

US: Russia buying arms from N. Korea

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Russian Ministry of Defense is in the process of purchasing millions of rockets and artillery shells from North Korea for its ongoing fight in Ukraine, according to a newly downgraded U.S. intelligence finding.

Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, said Tuesday that “the information that we have is that Russia has specifically asked for ammunition.” He said the U.S. has seen indications Russia approached North Korea, but said he had no other details, including whether money has changed hands or any shipments are in progress.

“It does demonstrate and is indicative of the situation that Russia finds itself in, in terms of its logistics and sustainment capabilities as it relates to Ukraine,” said Ryder, in the administration’s first public comments on the intelligence assessment. “We assess that things are not going well on that front for Russia.”

A U.S. official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the intelligence determination, said Monday that the fact Russia is turning to the isolated state of North

Korea demonstrates that “the Russian military continues to suffer from severe supply shortages in Ukraine, due in part to export controls and sanctions.”

U.S. intelligence officials believe that the Russians could look to purchase additional North Korean military equipment in the future. The intelligence finding was first reported by The New York Times.

Neither Ryder nor the U.S. official were able to say how much weaponry Russia intends to purchase from North Korea.

Asked why the information was declassified, Ryder it’s relevant to illustrate the condition of Russia’s ongoing military campaign in Ukraine. And, he said, it shows “they’re trying to reach out to international actors like Iran and North Korea that don’t have the best record when it comes to international stability.”

The Biden administration said last week that Russia has faced technical problems with Iranian-made drones acquired from Tehran in August for use in its war with Ukraine. Russia picked up Mohajer-6 and Shahed-series unmanned aerial vehicles over several days last month as part what the Biden administration says is likely part

of a Russian plan to acquire hundreds of Iranian UAVs for use in Ukraine.

North Korea has sought to tighten relations with Russia as much of Europe and the West has pulled away, blaming the United States for the Ukraine crisis and decrying the West’s “hegemonic policy” as justifying military action by Russia in Ukraine to protect itself.

The North Koreans have hinted interest in sending construction workers to help rebuild Russian-occupied territories in the country’s east. North Korea’s ambassador to Moscow recently met with envoys from two Russia-backed separatist territories in the Donbas region of Ukraine and expressed optimism about cooperation in the “field of labor migration,” citing his country’s easing pandemic border controls.

In July, North Korea became the only nation aside from Russia and Syria to recognize the independence of the territories, Donetsk and Luhansk, further aligning with Russia over the war.

The North’s arms export to Russia would be a violation of U.N. resolutions that ban the country from exporting to or importing weapons from other countries.

UN calls for safety zone around Ukraine nuke plant

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — The U.N. atomic watchdog agency urged Russia and Ukraine on Tuesday to establish a “nuclear safety and security protection zone” around the Zaporizhzhia power plant amid mounting fears the fighting could trigger a catastrophe in a country still scarred by the Chernobyl disaster.

In a report following a visit by an inspection team last week, the International Atomic Energy Agency said “shelling on site and in its vicinity should be stopped immediately to avoid any further damages to the plant and associated facilities, for the safety of the operating staff and to maintain the physical integrity to support safe and secure operation.”

“This requires agreement by all relevant parties to the establishment of a nuclear safety and security protection zone” around the plant, it said.

IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi, who led the inspection visit, was due to brief the U.N. Security Council later Tuesday on his findings.

Shelling continued around Europe’s largest nuclear plant on Tuesday, a day after it was again knocked off Ukraine’s electrical grid and put in the precarious position of relying on its own power to run its safety systems. Normally the plant relies on power from the outside to run the critical cooling systems that keep its reactors and its spent fuel from overheating. A loss of those cooling systems could lead to a meltdown or other release of radiation.

“For radiation protection professionals, for the Ukrainian and even the Russian people, and those of central Europe, this is a very worrying time — and that’s an understatement,” said Paul Dorfman, a nuclear safety expert at the University of Sussex in En-

gland.

Russian-installed officials accused Ukrainian forces of shelling Enerhodar, the city where the plant is situated, while the Ukrainians said Kremlin forces attacked the city of Nikopol, across the Dnieper River from the power station.

The Ukrainian mayor of Enerhodar, Dmytro Orlov, reported a powerful blast in the city around midday. The explosion left the city of 53,000 cut off from its power and water supplies. It wasn’t clear what caused the blast.

World leaders have called for the demilitarization of the plant, which has been occupied by Russian forces since the early days of the war but is being run by Ukrainian engineers.

In its report, the IAEA did not assign blame for the shelling at the plant. The agency has sought to keep out of the political fray.

Deadly typhoon makes landfall in S. Korea

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The most powerful typhoon to hit South Korea in years killed at least six people, dumped 3 feet of rain, destroyed roads and felled power lines Tuesday. The death toll could have been higher if not for proactive evacuations and school closures, officials said.

There was also greater public awareness about the storm and its risks. Typhoon Hinnamnor made impact just weeks after heavy rain around the capital, Seoul, caused flooding that killed at least 14 people.

Government officials put the

nation on high alert for days as Hinnamnor approached, warning of potentially historic destruction and putting in motion life-saving measures.

