

Army ready to ramp up arms to Israel

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

Top U.S. Army leaders said this week that they are prepared to “lean forward” when it comes to delivering arms to Israel, but that lawmakers will need to step up funding to make it happen.

The U.S. already has begun sending critical munitions to Israel, which declared war over the weekend after Hamas launched a large-scale attack on Israel’s territory, killing and taking hostage hundreds of civilians in the process.

On Tuesday, President Joe Biden said the U.S. will provide ammunition and interceptors to Israel to replenish the Iron Dome, and reiterated support for Israel.

He also confirmed that at least 14 Americans were killed in the violence over the weekend, and that an undisclosed number of U.S. citizens are being held by Hamas.

“We stand ready to move additional assets as needed,” he said.

In the days and weeks ahead, the Pentagon likely will be under intense pressure to meet the competing demands of supporting Ukraine in its ongoing war against Russia and Israel’s war with Hamas.

“We need additional support from Congress. So, I hope we’ll see that soon,” Army

Secretary Christine Wormuth said Monday at the Association of the U.S. Army’s annual meeting in Washington.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George, speaking alongside Wormuth, said he was confident the service is prepared to meet Israel’s needs.

Still, to support two U.S. partners in different wars means an already stretched military industrial base will need to further ramp up production.

“We’re obviously at the early stage of the process of evaluating our ability to support what the [Israel Defense Forces] needs,” Wormuth said. “And just as we have with Ukraine, we’re going to weigh obviously the impacts of requests to our readiness.”

Nonetheless, “I would argue that just as we lean forward with Ukraine, I think the intent is to lean forward in support of Israel,” she said.

But as the Pentagon deals with two crises overseas, political turmoil in Washington complicates matters. The House of Representatives is still without a leader and the threat of a government shutdown looms when a short-term spending bill expires next month.

Wormuth said the Army’s ability to support Israel and Ukraine simultaneously hinges on additional funding from Congress.

Meanwhile, Wormuth called on Congress to

act on hundreds of senior officer nominations and promotions that have been held up by Sen. Tommy Tuberville.

In blocking the moves, the Alabama Republican has cited a Pentagon policy allowing troops to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they must leave the state where they are stationed to obtain an abortion.

“This hold is hurting our military readiness and causing needless uncertainty for those of officers and their families,” she said. “It’s also frankly a discouraging signal for our talented junior and field grade officers as they contemplate their own futures as senior Army leaders.”

During the three-day AUSA conference, Army leaders are discussing an array of challenges confronting the service, ranging from efforts to modernize the force to recruiting problems and quality of life issues for junior troops.

In recent weeks, the Army has come under fire for the condition of barracks where soldiers live.

Wormuth said the Army has been pouring resources into improving barracks conditions, spending about \$1 billion annually on them.

However, the service faces a \$6.5 billion maintenance backlog, she said.

China says it drove Philippine navy ship from shoal

Associated Press

BEIJING — China’s coast guard claimed Tuesday to have chased a Philippine navy ship from a disputed shoal in the South China Sea as tensions between the two countries over rich fishing areas escalate.

Coast guard spokesman Gan Yu said the Philippine ship had sailed into waters next to the Scarborough Shoal, which China calls Huangyan Island, and ignored “multiple calls” to turn back.

“The Chinese coast guard took necessary measures to expel the Philippine ship in ac-

cordance with the law, such as following it and forcing it out and controlling its route,” Gan said.

In Manila, the Philippines’ military chief of staff, Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr., said authorities were still looking into the alleged incident but think it was more likely “propaganda from the Chinese” than an actual confrontation.

“If we ever have a ship there, we will not agree to be driven away (from our) exclusive economic zone,” Brawner told reporters. “It’s our right to make sure that our fishermen can fish

in our economic zone.”

The Scarborough Shoal lies within the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone, just west of the country’s main Luzon Island. It has been occupied by China since 2012 as part of Beijing’s push to lay claim to almost the entire South China Sea, which has also sparked disputes with Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

The conflicts have long been regarded as a potential Asian flash point and a delicate fault line in the United States-China rivalry in the region.

Washington has no claims of

its own, but U.S. Navy ships and jets have carried out patrols for decades to challenge China’s expansive claims and promote freedom of navigation in the important waterway.

Last month, China’s coast guard laid down a 980-foot-long floating barrier to block the entrance to the Scarborough Shoal lagoon to prevent Filipino boats from entering.

A few days later, the Philippine coast guard, acting on orders directly from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., covertly removed the barrier, infuriating China.

Israel pounds Gaza, vows retaliation

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli warplanes hammered the Gaza Strip neighborhood by neighborhood on Tuesday, reducing buildings to rubble and sending people scrambling to find safety in the tiny, sealed-off territory as Israel vowed a retaliation for Hamas' surprise weekend attack that would "reverberate ... for generations."

Aid organizations pleaded for the creation of humanitarian corridors to get aid into Gaza, warning that hospitals overwhelmed with wounded were running out of supplies. Israel has stopped entry of food, fuel and medicines into Gaza, and the sole remaining access from Egypt shut down Tuesday after airstrikes hit near the border crossing.

