hawaii — The U.S. Navy said Monday that it has removed nearly all of the fuel from a large plane that overshot a Hawaii runway and landed in an environmentally sensitive bay, but it doesn’t have a timetable for when it will get the aircraft out of the water.

Rear Adm. Kevin Lenox said there was an estimated 2,000 gallons of fuel on board the P-8A.

“The team extracted all the fuel that they could get out of those tanks. This process was completed successfully without any fuel being released into the bay,” Lenox said at a news conference. Removing the fuel will reduce the risks for the rest of the salvage operation, he said.

There were no injuries to the nine people who were on board when the plane landed Nov. 20

in shallow water just offshore of Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay.

The base is about 10 miles from Honolulu.

Cmdr. Mark Anderson, who is leading the Navy’s mobile diving and salvage unit working at the site, said the plane was sitting on a mixture of coral and sand. The left engine is resting on coral. The plane rises a little with the tide, so the full weight of the plane is not on the coral, he said.

There may have been some minor damage to the coral but there didn’t appear to be “massive chunks missing,” Anderson said. Still, the focus currently is on stabilizing the plane and developing a plan to move it, he said.

State environmental officials expect to conduct a damage assessment once the plane is removed.

Haley: Trump brings too much chaos for White House term

Associated Press

BLUFFTON, S.C. — Nikki Haley argued Monday former President Donald Trump causes too much chaos to be successful in a second White House term, reiterating her argument about the GOP front-runner at a large town hall in her home state of South Carolina.

The former governor and United Nations ambassador drew the largest crowd of her primary campaign so far as she tries to close the gap with Trump just weeks before the Iowa caucuses kick off the Republican nominating calendar.

Haley invoked her former boss, saying as she has before that she believes Trump was “the right president at the right time” but that the time is now right for a new generation in U.S. leadership.

About 2,500 people attended the event at a satellite campus of the University of South Carolina along the state’s southern coast. Half that number watched her

event from video screens outside the venue after it reached capacity.

Hours ahead of Monday’s start time, the line for attendees wrapped around the venue, which the campaign said had to be changed from its original location due to demand.

Her staff has cast her campaign as being on a rising trajectory and pointed to growing crowds in recent weeks as she gets new attention from voters and donors looking for a Trump alternative.

On Tuesday, Americans for Prosperity, the political arm of the powerful Koch network, formally endorsed Nikki Haley’s presidential campaign, promising to commit its nationwide army of activists — and virtually unlimited funds — to helping Haley defeat Trump in the GOP primary contest.

Haley remains among a pack of candidates competing for a distant second place with Trump, who has led the GOP

field since kicking off his third presidential campaign last year.

She often notes her ousting of a 30-year state incumbent in the South Carolina House, then beating three initially better-known candidates to become the first woman to serve as South Carolina governor.

The question of how Haley could close the gap with Trump was on the minds of some who gathered to hear her on Monday.

Vincent Francescangeli, who lives on Hilton Head Island, said he is leaning toward supporting Haley but is taking a wait-and-see approach as the election’s first votes draw closer, noting that Trump is still on his list of candidates whom he might support.

“The world was a safer place when Trump was in office,” Francescangeli said. “But Trump’s got a lot of baggage, and you’ve got to ask yourself — is Trump really electable? I don’t know.”

Trump to return to stand in fraud trial

Associated Press

NEW YORK — After a pugnacious first turn on the witness stand, former President Donald Trump plans to testify again next month in his civil fraud trial, his lawyers said Monday.

He is to return Dec. 11, defense attorney Christopher Kise said.

Trump had plenty to say during his initial testimony Nov. 6 in the case, which has questioned his net worth, accused him of misleading banks and insurers and threatened his future in business in New York. The Republican 2024 presidential front-runner denies all the allegations, and he used his first stint on the witness stand to lambaste the case, the judge and New York Attorney General Letitia James, who brought the lawsuit.

“People don’t know how good a company I built. You know why?” Trump complained as one of James’ deputies questioned him. “Because people like you go around and try and demean me and try and hurt me, probably for political reasons.”

