

US military footprint expanding in Australia

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

DARWIN, Australia — Red dust rises in Australia's Northern Territory as tractors churn the earth to build facilities for U.S. forces deployed to bolster a long-time ally threatened by China's rapid military buildup.

Major construction, funded by the U.S. and Australian governments, is underway in the northern port of Darwin, at Larrakeyah Defence Precinct and at Royal Australian Air Force Bases Darwin and Tindal for facilities that will be used by the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

The facilities will support U.S. and Australian forces training to defend chains of small islands that would likely be an arena for any future conflict with China, according to former Australian assistant defense secretary Ross Babbage.

The allies are learning to conduct dispersed operations and deploy anti-ship missiles to island chains in the Western Pacific "to make it extremely difficult and

dangerous for Chinese operations in a crisis," including a conflict over Taiwan, he said by phone Wednesday.

Australians are alarmed at Chinese efforts to gain influence among their South Pacific neighbors following a security pact, signed in April, with the Solomon Islands that many fear could lead to the establishment of a Chinese military base.

East of Darwin's central business district, 400 workers are building 11 massive tanks that will be able to store 80 million gallons of fuel, according to Crowley, a Florida-based fuel provider working under contract with the Defense Logistics Agency, according to the company's website.

The \$181 million project, to be completed by September 2023, will provide U.S. defense operations in the region with military-grade fuel, the statement said.

On the west side of Darwin, at Larrakeyah Defence Precinct, work is underway on a \$317 million upgrade of facilities and a new 820-foot-long wharf and fuel

farm, according to the Australian Defence Department's website.

The new facilities, due to be complete in 2023, will support surface warships, submarines, mine hunters and hydrographic ships, the website states.

The base has been home to 100 U.S. Marines, deployed there the past six months as part of a 2,200-strong rotational force that has been training in the Northern Territory during the Southern Hemisphere's cooler months since 2012.

The Marines at Larrakeyah make up the rotational force's command element and live on base in modern, multistory apartments, each with its own bathroom and balcony. The Marines share Larrakeyah with 600 Australian sailors assigned to naval base HMAS Coonawarra. Larrakeyah is home to 11 Armidale-class patrol boats. Sailors there can haul the 171-foot-long vessels out of the water and into a massive shed for maintenance.

The new wharf at Larrakeyah will allow Australia's 755-foot-

long landing helicopter dock ships the HMAS Canberra and HMAS Adelaide, to make port calls, Fitzgerald said.

Similar-sized U.S. Navy amphibious assault ships will also be able to dock at the new pier, he said, meaning visiting U.S. Marines can disembark there, rather than at Darwin's civilian wharf where commercial berths must be booked in advance.

The base is on the opposite side of town to Fort Hill Wharf, where the U.S. Navy's dock landing ship USS Ashland made a port call in May. The wharf and other port facilities in Darwin are leased by Landbridge, the Australian subsidiary of a privately owned Chinese company that is reported to have links to China's army.

Australian air bases in the Northern Territory frequently used by visiting U.S. aircraft are also being improved. At RAAF Darwin, for example, \$88.65 million worth of projects to build fuel tanks, expand the airfield and erect maintenance facilities are due for completion next year.

US Army housing in Germany ranks low in tenant survey

By **JENNIFER H. SVAN**
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Army housing in Europe once again fared poorly in the latest Army customer satisfaction survey when compared with base housing communities in the U.S. and in the Asia-Pacific region.

It's an issue that Army leaders in Europe are vowing to fix with hundreds of millions in housing improvements and new units planned over the next six years.

Out of 20 Army installations with housing managed by the government, the bottom four in overall satisfaction were in Ger-

many: Rheinland-Pfalz, Wiesbaden, Ansbach and Stuttgart, in order from highest to lowest. Bavaria, meanwhile, rated the sixth lowest.

