

Iran launches missile attack on Israel

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Iran said it fired dozens of missiles into Israel on Tuesday, a sharp escalation of the monthslong conflict between Israel and the Iran-backed militias Hezbollah and Hamas. There were no immediate reports of casualties as Israel ordered residents to head to bomb shelters and as air raid sirens sounded across the country.

A series of window-shaking explosions were heard in Tel Aviv and near Jerusalem, though it was not immediately clear whether the sounds were from missiles landing or being intercepted by Israeli defenses, or both.

Israel and the United States have warned there would be severe consequences in the event of an attack on Israel from Iran, which backs the militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris monitored the attack on Israel from the White House Situation Room.

Israeli army spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said the country's air defense system was fully operational, detecting

and intercepting threats. "However, the defense is not hermetic," he said.

Orders to shelter in place were sent to Israelis' mobile phones and announced on national television.

Iran took responsibility for launching dozens of ballistic missiles at Israel. The claim was made in a statement read aloud on state television.

In its statement, Iran referenced Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Revolutionary Guard Gen. Abbas Nilforushan, both killed in an Israeli airstrike last week in Beirut. It also mentioned Ismail Haniyeh, a top leader in Hamas who was assassinated in Tehran in a suspected Israeli attack in July. It warned this attack represented only a "first wave," without elaborating.

The air raid alerts in Israel came a day after Israel said it had begun limited ground operations against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire pounded southern Lebanese villages where people were ordered to evacuate, and Hezbollah militants responded

by firing a barrage of rockets into Israel. There was no immediate word on casualties as fighting intensified and concerns of a wider regional war grew.

A senior White House official warned of "severe consequences" should Iran launch a ballistic missile against Israel. U.S. ships and aircraft are positioned in the region to assist Israel in the event of an attack from Iran. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence.

Hagari also warned of consequences if Iran fired missiles into Israel.

He urged the public to stay close to sheltered areas. "The Iranian strike could be widespread," he said.

Iranian officials could not be immediately reached for comment.

Iran launched an unprecedented direct attack on Israel in April, but few of its projectiles reached their targets. Many were shot down by a U.S.-led coalition, while others apparently failed at launch or crashed in flight.

While Hezbollah denied Israeli troops had entered Leba-

non, the Israeli army announced it had also carried out dozens of ground raids into southern Lebanon going back nearly a year. Israel released video footage purporting to show its soldiers operating in homes and tunnels where Hezbollah kept weapons.

If true, it would be another humiliating blow for Iran-backed Hezbollah, the most powerful armed group in the Middle East. Hezbollah has been reeling from weeks of targeted strikes that killed its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, and several of his top commanders.

On Tuesday morning, Israel warned people to evacuate to the north of the Awali River, some 36 miles from the border and much farther than the Litani River, which marks the northern edge of a U.N.-declared zone intended to serve as a buffer between Israel and Hezbollah after their 2006 war.

The border region has largely emptied out over the past year as the two sides have traded fire. But the scope of the evacuation warning raised questions as to how deep Israel plans to send its forces into Lebanon.

Navy's only laser-equipped destroyer en route to Japan

BY ALEX WILSON

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The U.S. Navy's only guided-missile destroyer equipped with a directed energy weapon is on its way to join the U.S. 7th Fleet in Japan.

The USS Preble left its former homeport of San Diego on Sept. 22 bound for Yokosuka, where it will take the place of the USS Benfold. That warship,

meanwhile, will relocate to Everett, Wash., U.S. Pacific Fleet announced Thursday.

The Preble is the only U.S. warship outfitted with the High-Energy Laser with Integrated Optical-dazzler and Surveillance, or HELIOS, system. It can counter small watercraft or drones and is able to collect long-range intelligence, according to manufacturer Lockheed Martin's website.

HELIOS remains in the at-sea testing phase and will continue testing while homeported in Yokosuka, Task Force 70 spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Seth Koenig told Stars and Stripes by email Tuesday.

"Deploying the most capable surface ships, such as USS Preble, and superior technology forward ensures the United States is best able to honor our security commitments to Japan

and support a free and open Indo-Pacific," he wrote.

The Benfold departs a year short of the Navy's decade limit on overseas deployments for warships. It arrived in October 2015 as one of the most advanced destroyers in the service.

Koenig declined to comment on when the Benfold will depart or when the Preble will arrive, citing security concerns.

Rutte takes NATO reins, vows to work with next US leader

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Leadership of the 32-nation NATO alliance changed hands Tuesday for the first time in a decade as former Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte took the helm of a military bloc facing security challenges unrivaled since the Cold War era.

Rutte replaced Jens Stoltenberg, who for 10 years led NATO's efforts to rebuild itself to counter a renewed threat from Russia.

Stoltenberg also guided the U.S.-led alliance during the White House tenure of Donald Trump, whose frequent criticism of the alliance created uncertainty about the future of American commitment to NATO, which the country started in the aftermath of World War II.

Moments after taking on the title of NATO secretary-gener-

al, Rutte faced questions about how he would deal with Trump should the Republican nominee return to the White House next year.