Hinnamnor grazed the resort island of Jeju and hit the mainland near the port city of Busan, home to many U.S. service members. The storm then weakened as it blew into waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

South Korea's weather agency said Hinnamnor was over the open sea 248 miles northwest of the northern Japanese city of Sapporo as of 9 p.m. and had weakened to a tropical storm.

The damage was still severe in the southern city of Pohang, however, where five people were found dead and at least five others were reported missing after the storm submerged roads and buildings, triggered landslides and flooded a shopping mall.

Cars with smashed windows and trunks open lay scattered on roads like garbage. An entire two-story pool villa was uprooted from the ground and swept away by flash floods. Troops were deployed to assist with rescue and restoration efforts, moving in armored vehicles through streets turned into

chocolate-colored rivers.

Firefighters navigated flooded neighborhoods in rubber boats, rescuing people and their pets. Merchants scrambled to salvage furniture and other belongings at the famous Guryongpo outdoor market, where workers deployed excavators to clear huge piles of debris.

The rain and flooding eroded the foundations of bridges and motorways, which were often broken in chunks or blocked by fallen trees and electricity poles. Factory buildings were tilted, while a shipping container blew away and landed above cars in a parking lot.

Australia navy can now resume Solomons visits

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Australia said Tuesday that its navy ships have been given clearance to resume visits to the Solomon Islands, which had last week announced a temporary block on all military vessels during a review of its approval processes.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong confirmed to reporters that military ships from New Zealand and Fiji would also be allowed to visit the South Pacific nation.

But that means military ships from the United States, Britain and other countries still won't be able to dock at a time that many Pacific nations are alarmed about the Solomon Islands increasing security ties to China.

"Of course, we welcome the continued access of a member of the Pacific family — in this case, Australia — to Solomon Islands waters," Wong told

the Australian Broadcasting Corp. "We are regular visitors."

Asked if she was disappointed the U.S. wasn't also given an exemption, Wong said the Solomon Islands had indicated it was making its decisions on a case-by-case basis.

"They are a sovereign nation and that's a matter for them," Wong told the broadcaster. "What I would say is that the U.S. has a long history of presence in the Pacific, going back to World War II."

The move comes ahead of a visit to Australia by Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare.

"We welcome the Prime Minister's visit," Wong told reporters, adding that she welcomed his assurance "that Australia remains the security partner of choice."

The Solomon Islands did allow a visit last week by the U.S. hospital ship USNS Mercy to go ahead.

'Fat Leonard' Francis escapes from San Diego house arrest

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — The military contractor known as "Fat Leonard," the mastermind behind the worst public corruption scandal in U.S. Navy history who was three weeks away from being sentenced in the case, is on the run.

Leonard Glenn Francis, who has been under house arrest, cut off his GPS monitoring ankle bracelet and absconded from his San Diego home sometime Sunday morning, said Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal Omar Castillo.

Pretrial Services, the federal agency monitoring Francis, was alerted to an anomaly with Francis' bracelet, and Francis' defense team went to check on him, knowing he has a history of health issues. An attorney called San Diego police about 1:45 p.m., saying Francis was not answering their knocks or messages, and asked for a welfare check at the home in the Torrey Highlands neighborhood, according to police officials.

Officers arrived and entered the home through an unsecured door in a courtyard and found the home empty — save for the sheared GPS bracelet left behind, according to police and marshals.

The U.S. Marshals Service was called to assist, and the San Diego Regional Fugitive Task Force was activated to begin the high-profile manhunt. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which spearheaded the massive case against Francis more than a decade ago, is also helping.

Neighbors in the gated community told authorities that they had seen U-Haul moving trucks going in and out of Francis' home in the days leading up to his escape, Castillo said. It was not known if neighbors knew Francis was the tenant of the sprawling multimillion-dollar home, which, according to real estate websites, has five bedrooms and seven bathrooms. No one reported the moving trucks as suspicious, he said.

"He was planning this out, that's for sure," Castillo said.

Ex-leaders warn of civilian-military strains

The Washington Post

The Pentagon's former defense secretaries and top generals warned Tuesday that political polarization and other societal strains are creating an "exceptionally challenging" environment for maintaining the traditional relationship between the military and civilian worlds.

The assessment is the basis of an extraordinary open letter signed by eight former defense secretaries and five former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Adhering to the military's tradition of nonpartisanship, the leaders do not blame any political leader or party for the situation, but note that the last presidential election was the first in more than a century to have the peaceful transfer of power disrupted.

The former Pentagon leaders said the current environment is challenging for a variety of reasons, including deep political di-

visions and the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, and say they fear that the situation could worsen.

At the same time, the U.S. military has ended wars in Iraq and Afghanistan "without all the goals satisfactorily accomplished" and is preparing for "more daunting competition" with other nations, the leaders write.

"Looking ahead, all of these factors could well get worse before they get better," the letter states. "In such an environment, it is helpful to review the core principles and best practices by which civilian and military professionals have conducted healthy American civil-military relations in the past — and can continue to do so, if vigilant and mindful."