The second round of Trump’s testimony could be still more expansive. James’ office led the questioning the first time; next month, that role goes to Trump’s own lawyers, and they can ask about a wider range of subjects than they could during cross-examination before.

At the heart of the case are Trump’s 2014 to 2021 annual “statements of financial condition,” which were used to help secure loans and other deals.

A Trump Organization executive testified Monday that the company no longer produces such statements.

Trump may try to replace ‘Obamacare’

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former President Donald Trump threatened over the weekend to reopen the contentious fight over the Affordable Care Act after failing to repeal it while in the White House, saying he is “seriously looking at alternatives” if he wins a second term.

Trump’s comments drew rebuke from Democratic President Joe Biden’s campaign, which cast them as another “extremist” proposal from the GOP front-runner. And they rapidly moved to mobilize a response, including new advertising in battleground states contrasting Biden’s efforts to lower drug costs with Trump’s comments.

“Donald Trump is campaigning on a threat to rip away health care from millions of Americans, so we’re going to use every tool in our arsenal to make sure the American people know that lives are literally on the line next November,” said Biden campaign communications director Michael Tyler.

Health care has generally been a better issue for Democrats than Republicans, who have largely abandoned efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act in recent years. And Biden’s campaign quickly seized the opportunity to discuss it. Beyond the new ads, the campaign will host a press call Tuesday with former House Speaker Nancy

Pelosi and North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper to highlight the potential impact of repealing the law, while state Democratic parties in swing states will host their own events.

Trump has not spent much time discussing health care as he has laid out an aggressive agenda for a potential second term that has focused on immigration crackdowns and mass deportations, as well as efforts to target political rivals.

But Trump weighed in on the issue Saturday morning on his Truth Social site.

“The cost of Obamacare is out of control, plus, it’s not good Healthcare. I’m seriously looking at alternatives,” he wrote.

41 trapped workers saved from tunnel in India

Associated Press

UTTARKASHI, India — All 41 construction workers who were trapped in a collapsed mountain tunnel in northern India for more than two weeks were pulled out Tuesday, bringing an end to a drawn-out rescue mission that had grabbed the country's attention for days.

A crowd of local residents gathered around the tunnel erupted in joy and shouted "Bharat Mata ki Jai," or "Long live mother India," and set off firecrackers in celebration. Officials presented the first rescued workers with garlands made of

flowers, hanging them around their necks as the crowd cheered.

Nitin Gadkari, the minister of road transport and highways, said on X, formerly known as Twitter, that he was "completely relieved and happy" after all workers were rescued from the Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarkashi following an ordeal that lasted 17 days.

"I am very happy that all the 41 trapped workers have come out and their lives have been saved," he said in a video message posted on X. Gadkari added that "this was a well-coordinated effort by

multiple agencies, marking one of the most significant rescue operations in recent years."

The workers were pulled out through a passageway made of welded pipes that rescuers previously pushed through dirt and rocks.

They will each have an initial health checkup at a temporary medical camp set up inside the 42.6-foot wide tunnel.

One of the rescuers, Deveder, who only gave his first name, told the New Delhi Television channel that "the trapped workers were overjoyed when they spotted us in the tunnel.

Some rushed toward me and hugged me."

The massive rescue mission had many on edge. The workers got trapped Nov. 12, when a landslide caused a portion of the 2.8-mile tunnel they were building in Uttarakhand state to collapse about 650 feet from the entrance.

They survived on food and oxygen supplied through narrow steel pipes.

Kirti Panwar, a state government spokesperson, said about a dozen men had worked overnight to manually dig through rocks and debris.

Hunter Biden offers to testify in front of House committee

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Hunter Biden on Tuesday offered to testify publicly before Congress in response to a subpoena from Republicans investigating nearly every aspect of his business dealings as they pursue an impeachment inquiry into his father, President Joe Biden.

The Democratic president's son slammed the inquiry as a "fishing expedition" and refused to give closed-door testimony, but said he would "answer any pertinent and relevant question" in front of the House Oversight Committee next month, setting up a potential high-stakes face-off.

Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, the chairman of the House Oversight Committee, subpoenaed Hunter Biden in early November in the inquiry's most aggressive step yet and one that tests the reach of congressional oversight powers.