"I'm not worried," Rutte said. "I will be able to work with both (candidates) whatever the outcome of the election."

For any NATO chief, the most critical part of the job is managing the alliance's relationship with the United States.

Rutte's reputation for having a deft diplomatic touch was likely a factor in his selection by members to replace Stoltenberg, who himself was referred to at times by NATO insiders as the "Trump whisperer."

Rutte showcased some of those diplomatic skills during the 2018 NATO summit, in which there were concerns that Trump was poised to withdraw the U.S. from the security bloc.

During a crisis meeting of heads of state, Rutte was said to have realized that the key was to give Trump credit for calling out allies for their lack of defense spending and demanding more spending in the future. Past U.S. presidents had done the same for decades, though in more diplomatic terms.

On Tuesday, Rutte restated that Trump deserved credit.

"He was the one pushing us to spend more," Rutte said.

For NATO members, defense spending started inching up after Russia's 2014 armed takeover of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and picked up momentum during Trump's time in office.

Those expenditures have only accelerated since then, with Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine pushing allies to spend even more.

Video shows Russian jet buzzing F-16 near Alaska

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

A Russian fighter jet zooms dangerously close to an American F-16 near Alaska in a dramatic video posted online Monday.

The Russian Su-35 flew in a manner that was "unsafe, unprofessional and endangered all," Air Force Gen. Gregory Guillot, commander of U.S. Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, wrote Monday in a post on X. The conduct was "not what you'd see in a professional air force."

The post was accompanied by a short video taken Sept. 23 from the point of view of the American F-16 fighter jet that was buzzed while flying within the Alaskan Air Defense Identification Zone.

The identification zone is airspace beyond a nation's territorial boundary over which it maintains air traffic control for the sake of national security.

With the Russian jet's wings tipped vertically, the aircraft comes up from behind the F-16 and whisks past the left side of the American jet, which immediately rocked to its side, the 15-second video shows.

On Sept. 14, NORAD tracked a pair of IL-38 surveillance aircraft that crossed the Alaskan zone.

In July, U.S. and Canadian fighter jets intercepted two Russian bombers and two Chinese bombers flying about 200 miles off the coast of Alaska, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told reporters July 25.

CENTCOM confirms attack on US in Syria

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

A U.S. base in eastern Syria was recently struck by rocket fire, in what appeared to be the latest militant attack on American forces in the country since the Israel-Hamas war erupted nearly a year ago.

No personnel were injured in the early morning attack Thursday at Mission Support Site Euphrates, in which one rocket hit the base, U.S. Central Command said Monday. There were no injuries to personnel and there was no significant damage to the installation, the command said.

It wasn't clear Tuesday what group launched the strike.

Confirmation of the attack, at least the second on the installation since July, came after U.S. forces completed targeted strikes last month in Syria that killed 37 terrorists, including senior leaders of Islamic State and Hurras al-Din, an al-Qaida affiliate, CENTCOM announced Sunday.

Those actions were carried out Sept. 24 and Sept. 26, the command said. More than 2,000 U.S. service members are deployed to Iraq, and an additional 900 to Syria as part of a coalition fighting to prevent a resurgence of ISIS.

On Aug. 9, eight U.S. service members were treated for traumatic brain injury and smoke

inhalation following a drone attack on Rumalyn Landing Zone near Syria's northeastern border with Turkey and Iraq.

A few weeks prior to that, a single rocket was launched against Mission Support Site Euphrates. Militants also launched two rockets the same day in a separate attack aimed at al Asad Air Base in western Iraq.

There were no injuries or damage in either attack. But four U.S. service members and an American contractor were injured when two rockets struck al Asad on Aug. 5.

Last week's attack on U.S. forces in Syria comes as fighting escalates in the Middle East.

Crews working hard to aid battered NC

Associated Press

SWANNANOA, N.C. — Rescuers fanned out across the mountains of western North Carolina on Tuesday in search of anyone still unaccounted for since Hurricane Helene's remnants caused catastrophic damage to the Southeast, with the death toll nearing 140 people.

Many who lived through the deadly storm were left without electricity or any way to reach out for help. Some cooked food on charcoal grills or hiked to high ground in the hopes of finding a signal to call loved ones.

The devastation was especially bad in the Blue Ridge Mountains, where at least 40 people died in and around the city of Asheville, a tourism haven known for its art galleries, breweries and outdoor activities.

Just outside the city, in the small community of Swannanoa, receding floodwaters revealed cars stacked on top of others and trailer homes that had floated away during the storm.

Roads were caked with mud and debris and pockmarked by sinkholes.

Exhausted emergency crews worked around the clock to clear roads, restore power and phone service, and reach those still stranded by the storm, which killed at least 139 people in six states. Nearly half of the deaths were in North Carolina, while dozens of others were in South Carolina and Georgia. Search and rescue crews were deployed throughout western North Carolina. Federal agencies, aid groups and volunteers worked to deliver supplies by air, truck and even mule train.

President Joe Biden was set to survey the devastation in the region Wednesday.

The North Carolina death toll included one horrific story after another of people trapped by floodwaters or killed by falling trees. A courthouse security officer died after being submerged in his truck. A couple and a 6-year-old boy waiting on a rooftop to be rescued drowned when part of their home collapsed.