The signatories of the letter, published Tuesday by War on the Rocks, include former President Donald Trump's two confirmed defense secretaries, Jim Mattis

and Mark Esper, both of whom clashed with the president and were removed from their positions. Mattis, after leaving office, denounced Trump as a threat to the U.S. Constitution who tried to turn Americans against one another, while Esper resisted Trump's desire to use active-duty troops against people protesting the police killing of George Floyd and later said Trump was unfit for office.

The signatories also include earlier defense secretaries from both Republican and Democratic administrations and each of the Pentagon's retired top officers since October 2001: Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, Marine Gen. Peter Pace, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, Army Gen. Martin Dempsey and Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr.

The genesis of the letter was a discussion that began in the spring between Dempsey and Pe-

ter Feaver, a civil-military affairs scholar who is sometimes consulted by Pentagon leaders and who teaches with Dempsey at Duke University. They wanted to define best practices for civil-military affairs after Trump and some of his advisers alarmed Pentagon leaders with their rhetoric and ideas, Feaver said.

"We realized that there was a need for a restatement of what civilian control means, and how it applies," Feaver said. "It was striking that as General Dempsey reached out to them to get them involved, to a person they said, 'Oh, yeah. That's important. We need to do that.'"

The signatories said they are concerned about "irresponsible" and "heated" political attacks on U.S. institutions as the midterm elections loom, said Chuck Hagel, a former Republican senator who served as a defense secretary in the Obama administration.

Uvalde school year starts as fear, concern remain

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — A new and worrisome school year began Tuesday in Uvalde.

There is new high fencing around the Texas community's public school campuses that still isn't finished, a heavy police patrol that many families don't trust and no classes ever again at Robb Elementary School, three months after a gunman with an AR-15-style rifle killed 19 children and two teachers inside two adjoining fourth-grade classrooms.

Ashley Morales is putting her son, Jeremiah, back in class — because she says she has no other choice as a working single mother. She said she would drop him off outside Uvalde Elementary on the first day, as parents weren't allowed inside.

"I'm just nervous, scared," said Morales, whose son was a third-grader last year at Robb Elemen-

tary and lost three friends in the May 24 massacre.

Students began arriving at Uvalde Elementary before dawn Tuesday, walking through newly installed 8-foot metal fencing that surrounds the campus and past a state trooper standing guard outside an entrance. Colorful flags hung inside the hallways and teachers wore turquoise shirts that read "Together We Rise & Together We Are Better" on the back. State troopers were parked on every corner outside the school. Teachers hugged students climbing out of cars in the drop-off line and guided them toward a line of teachers in turquoise shirts who were waiting for them behind the fence.

Although school started weeks ago in many parts of Texas, officials pushed back the first day of class in Uvalde after a summer of unfathomable heartache.

Calif. OKs bills focused on producers of plastic waste

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Two months after California lawmakers passed sweeping legislation designed to reduce plastic waste, they've ponied up and passed more than a half-dozen new bills that will further reduce and clean up the state's waste stream.

If Gov. Gavin Newsom signs the bills — and most observers think he will — a visit to the grocery, electronics or general retail store will fundamentally change for most residents.

"If any one of these bills had passed, it'd have been huge," said Nick Lapis, director of advocacy for Californians Against Waste. "But all of these together? It's incredible."

One high-profile bill will affect the plastic bags in the produce and bulk bin sections of grocery stores. Starting in 2025, such bags will have to be reusable, recycla-

ble or compostable. It comes six years after California banned single-use checkout bags from grocery and retail stores.

Another bill focuses on thermoform plastics — containers that have been molded into shape by heat. Common thermoform plastic items include clamshell containers for food, plastic trays — such as the ones that hold baked chicken — cups and lids. These items will have to contain a certain percentage — 10% by 2025 and 30% by 2030 — of recycled plastic. If they can't meet these targets, the company that used the plastic to package the item will have to pay an annual penalty based on their shortfall.

Other bills focus on waste generated by batteries, electronics and wine and spirits bottles, the mercury found in some fluorescent bulbs and single-use propane canisters.

New UK Prime Minister Truss faces full slate of problems

Associated Press

LONDON — Liz Truss became U.K. prime minister on Tuesday and immediately confronted the enormous task ahead of her amid increasing pressure to curb soaring prices, ease labor unrest and fix a health care system burdened by long waiting lists and staff shortages.

At the top of her in-box is the energy crisis triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which threatens to push energy bills to unaffordable levels, shuttering businesses and leaving the nation's poorest people shivering in icy homes this winter.

Truss, who refused to spell out her energy strategy during the two-month campaign to succeed Boris Johnson, now plans to cap energy bills at a cost to taxpayers of as much as \$116 billion, British news media reported Tuesday. She is expected to unveil her plan on Thursday.

"You must know about the cost of living crisis in England, which is really quite bad at the moment," Rebecca Macdougall, 55, who works in law enforcement, said outside the Houses of Parliament.

"She's making promises for that, as she says she's going to deliver, deliver, deliver," she said. "But we will see in, hopefully, the next few weeks there'll be some announcements which will help the normal working person."