The Army's 2022 Tenant Satisfaction Survey examined privatized and government-owned or leased housing. On installations with government-run family housing, 14 rated between outstanding and average, four scored below average and two — Ansbach and Stuttgart — rated poor. The poor rating, according to the survey, signifies "substandard performance and strong displeasure" with the property and/or

level of service.

"Improvements are needed immediately," according to the Army's standards for housing rated as poor.

In Europe, Army family housing tends to be older, with less living space, than homes provided by Army installations in the U.S., said Mark Heeter, spokesman for Installation Management Command-Europe.

IMCOM is spending about \$50 million per year to refurbish quarters across installations in Germany, Heeter said in a statement Thursday. Improvements planned include installing rolling

window shutters, new balconies, interior and exterior renovations and demolishing lower-quality units. From 2022 through 2028, \$785 million worth of construction is planned for 990 new housing units in Europe. Another 100 to 200 units per year will be improved or repaired, IMCOM said.

Among Army housing managed by the government, Fort McCoy in Wisconsin received the top overall score on the survey with a satisfaction rate of 94.1%. The highest rated Army housing overseas was Camp Zama in Japan, with a satisfaction rate of 87%.

Army leaders say defense skills needs to 'tighten up'

BY KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

AMAMI OSHIMA, Japan — A “very severe security environment” surrounding Japan means the country’s Self-Defense Force must tighten up its defensive capability and its alliance with the United States, top brass from both countries said Thursday.

The commander of U.S. Army Pacific, Gen. Charles Flynn, and the head of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force staged a news conference on Amami Oshima days after the largest military exercise the two nations’ armies regularly undertake had concluded.

“Now I look at the current situation surrounding Japan, we are enabled by countries such as China, North Korea and Russia across the sea, so I recognize that Japan is located at the forward edge of a very severe security environment,” said Gen. Yoshihide Yoshida, chief of staff of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force.

“It is imperative for Japan to fundamentally reinforce its defense capability and strengthen the ability of the Japan alliance to deter and respond,” he said.

The Japanese garrison on Amami, about 200 miles south of Kyushu, the southern-

most of Japan’s four main islands, was reinforced in 2019 as a hedge against “natural disasters or any emergencies,” authorities said at the time.

Plans called for positioning about 800 troops on the island, which is part of the Ryukyu, or Nansei, chain, the “front line of our defense,” former Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya said in 2019.

Flynn is the first U.S. Army Pacific commander to visit Amami. His tour highlighted the combined drills by U.S. and Japanese forces that simulated island defense there.

Infantry units from the airborne division out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, for example, took part in live-fire training with Japan’s Western Army, focusing on the Javelin portable antitank missile, and sniper, infantry-combat and air-assault operations, according to the Army.

“I can tell you the Orient Shield that we’re doing now, in 2022, is very different from just a few years ago, much more complex, much more challenging, much more rigorous, and demands a lot more from the soldiers in both the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force in the U.S. Army,” Flynn said. “And in my view, that’s exactly the kind of environment and exactly the kind of training rigor that we want to do together.”

New Philippine administration considers more US base access

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The United States and the Philippines are talking about increasing the number of military bases in the island nation that visiting American forces may use, according to the Philippine ambassador to the United States.

The talks on expanded base access were revealed by Ambassador Jose Manuel Romualdez in comments reported Sept. 5 by The Nikkei newspaper in Japan.

“Our military and the military of the United States are all looking into what are the possible areas,” he said.

A naval base may be included in the list of sites available to the U.S., Romualdez told the newspaper.

Facilities for visiting American forces were supposed to be built on five Philippine military bases under the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. However, the only facility completed to date is a warehouse at Cesar Basa Air Base on Luzon.

The agreement also covers Antonio Bautista Air Base, Palawan; Benito Ebbad Air Base, Mactan; Cebu, Fort Magsaysay; Nuyve Ecija, and Lumbia Airport, Cagayan de Oro.