Rescuers did save dozens of other people, including an infant and two others who were stuck on the top of a car in Atlanta.

Search crews around Asheville first focused on those who were especially vulnerable, using helicopters to get past washed out bridges or hiking to isolated homes.

"We've been going door to door, making sure that we can put eyes on people and see if they're safe," said Avril Pinder, the county manager for Buncombe County, which includes Asheville. "We know that there are places that are still hard to access."

The storm unleashed the worst flooding in a century in North Carolina. Rainfall estimates in some areas have topped more than 2 feet since Wednesday. Across Georgia, Helene's inland path knocked out power and shattered lives from Valdosta to Augusta, where a line of cars waiting to get water Tuesday wrapped around a shopping center and stretched at least a half-mile down the road.

In hurricane response, Trump, Harris venture into a political storm as well

The Washington Post

VALDOSTA, Ga. — The two candidates for president ventured carefully into the politics of Hurricane Helene on Monday, with Vice President Kamala Harris canceling West Coast campaign stops to attend a storm briefing in Washington and former President Donald Trump delivering remarks from a Georgia city battered by the storm.

Trump blasted the administration's response as inadequate during a trip to severely damaged Valdosta, Ga., while Harris gave remarks at the headquarters of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Washington, aiming to reassure the public that the administration was acting decisively, but sensibly, in the storm's wake.

"I plan to be on the ground as soon as possible — as soon as possible without disrupting any emergency response operations, because that must be the highest priority and the first order of business," Harris said.

Harris plans to visit Georgia on Wednesday and survey the devastation in North Carolina in the coming days, according to aides who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the travel plans, The Associated Press reported Tuesday.

After Georgia, Harris plans to continue with scheduled campaign visits to Wisconsin and Michigan later this week, with the North Car-

olina trip coming sometime after that, AP reported.

Echoing remarks by President Joe Biden earlier in the day, she said the administration had marshaled more than 3,300 federal employees, who would stay in the worst affected areas in the weeks to come. "Our nation is with you," she said, backdropped by FEMA employees. "And President Joe Biden and I and all of the folks behind us are with you."

As people in the affected areas were still reeling from the onslaught of a hurricane that killed more than 100 people, with more than 600 still unaccounted for and communities devastated in six states, the politics of a bitter campaign seeped into the conversation. North Carolina and Georgia are battleground states coveted by both parties in the presidential election.

And as waterlogged communities took their first steps to recovery, the competing campaigns made dueling decisions about where to position their candidates.

Trump quickly sought to make an issue out of the hurricane over the weekend, saying Harris "ought to be down in the area" affected by Helene. He reiterated that message Monday after appearing in Valdosta with the Christian humanitarian relief organization Samaritan's Purse, suggesting he was filling a hole in the federal government's response.

Man again pleads not guilty of trying to assassinate Trump

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — A man who authorities say spent 12 hours camped outside Donald Trump's golf course before Secret Service spotted him with a rifle pleaded not guilty on Monday to federal charges including attempted assassination.

Ryan Wesley Routh appeared briefly in the federal court in West Palm Beach days after a grand jury handed down a five-count indictment stemming from the second attempt on Trump's life since July.

The assassination attempt was thwarted when a member of his Secret Service protective detail spotted Routh's rifle barrel protruding through the golf course fence line, ahead of where Trump was playing, authorities say. The agent fired in the direction of Routh, who sped away and was arrested in a neighboring county.

Routh left behind a digital camera, a backpack, a loaded SKS-style rifle with a scope and a plastic bag containing food.

Prosecutors have said that he had written of his plans to kill Trump in a handwritten note months before his Sept. 15 arrest.

Routh was initially charged in a criminal complaint only with gun offenses before prosecutors pursued additional charges before a grand jury.

Dockworkers' strike could reignite inflation

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — From Maine to Texas, dockworkers at 36 ports across the eastern U.S. are now on strike for the first time in decades. And the work stoppage could snarl supply chains — leading to shortages and higher prices if it stretches on for more than a few weeks.

Workers began walking picket lines early Tuesday in a strike over wages and automation, even though some progress had been reported in latest contract talks. The contract between the ports and about 45,000 members of the International Longshoremen's Association expired at midnight.

The strike also comes just weeks before next month's tight presidential election, and could become a factor if there are shortages impacting voters.

In early picketing, workers outside the Port of Philadelphia walked in a circle and chanted "No work without a fair contract." The union, which is striking for the first time since 1977, had message boards on the side of a truck reading: "Automation Hurts Families: ILA Stands For Job Protection."

Local ILA president Boise Butler said workers want a fair contract that doesn't allow automation of their jobs.

Shipping companies made billions during the pandemic by charging high prices, he said. "Now we want them to pay back. They're going to pay back," Butler said.

He said the union will strike for as long as it needs to get a fair deal, and it has leverage over the companies.

"This is not something that

you start and you stop," he said. "We're not weak," he added, pointing to the union's importance to the nation's economy.