The war, which has already claimed at least 1,800 lives on both sides, is only expected to escalate. The weekend attack that Hamas said was retribution for worsening Palestinian suffering under Israeli occupation has fired Israel's determination to crush the group's hold in Gaza — hiking risks of an expanded regional conflict.

Hamas militants stormed into Israel on Saturday morning, slaying hundreds of residents in homes and streets near the Gaza border and bringing gunbattles to Israeli towns for the first time in decades. Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza hold about

150 soldiers and civilians hostage, according to Israel.

Israel is now stepping up its offensive. It expanded the mobilization of reservists to 360,000 on Tuesday, according to the country's media. After days of fighting, Israel's military said Tuesday morning that it had regained effective control over areas Hamas attacked in its south, and of the Gaza border.

A looming question is whether Israel will launch a ground offensive into Gaza — a 25-mile-long strip of land wedged among Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea that is home to 2.3 million people and has been governed by Hamas since 2007.

On Tuesday, a large part of Gaza City's Rimal neighborhood was reduced to rubble after warplanes bombarded it for hours the night before. Residents found buildings torn in half or demolished to mounds of concrete and rebar. Cars were flattened and trees burned out on residential streets transformed into moonscapes.

Palestinian Civil Defense forces pulled Abdullah Musleh out of his basement together with 30 others after their apartment building was flattened.

"I sell toys, not missiles," the 46-year-old said, weeping. "I want to leave Gaza. Why do I have to stay here? I lost my home and my

job."

The Israeli military said it struck hundreds of targets in Rimal, an upscale district home to ministries of the Hamas-run government.

In a new tactic, Israel is warning civilians to evacuate neighborhood after neighborhood, and then inflicting devastation, in what could be a prelude to a ground offensive. On Tuesday, the military told residents of the nearby al-Daraj neighborhood to evacuate, and soon after new explosions rocked the area, and Rimal, continuing after nightfall.

"There is no safe place in Gaza right now, you see decent people being killed every day," Hasan Jabar, a Gaza journalist, said after three other Palestinian journalists were killed in the Rimal bombardment. "I am genuinely afraid for my life."

Tuesday, Hamas fired barrages of rockets toward the southern Israeli city of Ashkelon and Tel Aviv.

"The objective is for this war to end very differently from all of the previous rounds. There has to be a clear victory," said Chuck Freilich, a former deputy national security adviser in Israel. Weakening Hamas was not enough, "whatever has to be done to fundamentally change the situation will have to be done," he said.

Attack on Israel sparks fears of wider Mideast conflict

The Washington Post

The stunning attack by Hamas inside Israeli territory has replaced hopes of an era of peace in the Middle East with the very real danger of a new regional war.

For now, the focus is on the immediate crisis in Gaza, the fate of the hostages and the future of Hamas. It could take weeks or more for Israel to fulfill Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's pledge to "destroy" Hamas' military capabilities and the effort will consume the bulk of Israel's military capabilities for some time.

"We are going to change the Middle East," Netanyahu told

Israeli officials on Monday, as the country's war planes intensified their bombardments of Gaza ahead of what is widely expected to be a ground invasion. The death toll of an already brutal few days was rapidly rising on both sides.

But Hamas had already changed the Middle East, by inflicting on Israel the bloodiest day in its 75-year history, upending long-held calculations about Israel's military superiority and its ability to withstand pressures to accommodate the statehood aspirations of the Palestinians.

One open question, among many, is whether the escalating

conflagration can be confined to Gaza. The assault has rekindled neglected tensions that have long stood in the way of real peace, from the destabilizing role played by Iran and its allies to the fate of Palestinians, which have been bypassed by the U.S.-led effort to forge a peace settlement between Israel and the region's Gulf Arab states.

"This could easily get out of control," said Hussein Ibish, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Arab Gulf States Institute. "Everything is in place for a cascading series of events that will culminate in Israel attacking Iran."

A flurry of telephone calls

among regional and world leaders was aimed at finding ways to prevent a wider war. Israel downplayed the likelihood that Iran was involved in the Hamas attack, the United States also said it had seen no indications that Iran was involved and Iran denied any role — suggesting that there is no appetite for a regionwide conflict.

"From the messaging I'm seeing there are attempts to contain the situation," said Michael Horowitz, the Jerusalem-based head of intelligence for LeBeck, a security consultancy. "But we're really only at the beginning of something that will last a very long time."

USS Reagan, allies prep for N. Korea threats

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — A U.S. carrier strike group began drills in maritime interdiction tactics with warships from South Korea and Japan this week, the first such exercise by the three navies in seven years, according to the South Korean Ministry of National Defense.

The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group, led by the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan, took part in the two-day exercise starting Monday in international waters near South Korea's Jeju Island, the ministry said in a news release Tuesday.