Army’s leader: Drills to prep, not reaction to China

BY KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The U.S. and Japanese armies are not reacting to Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific when they exercise together as they did last week during the allies’ largest ground-force drills, the commander of U.S. Army Pacific said Friday.

The allied armies are simply preparing for a conflict, Gen. Charles Flynn told reporters during a media roundtable at the New Sanno Hotel.

“Many are saying we are being reactive, and I would say we are not,” he said. “We are being proactive, and we are doing things well in advance of the way that, at least, the Chinese behaved recently.”

Elements of U.S. Army in Japan and Alaska joined up with Japan’s Western Army for Orient Shield, a week of training in air assault, infantry combat and anti-tank, sniper tactics and other scenarios around Japan. Troops fired the Javelin anti-tank missile on Aug. 30, a first in Japan.

The main focus of Orient Shield is ensuring the two countries can employ the other’s equipment and methods, Flynn said.

He said working together builds a bond.

“I think that is because of the network of allies and partners talking to one another, communicating with one another, planning, synchronizing and integrating our operations together so we can exercise, and we can rehearse and we can demonstrate our commitment to one another,” he said.

Planning for Orient Shield 22, which began Aug. 27 and concluded Sept. 3, started in March, when staff from the Army and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force spent a week discussing exercise locations and training objectives, according to the Army.

“This isn’t something we did in reaction, it was something we had been planning and coordinating for some time,” Flynn said. “Orient Shield demonstrates the capabilities that we need to have to defend islands, straits or areas where land, people, air and sea come together. We are going to need joint solutions for a joint problem.”

Asked about plans by Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party to increase defense spending again this year, Flynn said he considered it a worthy investment.

For 9/11 families, ‘the wounds are still fresh’

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Americans remembered 9/11 on Sunday with tear-choked tributes, and pleas to “never forget,” 21 years after the deadliest terror attack on U.S. soil.

Bonita Mentis set out to read victims’ names at the ground zero ceremony wearing a necklace with a photo of her slain sister, Shevonne Mentis, a 25-year-old Guyanese immigrant who worked for a financial firm.

“It’s been 21 years, but it’s not 21 years for us. It seems like just yesterday,” Mentis said. “The wounds are still fresh.”

“No matter how many years have passed, nobody can actually comprehend that what happened that very day,” she added.

Victims’ relatives and dignitaries also convened at the other two attack sites, the Pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania.

More than two decades later, Sept. 11 remains a point for reflection on the hijacked-plane attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people, reconfigured national security policy and spurred a U.S. “war on terror” worldwide. Sunday’s observances, which follow a fraught milestone anniversary last year, come little more than a month after a U.S.

drone strike killed a key al-Qaida figure who helped plot the 9/11 attacks, Ayman al-Zawahri.

Pierre Roldan, who lost his cousin Carlos Lillo, a paramedic, said “we had some form of justice” when a U.S. raid killed Osama bin Laden in 2011.

“Now that al-Zawahri is gone, at least we’re continuing to get that justice,” Roldan said.

The Sept. 11 attacks also stirred — for a time — a sense of national pride and unity for many, while subjecting Muslim Americans to years of suspicion and bigotry and engendering debate over the balance between safety and civil liberties. In ways both subtle and plain, the aftermath of 9/11 ripples through American politics and public life to this day.

But like some other victims’ relatives, Jay Saloman fears that Americans’ consciousness of 9/11 is receding.

“It was a terrorist attack against our country that day. And theoretically, everybody should remember it and, you know, take precautions and watch out,” said Saloman, who lost his brother.

Like a growing number of those who read

names at ground zero, firefighter Jimmy Riches’ namesake nephew wasn’t born yet when his relative died. But the boy took the podium to honor him.

“You’re always in my heart. And I know you are watching over me,” he said after reading a portion of the victims’ names.