So far, Republicans have failed to uncover evidence directly implicating President Biden in any wrongdoing. But lawmakers have insisted their evidence paints a troubling picture of "influence peddling" in

the Biden family's business dealings, particularly with clients overseas.

Hunter Biden's attorney Abbe Lowell said in Tuesday's letter that his client had "misgivings about your motives and purpose" but had previously offered to speak with the committee without a response.

"Your empty investigation has gone on too long wasting too many better-used resources. It should come to an end," Lowell wrote. "From all the individuals you have requested depositions or interviews, all you will learn is that your accusations are baseless. However, the American people should see that for themselves."

He offered to appear on Dec. 13, the date named in the subpoena, or another day next month.

The subpoenas were bitterly opposed by Democrats, and the White House called for the subpoenas to be withdrawn. Richard Sauber, special counsel to the president, wrote that the subpoenas are "irresponsible" and the product of an overzealous House GOP majority that "weaponized the oversight powers of Congress."

Gruesome JFK assassination artifact gets \$46K in auction

The Dallas Morning News

DALLAS — Six decades after President John F. Kennedy was killed in Dallas, dozens of artifacts from his presidency and assassination fetched tens of thousands of dollars at an auction.

The highest-selling item — a pair of blood-stained leather swatches from the limousine Kennedy was riding in when he was shot — sold for \$46,865, according to RR Auction. The swatches were authenticated with a letter from F. Vaughn Ferguson, a technical service representative for the White House who maintained the presidential limousine.

Four days after the assassination, Ferguson and the White House upholsterer removed the leather, he wrote in the letter.

The light blue leather is from the center of the rear seat, and the dark blue leather is from the border of the rear seat.

"The spots on the leather are the dried blood of our beloved President, John F. Kennedy," he wrote.

Boston-based RR Auction called the swatches from the 1961 Lincoln Continental X-100 a "poignant, historic reminder of that fateful November day."

The Nov. 8 auction, which coincided with the 60th anniversary of Kennedy's assassination in Dallas' Dealey Plaza, featured more than 70 photographs, letters, books and documents signed by both Kennedy and his wife, former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy.

A large section of the picket fence from the "grassy knoll" at Dealey Plaza, which featured prominently in numerous assassination conspiracy theories, sold for \$13,740.

A bullet shot by the same gun Jack Ruby used to shoot Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, sold for \$18,568.

A ticket and program to Kennedy's 1962 birthday gala made famous by Marilyn Monroe's rendition of "Happy Birthday" sold for \$2,525.

A selection of photographs of Kennedy from Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth, moments before he departed for Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, sold for \$2,756. Old editions of The Dallas Morning News and the now-defunct Dallas Times Herald covering the assassination fetched \$2,069.

And Oswald's first gun, a .38 revolver, sold for \$31,625.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman bags marriage proposal on hunting trip

NE OMAHA — A Nebraska woman bagged a marriage proposal along with a big buck during a recent deer hunting trip.

Samantha Camenzind's boyfriend not only gave her the first shot at the deer they had spotted on a trail camera south of Lincoln, but then surprised her by popping the question in the middle of a photo shoot with the prized trophy — a giant buck with 11 tines on one side of its antlers and nine on the other.

In three years of dating one of the things the couple bonded over is their love of hunting.

Cole Bures told Camenzind he wanted a professional photographer to take some pictures to commemorate the big moment. Partway through the pictures, he got down on one knee and asked her to marry him, allowing the photographer to capture exactly when she said yes.

Man gets 40 years for suffocating ex-girlfriend

WI MADISON — A Madison man has been sentenced to 40 years in prison for killing his former girlfriend, who suffocated after he buried her beneath a pile of furniture, clothing and other items inside her home.

A Dane County judge sentenced Gregg Raether, 58, on Tuesday for the death of Patricia McCullough, 55, the Wisconsin State Journal reported. Raether was convicted by a jury in September of first-degree reckless homicide and other charges.

Officers who were called to

McCullough's home in September 2021 after she had not been heard from for weeks found her decomposed body beneath a pile of dresser drawers, shelving, televisions, clothing and other objects in her bedroom.