The Ronald Reagan was joined by the guided-missile cruisers USS Antietam and USS Robert Smalls and the guided-missile destroyer USS Shoup, according

to the ministry.

The training also included ROKS Yulgok Yi I, a South Korean destroyer equipped with the Aegis missile-defense system, and the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer JS Hyuga, the release said.

The warships conducted maritime interdiction drills—the first such training between the three countries since 2016 — in response to sea-based threats from North Korea, according to the ministry.

Maritime interdiction means stopping, boarding and searching a vessel at sea suspected of prohibited conduct, such as breaking an embargo or supporting terrorism. It may also mean seizing the vessel or the cargo and arresting those on board or any combination of the three, according to the NATO Maritime Inter-

diction Operational Training Center.

The three navies also conducted anti-piracy drills, the ministry added.

Strong cooperation between the United States, South Korea and Japan is needed to address North Korea's "evolving underwater threats and nuclear and missile threats," and the three navies will continue to conduct trilateral drills in the future, South Korean navy Vice Adm. Kim Myung-soo said in the release.

The U.S. 7th Fleet's commander, Vice Adm. Karl Thomas, said the three navies "are continuing to enhance trilateral exercises."

"Our continued dialogue and development of interchangeability demonstrate our shared resolve to maintain the status quo of peace and defend against aggression," he said in a Navy news re-

lease.

The Ronald Reagan and its crew of roughly 5,000 sailors and Marines are scheduled to make a five-day port call at South Korea's largest port, Busan, starting Thursday, according to a separate news release from the ministry Tuesday. The carrier last visited South Korea on Sept. 23, 2022.

The Ronald Reagan will be the second U.S. aircraft carrier to visit South Korea so far this year. On March 28, the USS Nimitz docked in Busan for the Ssangyong Exercise, two-week-long naval drills by the U.S. and South Korea.

This week's training comes nearly two months after leaders from the U.S., South Korea and Japan agreed to expand their military cooperation amid North Korea's weapons tests.

Guam dodges typhoon, but preps for winds, flooding

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

Typhoon Bolaven slid past Guam on Tuesday, drifting northeast at the last minute as the island braced for another bout of heavy rains, flash floods and strong winds.

The storm, with winds of 80 mph, comes 4½ months after Super Typhoon Mawar hurtled into Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, the region's worst weather event since 2002.

Guam was in Condition of Readiness 1 with a flash flood warning in effect until 4:15 p.m. Tuesday. Between 1 and 1.8 inches of rain had already fallen with another 2 to 3.6 inches expected, Guam's Joint Information Center said in a Tuesday afternoon news release.

The center anticipated 1.5 feet of rainfall between sunrise Tuesday and Wednesday morning and winds of tropical

storm force — 39 mph or more — through Tuesday evening.

Bolaven was forecast to continue northwest and pass between the islands of Rota and Tinian about 75 miles northeast of Guam.

Joint Region Marianas, which oversees military installations on Guam, said it applied "previous lessons learned" and was "well postured to weather the storm and begin recovery operations as soon as possible," according to a Monday post on the command's Facebook page.

"I know we are still recovering from Typhoon Mawar and another storm can feel overwhelming," Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman, commander of Joint Region Marianas, said in the post. "We are fortunate to be working hand-in-hand with our federal and territory partners to provide a whole-of-government approach, if required."

AAFES says energy drinks sold on bases had no CBD

By MICHAEL SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

A relabeled energy drink sold at Army and Air Force Exchange stores did not contain the marijuana compound CBD, the exchange said in a social media statement.

A post on the popular social media site U.S. Army WTF! Moments on Saturday contained images of a Kill Cliff energy drink with the plastic outer label removed to reveal printing on the can from one of its products containing CBD, which is illegal for service members to use under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and federal law.

The drink vendor has "advised the Exchange that it relabeled aluminum cans previously printed for a discontinued item," AAFES said in a reply to U.S. Army WTF! Moments on X, formerly known as Twitter.

The relabeled cans are being removed from store shelves,

AAFES added. It wasn't immediately known which stores were selling the relabeled drinks.

Kill Cliff was founded by a former Navy SEAL and has gained attention through partnerships with celebrities like Joe Rogan.

CBD, or cannabidiol, has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration only as a treatment for two forms of epilepsy. However, the compound has been touted as a remedy for many maladies.

While CBD is being studied as a treatment for many conditions, including Parkinson's disease, schizophrenia, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and anxiety, research supporting the drug's benefits is limited, according to the Mayo Clinic website.

The FDA announced in January that it would not regulate the chemical, leaving any further legal action up to Congress.

Blinken calls Bazoum as coup talk looms

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Antony Blinken called Niger's deposed President Mohamed Bazoum ahead of an expected decision by the Biden administration to formally declare that his overthrow was a coup d'état.

The State Department said Blinken called Bazoum on Monday to stress that a restoration of a freely elected government remains the best way for Niger to not only succeed for its people, but also to remain a key partner of the United States and others in countering extremism.