Readers often add personal remarks that form an alloy of American sentiments about Sept. 11 — grief, anger, toughness, appreciation for first responders and the military, appeals to patriotism, hopes for peace, occasional political barbs, and a poignant accounting of the graduations, weddings, births and daily lives that victims have missed. Some relatives also lament that a nation which came together — to some extent — after the attacks has since splintered apart. So much so that federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies, which were reshaped to focus on international terrorism after 9/11, now see the threat of domestic violent extremism as equally urgent.

“It took a tragedy to unite us. It should not take another tragedy to unite us again,” said Andrew Colabella, whose cousin, John Di-Giovanni, died in the 1993 bombing World Trade Center bombing that presaged 9/11.

Biden honors Sept. 11 victims at Pentagon

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden marked the 21st anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, laying a wreath at the Pentagon in a somber commemoration held under a steady rain.

Sunday’s ceremony occurred a little more than a year after Biden ended the long and costly war in Afghanistan that the U.S. and allies launched in response to the terror attacks.

Speaking at the Pentagon on Sunday, Biden recalled seeing smoke rise from the stricken military headquarters on 9/11, when he was a senator.

He vowed that the U.S. would continue working to root out terrorist plots and called on Americans to stand up for democracy on days beyond the anniversary.

“We have an obligation, a duty, a responsibility to defend, preserve and protect our democracy — the very democracy that guarantees the right to freedom that those terrorists on 9/11 sought to bury in the burning fire, smoke and ash,” he said.

First lady Jill Biden was scheduled to speak in Shanksville, Pa., where one of the hijacked planes went down after passengers and crew members tried to storm the cockpit as the hijackers headed for Washington. Al-Qaida conspirators had seized control of the jets to use them as passenger-filled missiles. Vice President Kamala Harris and husband Doug Emhoff joined the observance at the National Sept. 11 Memorial in New York, but by tradition, no political figures speak.

Visa to use specific code for credit card gun sales

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Payment processor Visa Inc. said Saturday that it plans to start separately categorizing sales at gun shops, a major win for gun control advocates who say it will help better track suspicious surges of gun sales that could be a prelude to a mass shooting.

But the decision by Visa, the world’s largest payment processor, will likely provoke the ire of gun rights advocates and gun lobbyists, who have argued that categorizing gun sales would unfairly flag an industry when most sales do not lead to mass shootings.

It joins Mastercard and American Express, which also said they plan to move forward with categorizing gun shop sales, moving forward.

Visa said it would adopt the International Organization for

Standardization’s new merchant code for gun sales, which was announced on Friday. Until Friday, gun store sales were considered “general merchandise.”

“Following ISO’s decision to establish a new merchant category code, Visa will proceed with next steps, while ensuring we protect all legal commerce on the Visa network in accordance with our long-standing rules,” the payment processor said in a statement.

Visa’s adoption is significant as the largest payment network, and with Mastercard and AmEx, will likely put pressure on the banks as the card issuers to adopt the standard as well. Visa acts as a middleman between merchants and banks, and it will be up to banks to decide whether they will allow sales at gun stores to happen on their issued cards.

Elizabeth II's coffin travels through Scotland

Associated Press

EDINBURGH, Scotland — In a somber, regal procession, Queen Elizabeth II's flag-draped coffin was driven slowly through the Scottish countryside Sunday from her beloved Balmoral Castle to the Scottish capital of Edinburgh. Mourners packed city streets and highway bridges or lined rural roads with cars and tractors to take part in a historic goodbye to the monarch who had reigned for 70 years.

The hearse drove past piles of bouquets and other tributes as it led a seven-car cortege from Balmoral, where the queen died Thursday at age 96, for a six-hour trip through Scottish towns to Holyroodhouse palace in Edinburgh.

The late queen's coffin was draped in the Royal Standard for Scotland and topped with a wreath made of flowers from the estate, including sweet peas, one of the queen's favorites.

The procession was a huge event for Scotland as the U.K. takes days to mourn its longest-reigning monarch, the only one most Britons have ever known. People turned out hours early to grab a space by the police barricades in Edinburgh.