At Port Houston, at least 50 workers started picketing around midnight local time carrying signs saying "No Work Without a Fair Contract." The U.S. Maritime Alliance, which represents the ports, said Monday evening that both sides had moved off of their previous wage offers. But no deal was reached.

The union's opening offer in the talks was for a 77% pay raise over the six-year life of the contract, with President Harold Daggett saying it's necessary to make up for inflation and years of small raises.

ILA members make a base salary of about \$81,000 per year, but some can pull in over

\$200,000 annually with large amounts of overtime.

Monday evening, the alliance said it had increased its offer to 50% raises over six years, and it pledged to keep limits on automation in place from the old contract. The alliance also said its offer tripled employer contributions to retirement plans and strengthened health care options.

The union wants a complete ban on automation. It wasn't clear just how far apart both sides are.

In a statement early Tuesday, the union said it rejected the alliance's latest proposal because it "fell far short of what ILA rank-and-file members are demanding in wages and protections against automation." The two sides had not held formal negotiations since June.

Mexico to swear in 1st female president

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Claudia Sheinbaum will take the oath of office Tuesday as Mexico's first female president in more than 200 years of independence, promising to protect an expanded social safety net and fight for the poor like her predecessor, but facing pressing problems.

The 62-year-old scientist-turned-politician will receive a country with a number of immediate challenges, foremost among them stubbornly high levels of violence, a sluggish economy and hurricane-battered Acapulco.

Sheinbaum romped to victory in June with nearly 60% of the vote, propelled largely by the sustained popularity of her political mentor, former President Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

He took office six years ago declaring, "For the good of all,

first the poor," and promising historical change from the neoliberal economic policies of his predecessors. Sheinbaum promised continuity from his popular social policies to controversial constitutional reforms to the judiciary and National Guard rammed through during his final days in office.

Despite her pledge of continuity, she is a very different personality.

"López Obrador was a tremendously charismatic president and many times that charisma allowed him to cover up some political errors that Claudia Sheinbaum will not have that possibility of doing," said Carlos Pérez Ricart, a political analyst at Mexico's Center for Economic Research and Teaching. "So, where López Obrador was charismatic, Claudia Sheinbaum will have to be effective."

US judge strikes down Georgia abortion ban

Associated Press

ATLANTA — A Georgia judge Monday struck down the state's abortion law, which took effect in 2022 and effectively prohibited abortions beyond about six weeks of pregnancy.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney wrote in his order that the law violates Georgia's Constitution, finding that "liberty in Georgia includes in its meaning, in its protections, and in its bundle of rights the power of a woman to control her own body, to decide what happens to it and in it, and to reject state interference with her health care choices."

When the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 and ended a national right to abortion, it opened the door for state bans.

Thirteen states now bar abortion at all stages of pregnancy, with some exceptions. Georgia was one of four where bans be-

gin after about the first six weeks — often before women realize they're pregnant.

McBurney's ruling would allow abortions through at least 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Kara Murray, a spokesperson for Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr, said he would immediately appeal to the state supreme court. The state high court earlier reversed a separate ruling by McBurney that had struck down the law on different grounds and could put Monday's ruling on hold pending an appeal.

"We believe Georgia's life act is fully constitutional," Murray said.

The bans have been felt deeply in the South because many people live hundreds of miles from states where abortion procedures can be obtained legally. If the Georgia ruling stands, it could open new avenues to access abortion.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man who shot 2 outside synagogues gets 35 years

CA LOS ANGELES — A California man charged with shooting and wounding two Jewish men as they left synagogues in Los Angeles last year was sentenced Monday to 35 years in prison, federal prosecutors said.

The February 2023 shootings raised fears among the city's Jewish community after officials said the victims were targeted because they wore clothing that identified their faith, including black coats and head coverings. Both men survived.

Jaime Tran, 30, pleaded guilty in June to two counts of hate crimes with intent to kill and two counts of discharging a firearm during a crime of violence, the U.S. Attorney's Office said in a statement. Tran told law enforcement that he looked online for a "kosher market" and decided to shoot someone nearby, according to an FBI affidavit.

Tran had a "history of anti-semitic and threatening conduct," the affidavit said, citing a review of emails, text messages and unspecified reports.

Registered voter denied ballot settles for \$20K

MI HOLTON TOWNSHIP — A community in western Michigan has agreed to a \$20,000 settlement in a lawsuit by a woman who was turned away from her polling place in 2022 despite registering online to vote, her attorneys said Monday.

Ashleigh Smith made many trips to her polling place in Muskegon County but was told that her address wasn't turning up in an electronic roster of voters and

that she wouldn't be given a ballot Nov. 8, 2022.

By the evening, Holton Township Clerk Jill Colwell-Coburn told Smith "she was sorry but that there was nothing more she could do," the lawsuit alleged.

Smith said she had a voter registration receipt and a sticker to put on her driver's license to show her new address. Her attorneys said she could have been given a provisional ballot, which would have given local officials a few days to try to clear up the problem.

Professor suspended 1 year for racial comments

PA PHILADELPHIA — The University of Pennsylvania law school said it is imposing a one-year suspension at half-pay and other sanctions along with a public reprimand on a tenured professor over her comments about race in recent years.