In the call, Blinken "reiterated that a democratically elected, civilian-led government presents the best opportunity to ensure that Niger remains a

strong partner in security and development in the region," the State Department said in a brief statement.

"The United States calls for the immediate release of all those unjustly detained following the military takeover," the department said.

Blinken's call came as the Democratic administration is preparing to make a formal determination that July's military takeover in the central African nation meets the legal standard for a coup, according to officials familiar with the matter.

That determination could come as early as Tuesday, the officials said. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because an announcement had not yet been made.

Under U.S. law, a formal determination of a coup — the unconstitutional overthrow of a democratically elected government — typically results in a suspension of all non-humanitarian assistance, particularly military aid and cooperation, to the country concerned. Some U.S. aid to Niger has been suspended since Bazoum's ouster, but it was unclear if the determination would halt American military activity in the country.

The Biden administration had been delaying a coup decision because Niger plays a critical role in U.S. counterterrorism activity in Africa's Sahel region.

Niger has been hosting some 1,100 American troops in regional outposts for wide-ranging patrols by armed drones

and other counterterrorism operations against Islamic extremist movements.

The officials could not say if the expected coup determination would eventually result in the withdrawal of any U.S. personnel from Niger.

The officials said the Pentagon had resisted such a move and hinted that the administration may have found a legal rationale to continue counterterrorism cooperation with the military junta.

Pentagon officials have been reviewing options for the U.S. troop presence in Niger. Defense and military leaders are reluctant to abandon Agadez, one of Niger's biggest cities, which is deemed a critical base for counterterrorism missions and oversight.

Schumer leads delegation to China for bilateral talks

Associated Press

BEIJING — U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said Monday that he was grateful for a strengthened statement from China condemning the killing and kidnapping of Israeli and foreign civilians by Hamas, issued during a bipartisan congressional visit to Beijing that included a lengthy meeting with President Xi Jinping.

Schumer led a delegation of six senators to China for talks aimed at stabilizing ties following a sharp deterioration in recent years over trade, U.S. support for self-governing Taiwan, human rights and other issues. The delegation, which included three Democrats and three Republicans, was the first visit by U.S. lawmakers since 2019 and came at a time of growing attacks on China in Congress as America contends with Beijing's rise as a global power.

Schumer told Foreign Minister Wang Yi earlier in the day

that he had been very disappointed by China's failure to strongly condemn the attack on Israel and show sympathy for the country and its people.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said later Monday that China is "deeply saddened by the civilian casualties caused by the conflict between Palestine and Israel."

"China opposes and condemns acts that harm civilians," along with actions that "expand conflict and undermine regional stability," Mao said, going beyond an initial Foreign Ministry statement on Sunday.

China hopes for a resumption of peace talks, the implementation of a two-state solution and a "comprehensive and proper settlement of the Palestinian issue, which guarantees the legitimate concerns of all parties, through political means, as early as possible," Mao said at a daily briefing.

Taiwan leader: Peace is 'only option' for resolution

Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Peace between Taiwan and China is the "only option," Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen said Tuesday, while strongly asserting the self-governing island's defenses against Beijing's threats to invade.

Tsai said in a National Day address that the international community views stability in the Taiwan Strait as an "indispensable component of global security and prosperity."

China claims Taiwan as its own territory and has been increasingly sending ships and warplanes across the Taiwan Strait in an effort to intimidate the population of 23 million, who strongly favor the status quo of de facto independence.

Tsai's Democratic Progressive Party will seek to maintain power in elections next year against the Nationalists, who officially support unification between the sides that divided

amid civil war in 1949.

"Let me reiterate that peace is the only option across the Taiwan Strait," said Tsai, who will step down after two terms in office. "Maintaining the status quo, as the largest common denominator for all sides, is the critical key to ensuring peace."

Tsai also referred to Taiwan's recent launch of a home-built submarine as a major breakthrough in efforts to re-energize the domestic arms industry.

"We took a big step forward in our national defense self-sufficiency and further enhanced the asymmetric capabilities of our military," she said.

The ceremonies with marching bands from Taiwan, Japan and the United States also underscored Taiwan's split personality as a self-governing democracy whose national symbols and state institutions were founded on mainland China after the Manchu Qing dynasty was overthrown in 1911.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Nearly 1K songbirds die after hitting windows

IL CHICAGO — David Willard has been checking the grounds of Chicago's lakefront exhibition center for dead birds for 40 years. One morning he found something horrible: Hundreds of dead songbirds, so thick they looked like a carpet.

Nearly 1,000 songbirds perished during the night after crashing into the McCormick Place Lakeside Center's windows, the result, according to avian experts, of a deadly confluence of prime migration conditions, rain and the low-slung exhibition hall's lights and window-lined walls.

Researchers estimate hundreds of millions of birds die in window strikes in the U.S. each year. Scientists with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a study in 2014 that put the number between 365 million and 988 million birds annually.

Birds that migrate at night, like sparrows and warblers, rely on the stars to navigate. Bright lights from buildings both attract and confuse them, leading to window strikes or birds flying around the lights until they die from exhaustion — a phenomenon known as fatal light attraction.