Truss took office Tuesday afternoon at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, when Queen Elizabeth II formally asked her to form a new government in a carefully choreographed ceremony dictated by centuries of tradition.

Johnson, who announced his intention to step down two months ago, formally resigned during his own audience with the queen a short time earlier.

It was the first time in the queen's 70-year reign that the handover of power took place at Balmoral, rather than at Buckingham Palace in London.

The ceremony was moved to Scotland to provide certainty about the schedule because the 96-year-old queen has experienced problems getting around that have forced palace officials to make decisions about her travel recently on a day-to-day basis.

Blackouts closer in Calif. amid heat wave

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — California is facing its highest chance of blackouts this year as a brutal heat wave continues to blanket the state with triple-digit temperatures. State energy officials said the electrical load Tuesday afternoon could top 51,000 megawatts, the highest demand the state has ever seen.

As people crank up their air conditioners, the state forecasted record levels of energy use, said Elliot Mainzer, president of California Independent System Operators, which runs the state's electrical grid. The state has additional energy capacity at the moment "but blackouts, rolling, rotating outages are a possibility," Mainzer said.

The CAISO site Tuesday morning showed California could fall more than 5,000 megawatts short of its power supply at peak demand, forecasted for 5:30 p.m.

The danger of wildfires was extreme as scorching heat and low humidity turned brush to tinder. Four deaths were reported over the Labor Day weekend as some 4,400 firefighters battled 14 large fires around the state, with 45 new blazes on Sunday alone, said Anale Burlew, a deputy chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

In Southern California, two people were killed and one injured by the Fairview Fire, which started Monday near the city of Hemet, the Riverside County Fire Department said. Roughly 50 miles southeast of Los Angeles, the fire had quickly spread to more than 2,000 acres by 11 p.m., prompting evacuations, and was only 5% contained.

1 suspect in stabbings found dead

Associated Press

WELDON, Saskatchewan — Canadian police hunted for the remaining suspect in the stabbing deaths of 10 people in an Indigenous community and nearby town in the province of Saskatchewan after finding the body of his brother amid a massive manhunt for the pair.

Damien Sanderson, 31, was found dead Monday near the stabbing sites and authorities believe his brother and fellow suspect, Myles Sanderson, 30, is injured, on the run and likely in the provincial capital of Regina, said police chief Evan Bray. The series of stabbings also wounded 18 people.

On Tuesday afternoon, police surrounded a residence with guns drawn on the Indigenous reserve where the rampage took place.

An emergency alert to phones warned people to shelter in place, saying the suspect, Myles Sanderson, may have been sighted on the James Smith Cree First Nation reserve. An Associated Press reporter heard people screaming and running and saw police surround a home. Police are barricading roads heading into the reserve.

Concerning Damien Sanderson, RCMP Commanding Officer Assistant Commissioner Rhonda Blackmore said authorities are not sure of his cause of death yet but the injuries he sustained

were not self-inflicted.

Damien Sanderson's "body was located outdoors in a heavily grassed area in proximity to a house that was being examined. We can confirm he has visible injuries," said Blackmore. Asked if Myles Sanderson was responsible for his brother's death, Blackmore said police are investigating that possibility, but "we can't say that definitively at this point in time."

Leaders of the James Smith Cree Nation, where most of the stabbing attacks took place, blamed the killings on the drug and alcohol abuse plaguing the community, which they said was a legacy of European colonization.

James Smith Cree Nation resident Darryl Burns and his brother, Ivor Wayne Burns, said their sister, Gloria Lydia Burns, was a first responder who was killed while responding to a call. Burns said his 62-year-old sister was on a crisis response team.

"She went on a call to a house and she got caught up in the violence," he said. "She was there to help. She was a hero."

Blackmore said police were still determining the motive, but the chief of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations echoes suggestions the stabbings could be drug-related.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man acting erratically dies while in custody

AZ PHOENIX — A suspect believed to be connected to an attempted home burglary in Phoenix died in police custody, according to authorities.

Police said the incident involved 36-year-old Enrique Cantu III.

Officers received calls about a man approaching the front doors of residential homes and acting erratically and were met with resistance when they tried to detain the suspect. Police said Cantu was handcuffed and laid on his side while awaiting an evaluation by paramedics based on his behavior.

While Cantu was receiving treatment, authorities said he became unresponsive.

Police said the Maricopa County Office of the Medical Examiner will determine the cause and manner of death while the officers involved face internal and criminal investigations.

Man left dead animals at Parkland memorial

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — A Florida man was charged with leaving dead animals on three separate occasions at a memorial for the 17 victims of the Parkland school massacre, officials said.

Robert Mondragon, 29, is being held without bail on three felony charges of defacing a monument for his alleged actions outside Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and for violating probation on an earlier conviction for battery and indecent exposure.

Broward County sheriff's investigators said on the night of July 20, Mondragon put a dead, cut open duck on the bench that is part of the memorial garden outside the school commemorating the victims of the Feb. 14, 2018, massacre.

The next night, Mondragon left a dead raccoon on the bench and left a dead opossum July 31, investigators said.