She suffered crushing, suffocating injuries that ultimately killed her, authorities said.

Dogs may be euthanized because of crowding

GA ATLANTA — Multiple dogs living at animal shelters in a county just south of Atlanta could be euthanized due to overcrowding if they aren't adopted before Nov. 30, a Georgia animal control group said.

Clayton County Animal Control, which houses stray animals at two shelters, said two dozen dogs faced euthanasia due to overcrowding at the facilities.

In a memorandum posted to social media Thursday, the group said dogs that aren't fostered before Nov. 30 at 6 p.m. faced possible euthanasia.

Sarah Ortiz, a Clayton County animal advocate, said rescue groups have been able to take in some of the dogs, but several more still needed homes.

Moose's wanderings tracked by herd of fans

MN MEEKER COUNTY — A herd of followers are tracking a moose on the loose in southern Minnesota, hoping the majestic animal's journey ends safely after it was spotted Tuesday 140 miles northwest of Minneapolis.

Fans have been tracking the young male moose for weeks

and posting updates on a Facebook page that as of Tuesday had more than 18,000 followers.

Admirers call the animal "Bullwinkle" or "Rutt," the latter in homage to a scatterbrained moose from the movie "Brother Bear."

A Minnesota Department of Natural Resources big game expert told the Minnesota Star Tribune that moose typically only roam in northern Minnesota, making the now-famous moose's visit to south and central Minnesota a rare treat. Todd Froberg, the agency's big game program coordinator, said the young moose is likely looking for home territory or other moose and is expected to continue moving north.

Child helped mom who had stroke while driving

MS COLUMBUS — A 6-year-old Mississippi girl is being honored for helping emergency responders find her family's car after her mother had a stroke while driving in a rural area.

Bryanna Cook is a first grader at Fairview Elementary School in Columbus, and Lowndes County supervisors have adopted a resolution to honor her bravery, the Commercial Dispatch reported.

Bryanna and her mother, Yolanda Cook, were headed to see Bryanna's grandmother in Preston on Oct. 23 when Cook had a stroke while driving on Mississippi Highway 21 between Shuqulak and Macon. After the car stopped in the woods, Cook became unresponsive and Bryanna grabbed her mom's cellphone to call her grandmother.

Her grandmother told her to call 911. Bryanna described her surroundings and stayed on the phone for two hours so first responders could find her. Bryanna's mother was taken to a hospital, where she stayed with her until Cook was released Oct. 31.

Schools reach tentative deal with teachers

OR PORTLAND — Oregon's largest school district said it had reached a tentative agreement with its teachers union, and that roughly 45,000 students would be back in school this week after more than three weeks without classes.

The agreement must still be voted on by teachers who have been on the picket line since Nov. 1 over issues of pay, class sizes and planning time.

It must also be approved by the school board, but the union agreed that classes could resume. Portland students missed 11 days of school before the district began its weeklong Thanksgiving break.

Students will make up missed school days by cutting a week off winter break and adding days in the new year.

The deal would provide educators with a 13.8% cumulative cost-of-living increase over the next three years and about half of all educators would earn an extra 10.6% from yearly step increases, PPS said.

The agreement would also add classroom time for elementary and middle grades starting next year and increase teacher planning time by 90 minutes each week for elementary and middle-aged classrooms.

— From Associated Press

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Bears use 4 field goals to beat Vikings

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Chicago Bears finally won one of these up-for-grab games after all those painful finishes.

Cairo Santos made a 30-yard field goal with 10 seconds left, his fourth of the night after a miss on the opening drive, and the Bears had four interceptions of Joshua Dobbs in a defense-dominated 12-10 victory over the Minnesota Vikings on Monday.

“Proud of everyone for fighting to the end, no matter what,” said Justin Fields, who lost two fumbles in the fourth quarter before a third-and-10 completion to D.J. Moore for 36 yards put the ball at the 13 with 55 seconds left to set up the winning kick. The Bears (4-8) stopped a 12-game NFC North losing streak, including six in a row against the Vikings (6-6).

“He came back like a true leader does — somebody on the rise as a young quarterback. They just block that out and make that

throw,” said Moore, who had 11 catches for 114 yards.