Coast Guard: 3 rescued from capsized vessel

NJ LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP — The Coast Guard said it has rescued three people without injury who were found clinging to the hull of a capsized vessel off the New Jersey coast.

Officials said the operator of the 18-foot disabled vessel used a VHF-FM radio to contact the Coast Guard's Delaware Bay sector for help, saying the vessel was disabled and needed help getting to shore.

The operator said three people were aboard and that his vessel was anchored in Great Bay in Little Egg Harbor Township less than a mile from the Great Bay Marina. Shortly after the initial call, the operator said his boat was going down because of inclement weather.

When the Coast Guard helicopter arrived, a rescue swimmer entered the water and helped the crew hoist all three people to safety. They were taken to the Coast Guard's Atlantic City air station, where they were met by emergency medical services personnel. No injuries were reported.

Bill making condoms free for high schools vetoed

CA SACRAMENTO — California Gov. Gavin Newsom rejected a bill that would have made free condoms available to all public high school students, arguing it was too expensive for a state with a budget deficit of more than \$30 billion.

"This bill would create an unfunded mandate to public schools that should be considered in the annual budget process," Newsom wrote in a message explaining why he vetoed the bill, known as Senate bill 541.

The bill would have required all public schools that have grades nine through 12 to make condoms available for free to all students. It would have required public schools with

grades seven through 12 to allow condoms to be made available as part of educational or public health programs.

And it would have made it illegal for retailers to refuse to sell condoms to youth.

Officials seek to push fishing boats back 1 mile

LA CAMERON — Louisiana officials are proposing that boats fishing for menhaden must be at least 1 mile offshore after boats spilled an estimated 850,000 of the small fish on Cameron Parish beaches in September.

KPLC-TV reported the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries proposed the rule.

Now, boats must only be a quarter of a mile offshore, except around Grand Isle and two other islands. The new rule would continue to require a 3-mile distance off Grand Isle and impose a 3-mile distance off Rutherford Beach and Holly Beach in Cameron Parish.

The rule comes after boats fishing for two menhaden processing companies suffered torn nets three times in mid-September, spilling fish on the beaches.

115 bodies found at 'green' funeral home

CO CAÑON CITY — The awful smell seeped from a neglected building in a small Colorado town for days, followed by a report that made police take a closer look at the "green" funeral operator's storage facility. Inside, they made a gruesome discovery: At least 115 decaying bodies.

Investigators were tightlipped about exactly what they found inside the Return to Nature Funeral Home in Penrose,

Colo., but their plans to bring in teams that usually deal with airline crashes, coroners from nearby jurisdictions and the FBI pointed to a grim mess.

A state document, meanwhile, alleged funeral home owner Jon Hallford tried to conceal the improper storage of corpses. He claimed he was doing taxidermy at the facility, according to the state suspension letter.

The document did not elaborate on the taxidermy and alleged improper storage of remains, but the facility's registration has been expired since November.

Helo crashes shortly after takeoff, killing the pilot

NH CROYDON — A helicopter crashed in the woods shortly after taking off in Croydon, N.H., killing the pilot, the only person on board, authorities said. The craft was reported as missing for at least several hours.

The helicopter had taken off at about 7:30 p.m., but the pilot, who was working for JBI Helicopter Services, could not be tracked shortly after that, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department said in a news release.

The Croydon Fire Department said it received a report of a missing aircraft at about 10:30 p.m., said deputy chief Zachary White. The helicopter was found several hours later in a heavily wooded area near the takeoff site, White said.

The pilot, Carl Svenson, 73, of Loudon, N.H., was found dead in the heavily damaged helicopter, the Fish and Game Department said.

— From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

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

Reporting
World, National
and Military News

HRs, game-ending DP get Braves even

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Baseball's most potent group of sluggers finally got into the swing of things — maybe just in time to save the season for the Atlanta Braves.

Throw in a game-ending double play for the ages, courtesy of a remarkable catch by Michael Harris II and some astute positioning by Austin Riley, and suddenly this 104-win team has gone from down and out to showing a little postseason swagger.

Travis d'Arnaud and Riley hit two-run homers as the Braves, who were held without a hit into the sixth inning, rallied from a four-run deficit to stun the Philadelphia Phillies 5-4 Monday night, evening the NL Division Series at one win apiece.

"It was really emotional, especially the way we came back," d'Arnaud said. "That was one of my favorite postsea-

son games ever."

D'Arnaud, who started at catcher over slumping Sean Murphy, gave the Braves hope with his shot into the left-field seats in the seventh, cutting Philadelphia's lead to 4-3.

It was Atlanta's first extra-base hit of the series.

Riley provided the second, driving a 3-2 pitch from Jeff Hoffman (0-1) into the Phillies bullpen with two outs in the eighth to put the Braves ahead for the first time in the best-of-five series. Ronald Acuña Jr. scored ahead of Riley after being plunked on the left arm by Hoffman's first pitch coming in from the bullpen.