After he was identified as a suspect, a deputy pulled him over and found blood and feathers in his car. He allegedly told the deputy he had been keeping a dead bird in his car because he liked the smell.

Last beagles taken from harmful breeding facility

VA CUMBERLAND — The Humane Society of the United States said it has removed the last group of beagles from a troubled breeding facility in Virginia that had planned to sell the dogs to animal testing labs.

The organization said it took away the remaining 312 dogs at the facility in Cumberland. Nearly 4,000 beagles were removed all together. They're being transported to shelters and other rescue sites across the country, which are finding homes for the canines.

"Many people don't realize that an average of 60,000 dogs just like these are still used in laboratories each year," Humane Society President and CEO Kitty Block said in a statement. "Even as we celebrate these lucky dogs going to loving homes, we're focused on creating a future where no dogs will face that kind of fate."

Block said those dogs were

spared because that particular breeding facility was cited for Animal Welfare Act violations.

2 teens die after live wire contact in crash

NY REDFIELD — Two teenagers who got out of a pickup truck that crashed into a downed tree in upstate New York died after coming in contact with live wires, police said.

The two 17-year-olds were among four teenagers in a truck that hit a tree knocked down by a storm in the town of Redfield, about 40 miles northeast of Syracuse, according to the Oswego County Sheriff's Office.

The four teens got out of the truck, which ended up in a ditch. The driver, Madysen Young, and passenger Matthew Bice contacted live wires entangled with the downed tree and were pronounced dead at the scene, according to the sheriff. Two 16-year-old boys survived.

Man killed in hit-and-run after parking dispute

NC CONCORD — A man was killed in a hit-and-run crash after a dispute over a parking space at a Walmart in North Carolina, police said.

Concord police officers were called to the Walmart on Thunder Road Northwest for a report of a hit-and-run crash with injuries, officials said in a news release. Emergency medical personnel pronounced Leon Phillip Fortner, 55, of Charlotte dead at the scene, police said.

Crash investigators obtained a description of the suspect vehicle and driver. Officers later ar-

rested Anthony Scott Amey and charged him with felony hit-and-run, police said. Investigators determined that the incident began as a dispute over a parking space.

Amey received a \$50,000 secured bond. He waived his right to an attorney at an appearance in Cabarrus County District Court on Friday, according to court records, and his next appearance is set for Sept. 22.

At least 10 arrested after fights, shots fired

OH CANFIELD — Authorities said at least 10 people were arrested after fights broke out and shots were fired at a fair in Ohio over the holiday weekend.

The Mahoning County sheriff's office said the disorder at the Canfield Fair in eastern Ohio began near some of the fair rides. Sheriff Jerry Greene said the fight broke up into smaller fights in that area and outside the fair gates. The fair was locked down and then evacuated by law enforcement officers.

Greene said three of the people arrested were adults and the others were juveniles. All were charged with disorderly conduct and some with resisting arrest and obstruction. A 14-year-old was found to be carrying a pistol that went off in a parking area.

Two vehicles at the scene were struck by gunfire, but authorities said they weren't aware of any injuries.

Greene said the sheriff's office is still investigating the cause of the fight. Officials said the fair would go on Sunday with increased security.

— From wire reports



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

Reporting World, National and Military News

Almost a third of NFL teams have new QBs

Associated Press

Among the nine NFL teams changing quarterbacks in 2022 are three franchises that had been the models of stability at the position for a decade or more: the Seattle Seahawks, Atlanta Falcons and Pittsburgh Steelers.

The Seahawks and Falcons traded away their longtime starters and the Steelers lost Ben Roethlisberger to retirement.

Russell Wilson led the Seahawks to the playoffs eight times in his decade in Seattle before his relationship with coach Pete Carroll soured and he was dealt to Denver in a blockbuster trade this spring.

Wilson becomes the sixth different starting quarterback in six years for the Broncos, who have churned through a dozen so-so QBs since Peyton Manning retired.

The Broncos gave up four high draft picks and three veterans for Wilson, including QB Drew Lock, who seesawed with Geno Smith in an underwhelming camp competition that had Seahawks fans dreaming of next year's deep class of QBs featuring Ohio State's C.J. Stroud, Alabama's Bryce

Young and Kentucky's Will Levis.

The Falcons are heading into the season without Matt Ryan under center for the first time since 2007. What spelled the end of Ryan's long stay in Atlanta was the Falcons' dalliance with Deshaun Watson, who eventually agreed to a trade to Cleveland after the Browns guaranteed every penny of his new \$230 million contract.

The Falcons traded Ryan, who started 232 of 235 games for Atlanta, including Super Bowl 51, to the Indianapolis Colts — who parted with Carson Wentz after just one year — for a third-round pick.

Atlanta replaced Ryan with Marcus Mariota, who will be a starter for the first time in four years. Wentz ended up in Washington, the third NFL stop in three seasons for the second overall pick of the Eagles in 2016.

Another ripple of the Watson trade, which netted the Texans five draft picks, including three first-rounders, was the departure of Baker Mayfield after a divisive four-year run in Cleveland that included the Browns' first playoff win since 2002. Mayfield was traded to Caroli-

na, where he beat out Sam Darnold.