The university said Professor Amy Wax — who has questioned the academic performance of Black students, invited a white nationalist to speak to her class and suggested the country would be better off with less Asian immigration — will also lose her named chair and summer pay in perpetuity and must note in public appearances that she speaks for herself, not as a university or law school member. The university has not, however, fired her or stripped her of tenure.

Wax told the New York Sun after the announcement that she intends to stay at the school as a "conservative presence on campus." She called allegations of mistreatment of students "totally bogus and made up" and said her treatment amounted to "perform-

mance art" highlighting that the administration "doesn't want conservatives like me on campus."

Financial adviser indicted in tax shelter scheme

MS GULFPORT — A Florida financial adviser has been indicted in an alleged scheme to promote and operate an illegal tax shelter through which he stole some of his clients' funds, federal prosecutors said Friday.

Stephen T. Mellinger III, of Delray Beach, Fla., conspired with several others to defraud the Internal Revenue Service in 2013 by promoting an illegal tax shelter, according to the indictment returned Wednesday by a federal grand jury in Gulfport, Miss., and unsealed Thursday.

Mellinger was charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States, aiding in the preparation of false tax returns, conspiracy to commit wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering and money laundering. If convicted of all charges, he could be sentenced to up to 68 years behind bars.

Movie armorer conviction upheld in 'Rust' shooting

NM SANTA FE — A New Mexico judge Monday upheld an involuntary manslaughter conviction against a movie armorer in the fatal shooting of a cinematographer by Alec Baldwin on the set of the Western film "Rust."

Armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed asked a court to dismiss her conviction or convene a new trial, alleging that prosecutors failed to share evidence that could have cleared her.

Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer in her written order noted that the armorer's attorneys did not establish that there was a reasonable possibility that the outcome of the trial would have been different had the evidence been available to Gutierrez-Reed.

The judge also rejected a request from Gutierrez-Reed that she be released from custody, saying it was moot because the request for a new trial was denied.

Women get \$300M in doctor sex abuse case

VA RICHMOND — A jury has ruled in favor of three women who alleged they were sexually abused while patients at a Virginia children's hospital, awarding them a total of \$300 million in damages.

The jury in Richmond Circuit Court on Friday awarded each woman \$60 million in compensatory damages and \$40 million in punitive damages, WTVR-TV reported.

A total of 46 former patients sued the Cumberland Hospital for Children and Adolescents in New Kent, which treats vulnerable children, and Dr. Daniel Davidow, the hospital's longtime medical director. In this first trial, the three former patients alleged that Davidow inappropriately touched them during femoral pulse exams.

Davidow's attorney, Bob Donnelly, told the jury during opening statements that Davidow "unequivocally denies" the sexual assault allegations. He said the femoral pulse exam conducted by Davidow dates back to the 1960s and 1970s and is a "standard examination."

— From wire reports

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MLB career hits leader Rose dies at 83

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Pete Rose, baseball's career hits leader and fallen idol who undermined his historic achievements and Hall of Fame dreams by gambling on the game he loved and once embodied, has died. He was 83.

Stephanie Wheatley, a spokesperson for Clark County in Nevada, confirmed on behalf of the medical examiner that Rose died Monday. Wheatley said his cause and manner of death had not yet been determined.

For fans who came of age in the 1960s and '70s, no player was more exciting than the Cincinnati Reds' No. 14, "Charlie Hustle," the brash superstar with shaggy hair and muscular forearms. At the dawn of artificial surfaces, divisional play and free agency, Rose was old school, a conscious throwback to baseball's early days. Millions could never forget him crouched and scowling at the plate, running full speed to first even after drawing a walk, or sprinting for the next base and diving headfirst into the bag.

Major League Baseball, which banished him in 1989, issued a brief statement expressing condolences and noting his "greatness, grit and determination on the field of play." Reds principal owner and managing partner Bob Castellini said in a statement that Rose was "one of the fiercest competitors the game has ever seen" and added: "We must never forget what he accomplished."

A 17-time All-Star, the switch-hitting Rose played on three World Series winners. He was the National League MVP in 1973 and World Series MVP two years later. He holds the major league record for games played (3,562) and plate appearances (15,890).

He was the leadoff man for one of baseball's most formidable lineups with the Reds' championship teams of 1975

and 1976, with teammates that included Hall of Famers Johnny Bench, Tony Perez and Joe Morgan. But no milestone approached his 4,256 hits, breaking his hero Ty Cobb's 4,191 and signifying his excellence no matter the notoriety which followed. It was a total so extraordinary that you could average 200 hits for 20 years and still come up short.

Rose's secret was consistency, and longevity. Over 24 seasons, all but six played entirely with the Reds, Rose had 200 hits or more 10 times, and more than 180 four other times.

He batted .303 overall, even while switching from second base to outfield to third to first, and he led the league in hits seven times.

"Every summer, three things are going to happen," Rose liked to say, "the grass is going to get green, the weather is going to get hot, and Pete Rose is going to get 200 hits and bat .300."