"I just have faith in those guys," Braves manager Brian Snitker said. "You know what? They give you a hard 27 (outs). ... They're never going to stop fighting in the batter's box."

It ended in equally stunning fashion. With Bryce Harper

aboard, Nick Castellanos drove one to deep right-center, only to be robbed on a great leaping catch by Harris slamming into the fence.

"I knew off the bat it was going to be close to the fence," Harris said. "I knew once I went back I wasn't stopping. I was going to do anything I could to get a glove on it. If my body had to go down because of that, I would have done that."

Harper had rounded second base when Harris made the grab. He backtracked desperately, and the throw back to the infield skidded past second baseman Ozzie Albies. But Riley alertly backed up the play and zipped a throw to first that completed the double play.

It was the first playoff game in baseball history to end on a double play involving an outfielder, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Just like that, the series is all

tied up. Game 3 is Wednesday at Philadelphia.

"Every playoff win is exciting," d'Arnaud said. "I think the way it ended was one of the most exciting endings to a game I've ever seen as far as a defensive standpoint. We got Money Mike making a crazy catch on the wall and us doubling up Harper to close it out."

Phillies manager Rob Thomson talked about Harper's base-running blunder.

"Usually you don't pass the base," Thomson said. "You stay in front of it, make sure it's not caught. But he thought the ball was clearly over his head, didn't think he was going to catch it. And Harris made a heck of a play. Unbelievable."

So did Riley, backing up on a play that he never could've expected to be involved in.

"It ended up just being right spot at the right time," Riley said.

D-backs win again, move to brink of sweeping Dodgers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Not many people picked the Arizona Diamondbacks to beat Milwaukee in the NL Wild Card Series. Even fewer pegged them to take down the 100-win Los Angeles Dodgers in the Division Series.

Surprise! After a rough ending to the regular season, the upstart youngsters from the desert are sailing through the playoffs.

Lourdes Gurriel Jr. and the Diamondbacks made quick work of another Dodgers starter, beating Los Angeles 4-2 on Monday night behind Zac Gallen for a 2-0 lead in their NLDS.

"Why would we play with anything to lose?" closer Paul Sewald said. "We were the sixth seed. We weren't supposed to win in Milwaukee. No one is going to pick us to beat the Dodgers when we haven't played well against them. We're going out there with a lot of confidence."

The D-backs, who earned the final National League wild card despite losing their last four regular-season games, improved to 4-0 in these playoffs — all on the road

against division winners. They were 5-8 against the Dodgers during the regular season, losing the final five meetings.

"These guys are very hungry and they feel like they have a lot to prove," Arizona manager Torey Lovullo said.

They'll try for a stunning sweep of the NL West champions when the best-of-five series shifts to Phoenix for Game 3 on Wednesday.

"It's two games, but our backs are against the wall," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "We've got to make some type of adjustments and we have no more margin."

Gallen allowed two runs over 5½ innings for his second win of the postseason. Gurriel laced an RBI single to cap a three-run first, and the Diamondbacks chased rookie starter Bobby Miller in the second.

"I don't think it's any secret we've come in here and struggled," Gallen said. "It was good for us just mentally to come in here and set the tone, have a little faith in ourselves."

Gurriel added a solo homer in the sixth to

make it 4-1. Sewald pitched a perfect ninth for his third save of the postseason, aided by a nice catch from Gurriel in left field.

Gallen retired nine in a row during one stretch in his second career postseason start. The 17-game winner gave up five hits, struck out four and walked two.

Arizona's hitters weren't intimidated by Miller's 100 mph heat in his playoff debut. They loaded the bases with nobody out and got a sacrifice fly from Christian Walker and an RBI groundout from Gabriel Moreno before Gurriel's two-out single made it 3-0.

Clayton Kershaw and Miller worked a combined two innings and gave up nine earned runs. Miller allowed four hits, struck out one and walked two in 1½ innings before Roberts had seen enough and went to the bullpen.

"Especially after losing Game 1, you want to go out there and set a tone for your offense and get them in a good mood," Miller said. "Stuff happens. We're not done yet. They've still got to win another game. I know we can do this."

Veteran Crosby to face rookie phenom Bedard

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Sidney Crosby knows a little — OK, maybe more than a little — about being hockey's next big thing.

The hype. The attention. The pressure. It can be a lot for a teenager to handle, no matter how talented, how driven, how focused they are.

Crosby was that teenager literally half a lifetime ago when the Pittsburgh Penguins selected "Sid the Kid" first overall in the summer of 2005, weeks before his 18th birthday.

All the franchise and the city asked of him was everything. Over the better part of the last two decades, Crosby has delivered it. All of it.

Stanley Cup championships. A sparkling downtown arena. A regional transformation that's made western Pennsylvania a hockey hotbed. All while serving as the face of the franchise and the league he helped revitalize one rush, one pass, one goal, one

point — 1,502 and counting — at a time.