By afternoon, the crowds were 10 people deep in places.

"I think she has been an ever-constant in my life. She was the queen I was born under, and she has always been there," said Angus Ruthven, 54, a civil servant from Edinburgh. "I think it is going to take a lot of adjusting that she is not here."

Silence fell on the packed Royal Mile in Edinburgh as the hearse carrying the queen arrived. But as the convoy vanished from view, the crowd spontaneously started clapping.

When the hearse reached Holyroodhouse, members of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, wearing green tartan kilts, carried the coffin past the queen's youngest three children — Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward — and into the throne room, where it was to remain until Monday afternoon so staff can pay their last respects.

King Charles III and his Queen Consort Camilla will travel Monday to Edinburgh to join another solemn procession that takes the queen's coffin to St. Giles Cathedral on the city's Royal Mile. There the coffin will remain for 24 hours so the Scottish public

can pay their respects before it is flown to London on Tuesday.

In each Scottish town and village, the entourage was met with muted scenes of respect.

People stood mostly in silence; some clapped politely, others pointed their phone cameras at the passing cars. In Aberdeenshire, farmers lined the route with an honor guard of tractors.

Sunday's solemn drive came as the queen's eldest son was formally proclaimed the new monarch — King Charles III — in the rest of the nations of the United Kingdom: Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It came a day after a pomp-filled accession ceremony in England.

Charles, even as he mourned his late mother, was getting to work at Buckingham Palace, meeting with the secretary-general and other representatives of the Commonwealth.

Many in those nations are grappling with affection for the queen and lingering bitterness over their colonial legacies, which ranged from outright slavery to corporal punishment in African schools to looted artifacts held in British cultural institutions.

Ukraine reclaims large parts of south, east

Associated Press

As the war in Ukraine marked 200 days on Sunday, the country has reclaimed broad swaths of the south and east in a long-anticipated counteroffensive that has dealt a heavy blow to Russia.

The counterattack began in the final days of August and at first focused on the southern region of Kherson, which was swept by Russian forces in the opening days of the invasion. But just as Moscow redirected attention and troops there, Ukraine launched another, highly effective offensive in the

northeast, near Kharkiv.

Facing the prospect of a large group of its forces becoming surrounded, Moscow pulled back its troops from Kharkiv in a dramatic shift in the state of play that posed the biggest challenge to the Kremlin since it launched the invasion Feb. 24.

"The Ukrainian army has taken advantage of the relocation of the bulk of the Russian forces to the south and is trying to direct the course of the war, excelling in maneuver and showing great ingenuity," said Mykola Sunhurovskyi, a military expert

with the Razumkov Centre, a Kyiv-based think tank. Ukraine's quick gains, he added, are "important both for seizing initiative and raising troops' spirit."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised the military in a video address Saturday night, saying it has reclaimed over 770 square miles of territory so far this month. He also taunted Moscow over its withdrawal, saying the Russian army was "demonstrating the best it can do — showing its back" and "they made a good choice to run."

Last reactor at Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant stopped

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Europe's largest nuclear plant has been reconnected to Ukraine's electricity grid, allowing engineers to shut down its last operational reactor in an attempt to avoid a radiation disaster as fighting rages in the area.

The six-reactor Zaporizhzhia plant lost its

outside source of power a week ago after all its power lines were disconnected as a result of shelling. It was operating in "island mode" for several days, generating electricity for crucial cooling systems from its only remaining operational reactor.

Nuclear operator Energoatom said one of those power lines was restored "to its oper-

ational capacity" late Saturday, making it possible to run the plant's safety and other systems on electricity from the power system of Ukraine.

"Therefore, a decision was made to shut down power unit No. 6 and transfer it to the safest state — cold shutdown," the company said in a statement.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Lawyer charged after slap outside of courthouse

CT DERBY — A Connecticut attorney is accused of slapping another lawyer during an argument outside a courthouse.

Robert Serafinowicz, 43, was charged with third-degree assault on an elderly person and breach of peace.