The Vikings, who cautiously chose to hold star wide receiver Justin Jefferson out for another game with his hamstring injury, were as helpless as ever on offense with only a field goal by Greg Joseph at the end of the first half to show for the first 54-plus minutes. Dobbs threw the go-ahead score to T.J. Hockenson with 5:54 left, but the Vikings stalled out again after that at the worst possible time.

After Fields rumbled for a first down, Josh Metellus jarred the ball loose that Anthony Barr recovered at the Chicago 43. The Vikings ran for no gain and 1 yard, before a screen pass lost 1 yard. Then Ryan Wright sailed his punt out of bounds, netting just 26 yards, and the Bears had the ball at their 22 instead of being pinned deep. Only 59 seconds came off the clock.

The Bears, who blew a 12-point lead with

about three minutes left last week in defeat at Detroit, forced four turnovers for the second straight game. Jaylon Johnson, Jaquan Brisker, T.J. Edwards and Kyler Gordon had the interceptions, three off deflected balls.

Gordon’s diving grab with 12:32 to go and a 9-3 lead gave the Bears the ball at the Minnesota 38. But five plays later, Danielle Hunter — whose takedown of Fields in Chicago on Oct. 15 dislocated the quarterback’s thumb and sidelined him for five games — dislodged the ball during a sack that Sheldon Day recovered at the Minnesota 23.

The Vikings went the other way in eight plays for only their second drive of more than 30 yards all game, and the Bears were in danger of another late collapse. But they became just the third team in the NFL in the last 20 years to win without a touchdown, multiple turnovers and 50-plus penalty yards, according to Sportradar.

Kansas State, Miami QBs entering transfer portal

Associated Press

Kansas State quarterback Will Howard and Miami quarterback Tyler Van Dyke were two of the biggest names who announced their intentions to enter college football’s transfer portal Monday.

In a social media post, Howard thanked Kansas State coach Chris Klieman, his teammates and the Wildcats’ fanbase before concluding: “I’m looking forward to this next chapter in my life and in the possibilities that lie ahead.”

Van Dyke also made his announcement on social media. “I have created lifelong friendships and memories, which I will always cherish. I am deeply appreciative of the opportunities and experiences that have shaped me during my time here,” he wrote.

Howard led the Wildcats to the Big 12 title last season and another bowl game this season. Kansas State running back Treshaun Ward also announced his plans to enter the portal Monday.

Most teams wrapped up regu-

lar seasons this past weekend, leading some to declare their intent to transfer. Howard, Ward and Van Dyke are among those who are graduate transfers, meaning they could enter the portal and become immediately eligible, while players who have yet to graduate must wait until Dec. 4 to make their announcements official.

Howard emerged as the Wildcats’ starter last year after injuries to Adrian Martinez, and he led them to an upset of eventual national runner-up TCU in the Big 12 title game. Howard was the clear-cut starter entering this season, though he was pushed at times by freshman Avery Johnson, and threw for 2,643 yards with 24 touchdown passes and eight interceptions.

Howard, who will have one year of eligibility left, had tears in his eyes as he walked off the field after his final game at Kansas State on Saturday. He accounted for two touchdowns in a 42-35 loss to Iowa State in a game played in heavy snow.

Howard’s departure means that Johnson, one of the nation’s

best dual-threat quarterbacks coming out of high school, will likely start for the Wildcats (8-4, 6-3 Big 12) in their bowl game. Johnson threw for 301 yards and three touchdowns but may be even more dangerous on the ground — he took over for Howard against Texas Tech and ran for five TDs in a 38-21 victory.

Miami’s situation is not as clear at quarterback for its bowl game. Van Dyke — who had 11 games of at least 300 yards in his career — lost his starting job earlier this month to freshman Emory Williams, who got hurt late in Miami’s loss to Florida State. Van Dyke started the final two games of the regular season.

His departure means Miami has just one healthy scholarship quarterback on its roster, that being Jacurri Brown — who did not throw a pass this season.

The Hurricanes — who also saw running back Don Chaney Jr., defensive lineman Jahfari Harvey and linebacker Corey Flagg announce their decisions to enter the portal on Monday — will be busy in using the portal to

make quick roster upgrades for 2024.