So when Chicago Blackhawks rookie Connor Bedard skates onto the PPG Paints Arena ice Tuesday night and sees Crosby on the other side, he won't just see the player he grew up idolizing. He will see a mentor well-versed in the unique crucible Bedard — born two weeks before Crosby arrived in Pittsburgh and himself chosen No. 1 just weeks before his 18th birthday — will find himself in over the next six months and quite possibly the next 16 years ... or more.

"I think he's a guy that's more than ready at this point," Crosby said. "He's been dealing with the expectations for a while now. ... I think, at this point, he's just ready to finally start and get all of that over with. You can relate to things like that."

Or at least, Crosby can, though the two-time Hart Trophy winner and future Hall of Famer

prefers not to spend too much time looking in the rearview mirror.

Yes, the now 36-year-old understands he's not the wunderkind he once was. That he has more hockey behind him than in front of him. That at one point he'll hand the baton of being the most recognizable active player in the sport he's helped redefine to someone else. Maybe Connor McDavid. Maybe Bedard. Maybe someone other prodigy drawn to the game because of something No. 87 did on the ice.

Don't let the small but noticeable flecks of gray that dot Crosby's hair fool you. While the league has become increasingly littered with "Next Sidney Crosbys," the 1.0 version remains very much intent on proving the fire burns just as bright entering his 19th season as it did in his first.

"I don't think it's by accident he's as good as he is," Penguins coach Mike Sullivan said. "He's

an ultra talent without a doubt, but he has an appetite for the game that's been unmatched by anyone I've been around."

Bedard, who has crossed paths with his childhood idol on occasion as he's made his way to the NHL, understands that responsibility will likely one day be his, too. Perhaps sooner rather than later. It's part of the gig, a gig Crosby has handled so gracefully it feels like second nature.

"He's such a good role model for everyone, the way he carries himself on and off the ice," Bedard said. "He's been in that spotlight for almost 20 years now and seems to have handled it so well. That's something that's really easy to look up to and I always do."

Forgive Bedard if he admitted there's a chance he may be "star-struck" when the puck drops. He expects the "wow, I'm finally here" daze to disappear once the game begins. Probably a good idea.

Bruins hoping for more after historic run ended in flop

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Boston Bruins are looking ahead at a new season, not back at the one where they posted the best record in NHL history and then lost in the first round of the playoffs.

"My rear-view mirror is broken," team president Cam Neely said as the 2023 Presidents Trophy winners opened training camp. "You certainly can learn from the past, and take some things away from that. But the page has turned, and we've got a new season coming up."

A year after setting NHL records with 65 wins and 135 points, the Bruins think they are primed for a run at the Stanley Cup. They'd have to do it without captain and six-time Selke Trophy winner Patrice Bergeron, who has retired along with scoring threat David Krejčí.

"People on the outside might view it as a void (considering) what other people and great players had done in the past," general manager Don Sweeney said. "That's evolution that every team goes through. We're fortunate enough to have players that are

really excited about that opportunity."

Brad Marchand replaced Bergeron as captain and returns to an offense that still has Hart Trophy runner-up David Pastrnak. Charlie McAvoy anchors a blue line that added veteran Kevin Shattenkirk to six returning defensemen.

And in goal, Vezina Trophy winner Linus Ullmark is back after winning 40 games last season with a 1.89 goals-against average; Jeremy Swayman, who went 24-6-4 with a 2.24 GAA, is back as the backup.

"The expectations, they don't change," Sweeney said. "We didn't expect to win 65 games last year, I don't expect to win 65 this year. But, I do expect us to be a highly competitive team from Day 1 and to take the approach that we're going to be a tough out each and every night and wear that jersey with pride. That's what this organization is trying to stand for."

Bergeron had toyed with retirement before, but he decided to return for one last run a year ago. Krejčí, who spent 2021-22 playing in his native Czechia, also signed on for another year.

With Jim Montgomery replacing Bruce Cassidy as coach, the team responded with a record-breaking campaign, surpassing the record of 62 wins that had been held by the 1995-96 Detroit Red Wings and 2018-19 Tampa Bay Lightning. The record of 132 points had stood since the 1976-77 Montreal Canadiens, though rules changes made it easier to come by.

It all did Boston little good when it met with the Florida Panthers in the first round of the playoffs.

The Bruins opened a 3-1 lead before Florida forced a decisive seventh game, Boston led 3-2 before Brandon Montour tied it with 1 minute left in regulation. Carter Verhaeghe scored midway through the first overtime to oust the stunned Bruins.

Sweeney called it "scar tissue."

"And it exists in each and every one of us. We take the disappointment and apply it going forward," he said. "We've fallen short, and last year's a great example of that. ... Eyes are forward, everybody has a job to do and there are expectations that come along with them."

3 interceptions help Raiders end 3-game skid

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Linebacker Robert Spillane had just one career interception before Monday night, and cornerback Amik Robertson received just his second start in five games this season.

Both players were critical to the Las Vegas Raiders' 17-13 victory over the Green Bay Packers. Spillane intercepted Green Bay's Jordan Love twice, and Robertson made the game-sealing pick in the end zone to stop a three-game skid.