Rose reached 1,000 hits in 1968, 2,000 just five years later and 3,000 just five years after that. He moved into second place, ahead of Hank Aaron, with hit No. 3,772, in 1982. No. 4,000 was off the Phillies' Jerry Koosman in 1984, exactly 21 years to the day after his first hit. He caught up with Cobb on Sept. 8, 1985, and surpassed him three days later, in Cincinnati, with Rose's mother and teenage son, Pete Jr., among those in attendance.

Rose was 44 and the team's player-manager. Batting left-handed against the San Diego Padres' Eric Show in the first inning, he smacked a 2-1 slider into left field, a clean single. The crowd of 47,000-plus stood and yelled. The game was halted to celebrate. Rose was given the ball and the first base bag, then wept openly on the shoulder of first base coach and former teammate, Tommy Helms. He told Pete Jr., who later played briefly for the Reds: "I love you, and I hope you pass me." He

thought of his late father, a star athlete himself who had pushed him to play sports since childhood. And he thought of Cobb, the dead-ball era slasher whom Rose so emulated that he named another son Tyler.

Baseball Commissioner Peter Ueberroth, watching from New York, declared that Rose had "reserved a prominent spot in Cooperstown." After the game, a 2-0 win for the Reds in which Rose scored both runs, he received a phone call from President Ronald Reagan.

"Your reputation and legacy are secure," Reagan told him. "It will be a long time before anyone is standing in the spot where you're standing now."

Four years later, he was gone.

On March 20, 1989, Ueberroth (who was soon succeeded by A. Bartlett Giamatti) announced that his office was conducting a "full inquiry into serious allegations" about Rose. Reports emerged that he had been relying on a network of bookies and friends and others in the gambling world to place bets on baseball games, including some with the Reds. Rose denied any wrongdoing, but the investigation found that the "accumulated testimony of witnesses, together with the documentary evidence and telephone records reveal extensive betting activity by Pete Rose in connection with professional baseball and, in particular, Cincinnati Reds games, during the 1985, 1986, and 1987 baseball seasons."

In August 1989, at a New York press conference, Giamatti spoke some of the saddest words in baseball history: "One of the game's greatest players has engaged in a variety of acts which have stained the game, and he must now live with the consequences of those acts." Giamatti announced that Rose had agreed to a lifetime ban from baseball, a decision that in 1991 the Hall of Fame ruled left him ineligible for induction. Rose attempted to downplay the

news, insisting that he had never bet on baseball and that he would eventually be reinstated.

Meanwhile, his story changed. In a November 1989 memoir, written with "The Boys of Summer" author Roger Kahn, Rose again claimed innocence, only to reverse himself in 2004. He desperately wanted to come back, and effectively destroyed his chances. He continued to spend time at casinos, insisting he was there for promotion, not gambling. He believed he had "messed up" and that his father would have been ashamed, but he still bet on baseball, albeit legally.

"I don't think betting is morally wrong. I don't even think betting on baseball is morally wrong," he wrote in "Play Hungry," a memoir released in 2019. "There are legal ways, and there are illegal ways, and betting on baseball the way I did was against the rules of baseball."

His disgrace was all the harder because no one seemed to live for baseball more than Rose did. He remembered details of games from long ago and could quote the most obscure statistics about players from other teams. He was as relentless in spring training as he was in the postseason, when he brawled with the New York Mets' Buddy Harrelson during the 1973 NL playoffs.

In the beginning, it was all about the game. He was a Cincinnati native from a working-class neighborhood whose father, Harry Francis Rose, like the father of Mickey Mantle, taught his son to be a switch hitter.

Rose the man was never inducted into Cooperstown, but his career was well-represented. Items at the Baseball Hall include his helmet from his MVP 1973 season, the bat he used in 1978 when his hitting streak reached 44 and the cleats he wore, in 1985, on the day he became the game's hits king.

Mets, Braves advance after doubleheader split

Associated Press

ATLANTA — A final day that wasn't on the schedule and won't soon be forgotten.

An improbable comeback by the New York Mets in the opening game of a makeup doubleheader to secure their playoff berth. A gritty recovery by the Atlanta Braves in the nightcap, stamping their postseason ticket as well.

And all the Arizona Diamondbacks could do was watch hopelessly from the desert, their hopes snuffed out by two games on the other side of the country.

"You're just focused on getting into the postseason," said Braves first baseman Matt Olson, soaked in champagne as he celebrated a 3-0 win in the last game of the regular season. "Whatever it took. If we had to play four games today, we would have done it."

The regular season went to extra innings after the Mets and Braves had a pair of games rained out last week by Hurricane Helene. They controlled their own fates, with each holding a tiebreaker edge over the defending

NL champion Diamondbacks.

Arizona needed one team to sweep, so they were pulling for the Mets after they overcame deficits of 3-0 in the eighth inning and 7-6 in the ninth to win the opener 8-7, going ahead for good on Francisco Lindor's two-run homer.

"An instant classic game," said Brandon Nimmo, whose two-run homer capped a six-run eighth.

The Braves, to their credit, bounced back to get the win they had to have. Even after ace Chris Sale was scratched because of back spasms, journeyman Grant Holmes stepped in to lead off a three-hitter spread among six pitchers.