News 12 Connecticut posted a video of the incident on its website. It showed Serafinowicz arguing with another attorney just outside the Derby Superior Court building before slapping the man across the face and walking away.

Serafinowicz was arrested by Derby police shortly after the incident.

Serafinowicz did not immediately return a telephone message seeking comment, but he sent a statement to News 12 accusing the other attorney of “trying to destroy his career and reputation.”

28 sites renamed to remove racist word

WI GREEN BAY — The government has renamed more than two dozen lakes and other sites on federal land in Wisconsin to remove a racist term for a Native American woman.

The changes announced capped a nearly yearlong process that began when Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, an American Indian, took office in 2021 and worked to remove the offensive word “squaw” from the names of nearly 650 peaks, lakes, streams and other places nationwide.

“I feel a deep obligation to

use my platform to ensure that our public lands and waters are accessible and welcoming. That starts with removing racist and derogatory names that have graced federal locations for far too long,” said Haaland, from Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico.

In Wisconsin, 28 places have been renamed, including Squaw Island in Door County, now named Keyes Island.

Chairman of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Ron Corn Sr., told WLUK-TV he had hoped the names would be removed sooner, but it is gratifying that it’s finally happening.

Town wants to help after human waste found

VT BOLTON — Bags of human waste have been appearing all summer near the Winooski River in the town of Bolton and local and state officials want to help whoever is responsible.

Officials suspect whoever is doing the dumping has a failed septic system. There is a program to help Vermonters replace failed septic systems.

“Our goal is to help get the system fixed and make sure that people have a safe, clean environment to live in,” Megan Cousino of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation told WCAX-TV.

Back in May, volunteers discovered trash bags containing upward of 400 pounds of human waste and toilet paper that had been dumped over a guardrail. Volunteers cleaned up the original mess, but the dumping has continued.

Bolton officials said some of the bags had been ripped open

by animals and their contents spread onto nearby properties.

Natural gas pipeline blast started fire in a lake

LA NEW ORLEANS — Federal agencies are investigating a natural gas pipeline explosion that started a towering blaze in a lake south-east of New Orleans.

The line exploded shortly before 4 p.m. Thursday in Lake Lery and the fire was out by about 4:45 p.m. Friday, the U.S. Coast Guard said.

Preliminary information indicates a barge broke loose from its mooring and hit the pipeline, according to the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

“The pipeline has been shut down and the affected section of pipe has been isolated. Remaining gas will be allowed to burn off,” said a statement from the agency, part of the Department of Transportation.

Nobody was hurt by the rupture and fire, the Coast Guard said in a news release. There was a silver sheen Friday on the water between St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes, Coast Guard spokesperson Riley Perkofski said in an email. It is expected to dissipate, the Coast Guard said Friday evening.

Trooper trainee dies after collapsing after training

GA FORSYTH — A Georgia state trooper cadet has died during training.

The state Department of Public Safety said that Trooper Cadet Patrick Dupree died at a hospital after collapsing at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth.

The department said in a statement that Dupree collapsed after the end of a training exercise and that medical staff at the training center tried to save his life before Dupree was taken to a hospital.

Dupree was part of a class training to be state troopers.

Monroe County Coroner Joey Proctor told WMAZ-TV that Dupree was from Rome, Ga. His body will undergo an autopsy by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to determine the cause of death.

The City of Euharlee in Bartow County said Dupree was a police officer there from 2015 to 2021 before starting trooper school.

Landlord arrested in death of a tenant

NV PAHRUMP — A Pahrump landlord accused of running over a tenant with a vehicle and dragging the victim on a road has been arrested, authorities said.

Nye County Sheriff’s officials said William Stanley, 70, remains jailed without bail on suspicion of an open count of murder.

Las Vegas TV station KLAS reported that Stanley and Frank Brink, 66, also of Pahrump, got into an argument.