"One of the best interceptions I've ever seen in my life," Spillane said. "Fifty yards down the field, to be able to contort his body, high point the football and end the game like that, what an outstanding play by a player who's been gnawing at the bit to get on the field."

The Raiders' offense did just enough, with Jimmy Garoppolo completing 22 of 31 passes for 208 yards and a touchdown while throwing his NFL-high seventh interception. Jakobi Meyers caught seven passes for 75 yards and a TD, and former

Packer Davante Adams had four catches for 45 yards.

Love was 16-for-30 for 182 yards and the three picks. He has thrown five interceptions in the past two games.

"I've got to be better," Love said. "I've got to take care of the ball."

Both offenses struggled. The Raiders (2-3) gained 279 yards and the Packers (2-3) finished with 285.

"I thought our defense competed hard, enough for us to win the game," Packers coach Matt LaFleur said. "We've got to find a way to score points because I think anytime you hold somebody to 17 points, it's enough to win football games."

Las Vegas ended an eight-game skid against the Packers. The franchise last beat Green Bay in 1987.

Robertson secured the victory when he intercepted a pass in the end zone with 44 seconds left.

"I played receiver in high school," Robertson said. "I'm an offensive player playing defense."

The Raiders took a 10-3 lead into halftime thanks to a 9-yard touchdown pass from Garoppolo to Meyers. Las Vegas had a chance for an even bigger lead after Spillane's interception in the second quarter gave the Raiders possession at the Green Bay 7, but settled for a short field goal.

That kind of start was nothing new for the Packers, who have scored six first-half points in their past three games. They overcame a 17-0 deficit at the break two weeks ago to beat the New Orleans Saints, and last week outscored the Detroit Lions 17-7 in the second half but still lost by two touchdowns.

And, right on cue, the Packers opened the second half with Rudy Ford's interception of Garoppolo. That led to AJ Dillon's 5-yard touchdown run to tie the game.

Later in the third quarter, Green Bay failed to take advantage of a short field. Love found Christian Watson without a defender within about 10 yards of him. The 77-yard completion — and a horse-collar tackle penal-

ty — put the Packers at the 3. But Green Bay had to settle for a chip-shot field goal to go ahead 13-10.

The lead didn't hold up long. Josh Jacobs' 2-yard touchdown run to open the fourth quarter put Las Vegas back in front.

"A lot of credit for hanging in there and grinding it out," Raiders coach Josh McDaniels said. "It was that kind of game the entire four quarters. Nothing was easy."

Brother against brother

Give the edge to younger brother Anders Carlson in the matchup of kicking brothers.

Anders Carlson made both field goals for the Packers, from 37 and 22 yards. He is 7-for-7 on field goals and 10-for-10 on extra points.

Daniel Carlson, one of the league's most reliable kickers, hit from 26 yards, but had a 53-yard attempt partially blocked and a 52-yarder bounce off the right upright. He entered this game having made 24 of 29 career field goals from at least 50 yards.

Vikings' Jefferson headed to IR, will miss four weeks

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Vikings will place wide receiver Justin Jefferson on injured reserve, according to a person with knowledge of the decision, forcing the 2022 NFL Offensive Player of the Year to miss at least the next four games because of a hamstring injury.

The person confirmed the decision to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity Tuesday because the Vikings had not finalized the move.

Jefferson slipped on the U.S. Bank Stadium turf while trying to make a cut on his route during a third-down pass deep in Kansas City territory and

limped slowly to the sideline after grabbing the back of his right leg in the fourth quarter.

Vikings coach Kevin O'Connell, talking to reporters Monday, made it clear the team would be extra cautious with their most important and extremely competitive player.

"We're going to have to, medically, make a good decision and help almost protect him from himself a little bit in a way, where we have to take care of him and get him back to 100%," O'Connell said.

Dolphins' Achane likely to miss multiple weeks

Dolphins rookie running back De'Von Achane will reportedly miss multiple weeks

after suffering a knee injury in Miami's win over the New York Giants.

Coach Mike McDaniel said Monday that the team is still gathering information on the severity of Achane's injury and didn't have details on exactly when it occurred, or a timeline for return. According to NFL Network, Achane's injury is not expected to sideline him for the rest of the season.

Achane, whom Miami selected in the third round of the 2023 draft, leads the league with 12.1 yards per carry and is second in total yards rushing with 460 despite having only 38 carries — 61 fewer than San Francisco's Christian McCaffrey, who leads the NFL with

510 yards.

Achane's injury will likely put a heavier workload on the veteran Raheem Mostert

Colts QB Richardson to miss Sunday's game

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indianapolis Colts know one thing about Anthony Richardson's shoulder injury: It will keep him out of this week's game at Jacksonville.

One day after the rookie quarterback injured the AC joint in his right shoulder on an awkward 4-yard run against Tennessee, coach Shane Steichen announced Gardner Minshew would make his second start of the season, this time against his former team.