“It’s the wild, wild West,” Miami coach Mario Cristobal said earlier Monday in his weekly appearance on WQAM-AM. “It really is. It’s like completely out of control. And the NCAA, rightfully so, has taken a hard-line stance. If people are messing around and tampering, they’re going to slam you. They really are. ... But you need to be ready to upgrade right away.”

Van Dyke was the Atlantic Coast Conference’s rookie of the year in 2021 under then-offensive coordinator Rhett Lashlee, now the coach at SMU. He leaves Miami second on the school’s all-time list in completion percentage (63.7%), fourth in touchdown passes (54), fourth in completions (581) and sixth in yards (7,469).

Ward, who arrived at Kansas State from Florida State, is transferring again after ceding playing time to D.J. Giddens throughout the season. He ran for 643 yards and five touchdowns while adding two touchdown receptions.

Cardinals sign Gray to 3-year, \$75M deal

Associated Press

The St. Louis Cardinals made their biggest splash yet in an attempt to revamp their lackluster rotation, agreeing with AL Cy Young runner-up Sonny Gray on a \$75 million, three-year contract Monday to anchor their staff heading into next season.

Gray's deal includes a \$30 million team option for 2027 with a \$5 million buyout, which could make the agreement worth \$100 million over four seasons.

John Mozeliak, the Cardinals' president of baseball operations, had already signed free-agent right-handers Kyle Gibson and Lance Lynn to one-year deals. But Mozeliak also said the Cardinals were not at "the finish line," and a week later, they have one of the best pitchers on the free-agent market at the front of their rotation.

"We were hoping to sign a couple of pitchers we knew we could count on for innings," Mozeliak said, "and if we could

accomplish that, we were hoping we could do something a little bigger, a little longer, and obviously that's where Sonny fits in."

The 34-year-old Gray went 8-8 with a 2.79 ERA for Minnesota last season. He turned down a qualifying offer from the Twins, who will get an additional pick in next year's amateur draft as compensation for losing him, currently No. 33.

St. Louis will lose its second-highest selection. It could be a small price to pay for a big boost to its rotation.

"Where I am in my career," Gray said during a news conference at Busch Stadium, "I want to win. I'm coming to an organization like St. Louis — the tradition, just walking in here this morning, walking around seeing everything — the history is there. The feel is there. It's just a baseball town and city and a place that I'm thrilled to be able to come and be part of it."

The Cardinals went 71-91 last

season for their worst record since 1995, and the biggest culprit was pitching. Their rotation had a 5.08 ERA, fifth-worst in the major leagues, and when the bullpen was added to the mix, their 4.79 ERA ranked 24th.

The Cardinals only had righthander Miles Mikolas and lefthander Steven Matz under contract for 2024, so it made sense for them to move quickly and sign Lynn and Gibson to absorb innings at the back of the rotation.

Gray is expected to be right at the front of the rotation.

The former first-round pick of the A's spent four seasons in Oakland, struggled during the 2018 season with the Yankees, then had a breakthrough after a 2019 trade to the Reds. He went 23-20 with a 3.89 ERA over three seasons in Cincinnati.

Gray was dealt to Minnesota last year, where his season was derailed by hamstring and pec-toral injuries. But he bounced back with the best season of his

11-year career, finishing second to the Yankees' Gerrit Cole in AL Cy Young voting.

"Going into the offseason we knew he was going to be someone of high interest," Mozeliak said. "The real question became the timing. How do we accomplish what we felt like we had to accomplish, and do it in an order where the music didn't stop and we were left standing? We feel good about where we are today because we were able to add these three arms."

Gray said the Cardinals were not the first team to discuss a deal this offseason. In fact, Gray and his agent, Bo McKinis, were moving ahead with other offers and starting to imagine how he would fit in with other clubs.

"Then you do finally get a call and you get intrigued," Gray said. "You move down the road and once it becomes clear, I did tell Bo, 'This is the place. Let's make it work.' And I don't know if a lot of free agents say that but it's just who I am."