Watson won't be eligible to suit up for the Browns until Week 13 following an 11-game NFL suspension for violating the league's personal conduct policy after he was accused of sexual misconduct by two dozen women while with the Texans.

"My whole life I just have been able to move forward and that's the plan," said Watson, who can return for the Browns' game in Houston on Dec. 4.

Wilson and Mayfield won't have to wait that long for their reunions.

Wilson returns to Seattle on Sept. 12 to cap an opening week-end that also features a revenge game with the Browns, behind stand-in Jacoby Brissett, at Carolina.

The last time the Steelers entered a season without "Big Ben" at quarterback was 2003, although Roethlisberger's 2019 season ended after two weeks because of an elbow injury that required surgery.

Pittsburgh, loaded with premier pass-catchers, signed free agent Mitch Trubisky, who spent four turbulent years in Chicago before serving as Josh

Allen's backup in Buffalo last year, and drafted Kenny Pickett out of the University of Pittsburgh.

Finally, the 49ers turned things over to Trey Lance this summer after he spent his rookie year on the bench behind Jimmy Garoppolo, who led San Francisco to the Super Bowl following the 2019 season.

Wilson insists he's not anticipating an emotional homecoming at Lumen Field.

"It has to be non-emotional," Wilson said, just like every other game he played while compiling a 113-60-1 record for the Seahawks, including a 43-8 demolition of Denver in Super Bowl 48.

Wilson will be the first quarterback to start for a team he beat in the Super Bowl, but he said he's not concerned in the least whether he'll be greeted with cheers or jeers.

Mayfield, on the other hand, acknowledged there will be some extra incentive in going against the Browns in the Panthers' opener.

"Obviously there is a lot of attachment there and I'm not going to sit here and be a robot and say that it doesn't mean anything," Mayfield said. "It will."

Pats facing two opponents: heat and the Dolphins

Associated Press

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — On Sunday, New England plays Miami's Dolphins.

Before that, the Patriots will take on Miami's heat.

High temperatures are forecast to be in the mid-60s to mid-70s around Foxborough, Mass., for the next few days — and the way Patriots coach Bill Belichick sees it, those might not be the best atmospheric conditions to prepare his team for the steaminess that awaits them in South Florida on Sunday when New England and Miami kick off the regular season.

So the Patriots were flying south Tuesday, practicing this week in Palm Beach County, an hour or so from the Dolphins' facilities. High temperatures there this week will reach the low 90s each day, and the forecast for game day calls for more of the same — low 90s, lots of humidity, and with regard to Belichick's preferred sideline apparel choice, hoodies might not be the ideal selection.

"They better SPF up," Dolphins coach Mike McDaniels said.

Sunscreen — likely of the high SPF variety — will surely

be packed among all the gear the Patriots will be bringing south for the trip. It's not a totally foreign concept for New England to take its game-week show on the road; the Patriots spent a week in Las Vegas last month before facing the Raiders there in a preseason game.

"I think there are a combination of factors, but in the end it all looks like it's set up fairly well here," Belichick said. "So, make the travel on Tuesday instead of on Saturday. We'll already be down there. We'll be able to just focus on the Dolphins."

In recent years, even for a perennial winner such as the Patriots, trips to the Sunshine State — where summer doesn't end just because pumpkin spice everything has hit stores — haven't always gone to New England's liking, and weather may have been a factor in some of those outcomes.

New England is 3-8 in its previous 11 regular season games played in Florida, including losses by double-digit margins twice — a 97-degree day at Jacksonville in 2018, and an 89-degree day at Miami Gardens in 2014.

Tiafoe halts Nadal's Slam streak at 22

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Frances Tiafoe's vision was blurry from the tears. He was thrilled — overwhelmed, even — when the last point was over and it hit him that, yes, he had ended Rafael Nadal's 22-match Grand Slam winning streak Monday and reached the U.S. Open quarterfinals for the first time.

"I felt like the world stopped," Tiafoe said. "I couldn't hear anything for a minute."

Then Tiafoe found himself "losing it in the locker room" when he saw that NBA superstar LeBron James gave him a Twitter shoutout.

"Bro," Tiafoe said, "I was going crazy."

What meant the most to Tiafoe about his 6-4, 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 victory over 22-time major champion Nadal in the fourth round at Flushing Meadows, though, was looking up in his Arthur Ashe Stadium guest box and knowing his parents, Con-

stant and Alphina, were there.

"To see them experience me beat Rafa Nadal — they've seen me have big wins, but to beat those 'Mount Rushmore' guys? For them, I can't imagine what was going through their heads," said Tiafoe, a 24-year-old American seeded 22nd at the U.S. Open. "I mean, they're going to remember today for the rest of their lives."

His parents both emigrated to the United States from Sierra Leone in West Africa amid its civil war in the 1990s. They ended up in Maryland, where Constant helped construct a tennis training center for juniors, then became a maintenance man there; Alphina, Frances said, was "a nurse, working two jobs, working overtime through the nights." Frances and his twin brother, Franklin, were born in 1998, and were soon spending hour upon hour where Dad's job was, rackets in hand.