At the end, in the perfect capper to a wacky day, there were champagne-spraying celebrations in both clubhouses at Truist Park.

Atlanta, New York and Arizona all finished 89-73.

Holmes found out he was starting about a half-hour before the first pitch.

"I was about to go get some food," said the 28-year-old Holmes, who finally made it to the

big leagues this year after a decade in the minors. "They came up to me and said, 'Hey, you're going to start this one off today.' And I was like, 'Oh, OK, here we go.'"

With their postseason berth locked up, the Mets added left-hander Joey Lucchesi to the roster to start the second game. The 31-year-old left-hander spent most of the season at Triple-A Syracuse, giving up five runs in 4½ innings in his lone big league appearance before Monday.

He looked like an ace against the Braves, who might've still been a bit shellshocked after the way they lost the opener. Lucchesi (0-2) allowed just three hits, including a run-scoring single to Gio Urshela, in a six-inning, 111-pitch outing.

But Marcell Ozuna gave the Braves some breathing room with a two-run single in the seventh. Daysbel Hernandez (3-0) earned the win and Raisel Iglesias finished it off for his 34th save in 37 chances.

"I'm so proud of all those guys," Atlanta manager Brian Snitker

said. "It takes the whole building to make something like this happen."

The Mets were already in party mode after Lindor's 33rd homer.

Trailing 3-0, with just three singles through seven innings against rookie Spencer Schwellenbach, New York's offense came to life in the eighth.

The Mets surged ahead with their six-run outburst. The Braves stormed back with four runs in the bottom half, as Ozzie Albies delivered a bases-loaded double with two outs for a 7-6 lead — giving him five RBIs in the game after a two-run homer in the third.

But New York delivered the final blow with Lindor's drive into the Braves bullpen off Pierce Johnson (7-5).

"That was one of the craziest games I've ever been a part of," said Carlos Mendoza, the Mets rookie manager. "Just the meaning of it. Coming back in the game and then losing the lead and then coming back again in the ninth. It was unbelievable, like you should write a book."

Legacies, fortunes can be made in baseball's postseason

Associated Press

Japanese superstar Shohei Ohtani has put up some of the best regular-season numbers in baseball history over the past six months. Bobby Witt Jr. is a precocious 24-year-old who just won the American League batting title.

They've both proven they are excellent at baseball.

Now it's time to see if they're good at October baseball.

"The mound is 60 feet, 6 inches away, first base is 90 feet away," Witt said on Monday. "It's the same game I've played since I was little, and so just go out there, enjoy every moment and take it all in."

The Kansas City shortstop was trying not to put too many expectations on himself before the biggest games of his professional career. That's probably smart.

But there's little doubt that October competition is a little different. It all started Tuesday when the Tigers-Astros, Royals-Orioles, Mets-Brewers and Braves-Padres begin their best-of-three Wild Card Series.

The Yankees, Guardians, Dodgers and Phillies all earned a bye until the Division Series, which begins on Saturday.

Everyone feels the pressure of the playoffs. Owners, fans, players. Yankees slugger Juan Soto, Astros third baseman Alex Bregman, Orioles outfielder Anthony Santander and Mets first baseman Pete Alonso are among the upcoming free agents who could increase their value by millions with good postseason performances.

Soto was still a rising star with the Washington Nationals when they won their title in 2019. He hit .333 with three home runs and seven RBIs in that World Series, and a similar performance over the next few weeks could send his asking price this winter into the stratosphere.

The postseason is also where legacies are made.

Yankees slugger Aaron Judge is already one of the most productive sluggers in the storied franchise's history. He smashed 58 homers this season two years after a 62-homer

campaign and his tape-measure homers are the stuff of legend.

But he doesn't have a championship ring, and that's the expectation in the Bronx. The Yankees haven't won a title since 2009.

"I think there's no question he's one of the franchise's greatest players," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "But he's playing for (championships). That's why he does this, not to rack up personal accolades. He embodies that. He lives that. I'm sure winning it all would add a level to his legacy."

Philadelphia's Bryce Harper is another one of this generation's great players who has never won a title. The two-time MVP led the Phillies to the World Series in 2022 — earning MVP of the National League Championship Series along the way — before losing to the Houston Astros for the title.

It's one of the few missing pieces of a stellar career.

"We've just got to play Philly baseball and continue to play," Harper said after his team clinched the NL East.

Goff perfect as Lions top Seahawks

Associated Press

DETROIT — Jared Goff threw a perfect game, setting an NFL record by completing all 18 of his passes to help the Detroit Lions beat the Seattle Seahawks 42-29 Monday night.

"I just gave the game ball to somebody else, so I feel awful," Lions coach Dan Campbell said. "I knew he played a heck of a game. I did not know he was perfect."

Kurt Warner had the previous league mark for the passes without an incompleteness, going 10-for-10 for Arizona against Houston in 2005.

"It's a cool thing," Goff said. "I'm just happy we got the win."

Goff did throw an incomplete pass, but it was negated by a penalty.

"I was like, does that count?" he recalled wondering.