Blue Jackets win, hand Bruins 3rd consecutive loss

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Yegor Chinakhov had a goal and an assist, lifting the Columbus Blue Jackets over Boston 5-2 on Monday night, handing the Bruins their third straight loss.

Dmitri Voronkov, Ivan Provorov, Kirill Marchenko and Justin Danforth also scored for Columbus, and Boone Jenner added a pair of assists. Spencer Martin stopped 31 shots for Columbus, which has won three of its last four games and beat Boston for the first time in seven games, dating back to Jan. 14, 2020.

The scores by Chinakhov, Voronkov, Provorov and Marchenko marked the first time in NHL history four Russians scored in a single game for the same team.

"Everybody chipped in," Blue Jackets coach Pascal Vincent said. "Everybody had a good game. We played really well as a team, and our goalie was really good when we needed him to be. I'm happy about it, but not overly surprised. Regardless of the

score, just the way we played. We have very good people, and they want to be here, and they want to do well."

Matthew Poitras and John Beecher scored for Boston and Jeremy Swayman stopped 17 shots before being replaced in the second period by Linus Ullmark, who stopped 19 shots. The Atlantic Division-leading Bruins haven't lost three consecutive games since April 2022.

"There (are) a lot of things to address and move forward, but we've got to move forward," Bruins coach Jim Montgomery said.

Sabres 5, Rangers 1: Alex Tuch scored twice and Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen stopped 25 shots as visiting Buffalo beat first-place New York.

Casey Mittelstadt had a goal and two assists, J.J. Peterka and Kyle Okposo also scored and Owen Power added two assists as the Sabres bounced back from a 7-2 loss at New Jersey two nights earlier.

Flames 2, Golden Knights 1 (OT): MacKenzie Weegar scored with 5 seconds left on

the clock in overtime, lifting host Calgary past Vegas.

A.J. Greer also scored for the Flames, and Dan Vladar stopped 27 shots. Calgary won for the second time in three games and is 5-2-1 in its last eight games overall and 3-0-1 in the last four at home.

Sharks 2, Capitals 1: Luke Kunin scored a go-ahead power play-goal in the third period, Mackenzie Blackwood stopped 33 shots and host San Jose beat Washington.

Fabian Zetterlund also scored for the Sharks, who won back-to-back games for just the second time all season and earned points in three consecutive games for the first time.

Avalanche 4, Lightning 1: Ryan Johansen scored twice, Alexandar Georgiev made 37 saves and host Colorado won its fourth straight.

Panthers 5, Senators 0: Sam Reinhart scored two goals and Sergei Bobrovsky made 20 saves to lead visiting Florida over Ottawa.

Embiid helps 76ers beat Lakers by 44

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — LeBron James never endured a lopsided basketball defeat like the one he suffered with Los Angeles in Philadelphia.

James has lost big before. His Miami Heat once got trounced by 36 points in the NBA Finals. The Indiana Pacers beat James and the Lakers by 42 in 2019.

But this blowout was an all-timer: By the time Joel Embiid clinched a triple-double in the third quarter, the 76ers were on their way to a 138-94 win over the Lakers on Monday night, the 44-point loss now the worst in James' career that dates to 2003.

"What needs to change in order for that to not happen again? A lot," James said, without elaboration.

The miserable milestones piled up for the Lakers. It was their worst loss to the 76ers in 290 games in the series.

It was so bad, James didn't even grab a rebound.

OK, one more: The 76ers beat the Lakers for the seventh straight time.

"That's my favorite team," Embiid said, again noting he learned of basketball through Kobe Bryant. "Any time I play against them, you want to get

the win. But I do it every night anyways against every other team."

The box score tells part of the story. The 76ers hit 22 3-pointers to just seven for the Lakers, and even when Embiid sat out the entire fourth quarter, the 76ers still outscored them 40-14.

"We got killed on the 3-point line," James said. "They made shots. Give them credit."

The reigning NBA MVP, Embiid had 30 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists for his sixth career triple-double. It was Embiid's first of the season and his seventh career game with 10-plus assists.

Embiid's anticipated show-down with James never really materialized. James scored 18 points in 29 minutes but nothing he did could make a dent in the 76ers' lead. He has now played more minutes than any player in NBA history, with playoff time included.