Maybe one day, went the

dream, a college scholarship would come of it.

"It wasn't anything supposed to be like this," Tiafoe said Monday evening, hours after by far his biggest victory.

He is the youngest American man to get this far at the U.S. Open since Andy Roddick in 2006, but this was not a case of a one-sided crowd backing one of its own. Nadal is about as popular as it gets in tennis and heard plenty of support as the volume raised after the retractable roof was shut in the fourth set.

This surprise came a day after Tiafoe followed along on TV as his pal Nick Kyrgios "put on a show" and eliminated No. 1 seed and defending champion Daniil Medvedev. That makes this the first U.S. Open without either of the top two seeded men reaching the quarterfinals since 2000, when No. 1 Andre Agassi exited in the second round and No. 2 Gustavo Kuerten in the first.

Tiafoe now meets No. 9 Andrey Rublev, who beat No. 7 Cam Norrie 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 earlier Monday.

Late Monday turned into early Tuesday when third-seeded Carlos Alcaraz beat No. 15 seed Marin Cilic 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 in a match that lasted 3 hours, 54 minutes and ended at 2:23 a.m.

No. 11 Jannik Sinner rallied from two games down in the fifth set to beat Ilya Ivashka 6-1, 5-7, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3.

The No. 1 woman, Iga Swiatek, moved into her first quarterfinal at Flushing Meadows by coming back to beat Jule Niemeier 2-6, 6-4, 6-0.

"I'm just proud," Swiatek said, "that I didn't lose hope."

The 21-year-old from Poland will face another first-time U.S. Open quarterfinalist: No. 8 Jessica Pegula, the highest-ranked American woman, who advanced with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova.

Clemson starts slowly, pulls away from Georgia Tech

Associated Press

ATLANTA — After getting much of the blame for a disappointing season by Clemson standards, DJ Uiagalelei needed good things to happen in the season opener.

With one whirling dervish of a play, the quarterback showed why the Tigers still have plenty of faith in him.

Uiagalelei threw for one touchdown and ran for another, overcoming a sluggish start in the season opener as No. 4 Clemson pulled away for a 41-10 victory over Georgia Tech on Monday night.

Perhaps the biggest play of the game came in the third quarter, when Uiagalelei was cornered by two Georgia Tech defenders and appeared headed for a sack on third-and-4.

But he twisted around and managed to stay upright just long enough to flip a lateral to Shipley, who rumbled 10 yards to keep the Clemson offense on the field.

"I was trying to get out of the pocket, trying to buy some time to get the ball

away," Uiagalelei said. "As I was going to the ground I looked to my left and saw Shipley there. I just pitched it to him. He made a great run."

For coach Dabo Swinney, that's the kind of play the Tigers need to make to reclaim their place atop the Atlantic Coast Conference, as well as get back to the College Football Playoff.

"That was a play we didn't make last year," Swinney said. "That's just his strength, his grit, where he's at physically. Just find a way, man. He's got some creativity to him."

Sparked by that play, the Tigers drove 74 yards for a touchdown that finally buried the Yellow Jackets. Uiagalelei ran it in from 9 yards out to push Clemson's lead to 24-10.

Uiagalelei completed 19 of 32 passes for 209 yards, including a 6-yard scoring play to Beau Collins that gave the Tigers a two-touchdown lead in the first half.

Georgia Tech, looking to improve on

three straight three-win seasons that have coach Geoff Collins on the hot seat, kept it closer than expected much of the way.

But the Yellow Jackets couldn't overcome two blocked punts, both of which led to short touchdown runs by Will Shipley.

It was the first time since 2007 that Clemson has blocked two punts in a game.

"We've got to get that fixed. Those things cannot happen," Collins said. "Very disappointing."

Georgia Tech pulled to 14-10 with an impressive drive in the third quarter, culminating with Jeff Sims tossing a 13-yard TD pass to 6-foot-7 transfer E.J. Jenkins.

Both teams struggled offensively until Clemson got its first blocked punt.

Carson Donnelly broke through the line untouched and smothered the ball. Brannon Specter scooped up the ball at the Georgia Tech 18 and took it down to the 5 before he was knocked out bounds, setting up Shipley's 1-yard TD run on fourth-and-goal.

Judge hits 54th home run as Yanks win

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge kept up his bruising pace and hit his major league-leading 54th home run, connecting for the third straight day and sending the New York Yankees over the Minnesota Twins 5-2 on Monday.

Judge has homered in five of his last seven games for the AL East leaders. He snapped a 2-2 tie in the sixth inning when he hit a 3-1 slider from Trevor Megill (3-2) into the second deck in left.

“It’s getting hard to put into words what he’s doing,” manager Aaron Boone said. “Just a special season he’s in the midst of.”

The All-Star slugger reached 54 homers in his 131st game. He is on pace to hit 65 homers, four more than Roger Maris’ AL record in 1961. Judge has continued to play down his pursuit of history.

“Just trying to do what I can every single day,” Judge said. “I show up to work prepared, ready to go and do whatever it takes to help our team what it takes to get a win today. Whether it’s moving a guy over, driving a guy in, making a play on defense, that’s what I’m focused on.”