Goff also had a touchdown reception for the first time in his career, catching a pass from

Amon-Ra St. Brown, and threw one of his two touchdown passes to the All-Pro receiver. Goff and St. Brown are the eighth duo in league history to throw and catch a touchdown from each other.

St. Brown lobbed a 7-yard pass to Goff on a trick play in the third quarter and caught an 8-yard touchdown from the quarterback in the fourth.

Goff, who threw for 292 yards, completed his first 14 passes in Detroit's previous win at Arizona to set a personal record that lasted a little more than a week. He also threw a pass over the middle to Jameson Williams, who ran away from the Seahawks for a 70-yard touchdown in the third quarter.

The Lions (3-1) asked Goff to throw one more time from his end zone and he was sacked for a safety with 2:01 remaining, cutting their lead to 13 points.

The Seahawks (3-1) simply

could not overcome an injury-depleted defense that could not stop Detroit on the ground or through the air.

"It shows we aren't the team we want to be," Seattle coach Mike Macdonald said.

Macdonald went for it on fourth-and-4 from the Detroit 39 early in the fourth and receiver Tyler Lockett negated a first down with pass interference, getting called for running a pick play that freed up Jaxon Smith-Njigba for a catch.

"They said he picked the guy, but I think we all saw he never made contact with him," Smith said.

Macdonald went for it again on fourth-and-goal from the Detroit 3 with 2:09 to go and Geno Smith threw a fourth straight incompleteness.

The Lions took advantage and went ahead by 15 points with 5:23 left when Goff threw a high pass to St. Brown, who leaped

for the catch and got both feet in the end zone.

Jahmyr Gibbs ran for two touchdowns in the second quarter and finished with 78 yards rushing. David Montgomery started the scoring barrage with a 1-yard touchdown run, capping a 10-play, 93-yard drive that took 7-plus minutes off the clock in the first quarter, and had 80 yards from scrimmage.

Smith was 38-for-56 for 395 yards with a 9-yard touchdown pass to rookie tight end AJ Barner in the third quarter on a drive he extended with a sneak on fourth down. He threw an interception in the end zone with a minute left, sealing Seattle's first setback this season.

"Even when we were down 14, we knew we had a chance to come back," Smith said.

Kenneth Walker, who gained 80 yards on 12 carries, had a career-high three touchdowns rushing.

Reserve Rudolph leads Titans to first win of season

Associated Press

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Mason Rudolph was happy to help lead the Tennessee Titans to their first win of the season on Monday, even though he felt like he didn't have to do much.

Nick Folk helped him with five field goals, and Rudolph led seven scoring drives after starter Will Levis left with a shoulder injury in the 31-12 win over the Miami Dolphins.

"I didn't do a whole lot, that's for sure," Rudolph said. "Tony (Pollard) and the O-line and Tyjae (Spears) just mauled them up front. Moved the ball, controlled the ball in the second half. We protected the ball there in the second half and got out with the win."

Rudolph threw for 85 yards and completed 9 of 17 passes in relief of Levis, who attempted just four passes before injuring

his right throwing shoulder on a scramble.

Brian Callahan, who got his first win as the Titans' coach, said Levis tried to go back in but was in pain. Tennessee's upcoming bye week factored into the decision to hold him out.

Folk made field goals of 53, 52, 47, 51 and 29 yards. Spears took a direct snap and ran it in for a 7-yard touchdown. Pollard had a 4-yard touchdown run to go with 88 yards on 22 carries. The Titans (1-3) rushed for 142 yards.

"I knew the style of game we needed to play to win this game," Callahan said. "I knew that they were going to have some trouble offensively, and I knew that we were going to be able to run the ball effectively on them."

Tyler Huntley, who signed with the Dolphins on Sept. 17 off Baltimore's practice squad, ran for a touchdown and had 96

yards passing. But the Dolphins' offense continued to struggle without Tua Tagovailoa, who remains on injured reserve with a concussion.

Huntley was named starter on Saturday, as No. 2 quarterback Skylar Thompson nurses a rib injury.

"I felt pretty comfortable," Huntley said. "Just now I got to dig in deeper and just know the ins and outs of the offense, and it will take our offense to another level."

Huntley brought the Dolphins (1-3) within 10 when he scored on a 1-yard run with 3:40 left. He was intercepted on the 2-point conversion attempt, and the Titans recovered the ensuing onside kick.

Huntley was called for intentional grounding in the end zone on Miami's last effort at a comeback, adding two more points for

the Titans.

Tyreek Hill was held under 50 yards receiving for the third straight game with 23 yards on four catches, as the Dolphins managed just 78 yards passing.

Titans receiver DeAndre Hopkins was also quiet with two catches for 31 yards.

Linebacker Emmanuel Ogbah intercepted Levis and secured the ball between his knees to end a promising opening drive for the Titans.

The Dolphins gave it right back when Huntley threw a backward pass to Hill that went off the receiver's fingertips. It was initially ruled an incomplete pass but after review, it was overturned to a fumble that Tennessee recovered.

That was the first takeaway of the season for the Titans, who entered the game with a minus-7 turnover differential.