"That doesn't mean much to me," James said.

Tyrese Maxey scored 31 points for the 76ers. Anthony Davis had 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers.

Nuggets 113, Clippers 104: Reggie Jackson scored 35 points, DeAndre Jordan had 21 points and 13 rebounds, and vis-

iting Denver rallied in the fourth quarter to beat Los Angeles without Nikola Jokic.

Former Clippers Jackson and Jordan combined for 20 points in the fourth, when the Nuggets trailed by 11 to start. Jackson began and ended a 22-6 spurt with 3-pointers that put the Nuggets ahead 99-94. In between, he fed Jordan for two vicious dunks.

The Nuggets were missing starters Jokic, Jamal Murray and Aaron Gordon, who average a combined 58.2 points. Jokic sat out the second game of a back-to-back because of low back pain. Murray has a right hamstring strain and Gordon has a right heel strain.

Kawhi Leonard led the Clippers with 31 points and Ivica Zubac had 23 points and 14 rebounds. Paul George picked up his fourth and fifth fouls early in the fourth. He finished with six points on 2-of-13 shooting.

Wizards 126, Pistons 107: Kyle Kuzma had 32 points and 12 rebounds as visiting Washington ended a nine-game losing streak with a rout of Detroit in a matchup of the NBA's worst teams.

Washington (3-14) won for the first time since a 132-116 victory over the Charlotte Hornets

on Nov. 8. The Pistons (2-15) have lost 14 straight after beating the Chicago Bulls 118-102 on Oct. 28.

Trail Blazers 114, Pacers 110: Jerami Grant scored 34 points and Deandre Ayton had 22 points and 13 rebounds to power visiting Portland past Indiana.

Malcolm Brogdon added 24 points for the Trail Blazers, including a game-sealing basket in the closing seconds.

Tyrese Haliburton led Indiana with 33 points. Bruce Brown, Myles Turner and Benedict Mathurin each had 11, but the Pacers were slowed by 20 turnovers and 8-for-33 shooting from 3-point range.

Jazz 114, Pelicans 112: Rookie Keyonte George scored a season-high 19 points to lead host Utah over New Orleans for a sweep of their two-game series.

Jordan Clarkson chipped in 16 points and 10 assists for the Jazz. Walker Kessler added 14 points and eight rebounds off the bench. Simone Fontecchio scored 14 points.

Utah beat New Orleans for the fifth straight time and second time in three days after making 17 3-pointers, including six in the fourth quarter.

Clingan scores 29 as No. 4 UConn rolls over UNH

Associated Press

STORRS, Conn. — UConn's players like to point out that they are a different team than the one that took home the national championship in April.

But they were happy to carry a bit of that squad's history with them on Monday night, beating New Hampshire 84-64 to set a Division I record with the program's 24th consecutive victory over a nonconference opponent by double digits.

The No. 4 Huskies haven't lost outside of the Big East since

falling to New Mexico State in the first round of the 2022 NCAA Tournament. They broke a record held by North Carolina, which had 23 consecutive double-digit wins over nonconference opponents in 2008 and 2009.

"It's great to share a record with the men from last year's team," coach Dan Hurley said. "The men from this year's team and the men from last year's team are just such great men."

The Huskies (7-0) will take their streak into Lawrence,

Kan., on Friday to face the fifth-ranked Jayhawks.

Donovan Clingan, a 7-foot-2 sophomore who was part of both squads, hit 12 of his 13 shots from the floor to finish with a career-high 29 points.

Cam Spencer and Tristen Newton each scored 17 points and Newton also pulled down 10 rebounds. Backup center Samson Johnson chipped in with 10 points for Connecticut, which outscored New Hampshire 52-8 in the paint.

Jaxson Baker had 15 of his 20

points in the first half for New Hampshire (4-3). Ahmad Robinson and Clarence Daniels each added 19 points.

Spencer, a Rutgers transfer, hit two early 3-pointers to reach 200 for his career, and UConn used a 16-0 run to take a 24-8 lead midway through the first half.

Baker tried to keep New Hampshire close, hitting five of his first six shots from behind the arc. But the Wildcats had no answer for UConn's size underneath.