Judge reached 54 homers in New York’s 135th game; Maris hit his 54th when he connected off Washington’s Tom Cheney in New York’s 139th game on Sept. 6, 1961.

Blue Jays 7-9, Orioles 3-4: Bo Bichette

hit a career-high three home runs in the second game of a doubleheader, and visiting Toronto defeated Baltimore to complete a sweep and widen its lead in the AL wild card race.

Toronto won the opener behind Kevin Gausman, who allowed two runs in 6½ innings in his first outing at Camden Yards since Baltimore traded him in July 2018.

Guardians 6, Royals 5 (10): Oscar Gonzalez hit a two-run double in the 10th inning and visiting Cleveland snapped a five-game losing streak, beating Kansas City to regain sole possession of the AL Central lead.

Cleveland moved a game ahead of Minnesota, while the third-place Chicago White Sox are one game behind the Twins.

White Sox 3, Mariners 2: Lance Lynn struck out a season-high 11, Elvis Andrus hit a two-run home run and visiting Chicago ended Seattle’s seven-game winning streak.

Lynn retired the final 17 batters he faced in a dominant outing. The win kept the White Sox on the heels of Minnesota and Cleveland in a suddenly tight AL Central race, while Seattle lost ground to both Toronto and Tampa Bay in the chase for the top wild card spot in the AL.

Diamondbacks 5, Padres 0: Ryne Nelson was brilliant in his big league debut, allowing just four hits in seven innings and

retiring 17 straight batters at one point to lead visiting Arizona over San Diego.

Rays 4, Red Sox 3: Manuel Margot and David Peralta each doubled home a run in the seventh inning, sending host Tampa Bay past Boston for its 12th win in 15 games.

Astros 1, Rangers 0: Hunter Brown scattered three hits across six innings in his major league debut, and host Houston handed Texas its ninth straight loss.

Nationals 6, Cardinals 0: Jack Flaherty pitched five effective innings in his first big league action since June, but NL Central-leading St. Louis had its four-game winning streak stopped by Joey Meneses and visiting Washington.

Brewers 6, Rockies 4: Victor Caratini hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the sixth inning for visiting Milwaukee, helping Craig Counsell earn managerial win No. 600.

Angels 10, Tigers 0: Shohei Ohtani had his sixth multi-homer game of the season, Mike Trout also went deep and José Suarez threw three-hit ball for seven innings to lead host Los Angeles.

Giants 7, Dodgers 4: Lewis Brinson, J.D. Davis, Thairo Estrada and David Villar rocked Andrew Heaney for home runs in back-to-back innings, and Brinson added a solo shot in the ninth to lead visiting San Francisco.

Wild NASCAR regular season continues in playoffs

Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Buckle up your five-point harness. It looks like NASCAR’s playoffs will be just as wild and unpredictable as its regular season.

That came into sharp focus at Darlington Raceway where Erik Jones became the first-ever non-playoff racer to take the postseason opener in the Southern 500 on Sunday night — one week after the cutoff for playoff qualifying.

Jones’ crew chief, Dave Elenz, was gratified his team finally broke through at one of the most difficult tracks in NASCAR. “But I think the first thing Erik said to me is, ‘Don’t you wish we won Daytona?’” in the regular-season finale, Elenz said.

At the end, Jones outlasted all three of his old Joe Gibbs Racing teammates — Martin Truex Jr., Kyle Busch and Denny Hamlin. Truex lost a late lead with power steering problems, Busch’s engine blew up with Jones in second. Hamlin reached Jones’ back bumper on the last lap but couldn’t pass him.

“It was crazy. I’ve never had anything like that happen,” Jones said.

Truex, like Jones, didn’t qualify for the playoff. Busch and Hamlin are vying for the title.

Earlier in the night, playoff favorites Chase Elliott and Kyle Larson of powerhouse Hendrick Motorsports struggled.

Elliott bounced off the wall as he spun by himself in the first

100 laps, damaging his suspension, which his team could not repair. Top-seeded coming in, Elliott was out of the race and fell to ninth in playoff points.

Larson, the defending NASCAR Cup Series champion who is seeded fourth this year, had early engine problems and fell four laps off the pace. Larson steadily rebounded to get back on the lead lap and end 12th — not what was expected out of 2021’s most dominant driver.

“So pretty bummed about it, but also happy at the same time because I thought we were going to have another DNF,” said Larson, who fell to seventh in the point standings with two more races at Kansas and Bristol before four of the 16 playoff teams are eliminated.

Busch, faced with questions about his racing future much of the summer, looked like he’d have a moment of celebration as he led the race with less than 40 laps remaining. Then his failing engine sent him to the garage.

The race’s least surprising result? Continued driver anger over what they see as an unreliable, unsafe Next Gen car. The loudest voice Sunday came from Kevin Harvick, the 2014 series champ whose car caught fire and had flames coming through the dashboard.

Harvick parked the car on the grass and scrambled away to safety. He did not return. Moments later, J.J. Yeley’s machine caught fire under the hood and he, too, had to get out quick.