Sheriff’s officials said Stanley allegedly ran over Brink with a vehicle and then tied the man to the bumper and dragged him at least a half mile.

Investigators told KLAS that they found Brink’s body on the side of the road and were able to follow a trail of blood back to Stanley’s property.

— From wire reports



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Sun Belted: No. 6 Aggies, No. 8 Irish fall

Associated Press

The college football offseason is mostly spent trying to figure what's going to happen when the games start.

We speculate. Predict. Make an educated guess.

Then in Week 2 we realize just how much we didn't know — and that's when the fun starts.

While No. 1 Alabama needed every little bit of misfortune that conspired against Texas, there was no escape for No. 6 Texas A&M and No. 8 Notre Dame. The Aggies and Fighting Irish were Sun Belted.

In South Bend, Ind., the honeymoon for coach Marcus Freeman came to a resounding and stunning end when Marshall not only beat the eighth-ranked Fighting Irish, but pushed them around right in front of Touchdown Jesus.

Marshall's upset was only the opening act for the Sun Belt Conference.

Appalachian State, conjuring up memories of 2007 against Michigan at the Big House, squeezed the breath out of No. 6 Texas A&M, upsetting the Aggies with a master class of keep-away football.

Throw on top of that Washington State knocking off No. 18 Wisconsin in Madison, and it was a difficult day for double-digit favorites.

With all the midafternoon carnage in the Top 25, one might have forgotten all Alabama had to do to beat Texas. The game in Austin produced a result few expected and played out in a way that nobody would have imagined.

Voters excused Notre Dame's lack of offense last week at Ohio State, but Freeman might have some real problems on his hand.

There was a lot of "Don't let the door hit you on the way out" from Irish fans with Brian Kelly bolted for LSU. They might be missing him now.

The early part of Kelly's tenure featured some of these types of losses against Tulsa and Navy. But Kelly cleaned that up and Notre Dame won 42 straight victories against unranked teams — before Saturday.

Notre Dame's streak of five straight double-digit victory seasons is in grave danger and it's still summer.

If Notre Dame fans are having some buyer's remorse with Freeman, what exactly is going on in College Station?

Aggies coach Jimbo Fisher won the offseason with a monster recruiting class and by lobbing barbs at Saban.

A&M looks as if it's building toward something big, but if you are what your record says you are, Fisher's tenure has left a

lot to be desired. He is 35-15 after 50 games with an offense that looks fossilized. His predecessor, Kevin Sumlin, was 36-14 after 50 games.

Both Notre Dame at No. 5 and Texas A&M at sixth seemed like a stretch in the preseason rankings. Two weeks in, both might be unranked.

Long considered 10 of 10 among major college football conferences, the Sun Belt has come a long way in recent years behind Louisiana, Appalachian State and Coastal Carolina.

This past offseason Commissioner Keith Gill and Sun Belt leadership decided to get aggressive and expand the conference by four, with Marshall among the additions.

Last week, Sun Belt newcomer Old Dominion knocked off Virginia Tech at home. It was a nice win, but also a sloppy mess.

On Saturday, Marshall and App State were straight up better than two of, ostensibly, the most talented teams in the country.

Georgia Southern, led these days by former USC coach Clay Helton, capped the greatest day in Sun Belt history by beating three-touchdown favorite Nebraska 45-42. Though is that even an upset anymore as the slow march toward a coaching change continues in Lincoln?

FB Roberts scores 3 TDs, Air Force routs Colorado

Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Fullback Brad Roberts ran for 174 yards and three touchdowns to help Air Force overcome several miscues, including a snap over the punter's head, in a 41-10 win over Colorado on a dreary Saturday.

Hosting the Buffaloes for the first time since 1974, the Falcons built a 20-0 lead. Air Force entered the nationally televised game as a 17½-point favorite, according to FanDuel Sportsbook, but couldn't shake the Buffs until late in the third quarter, when they scored 21 straight points.

"It's an awesome feeling (to beat Colorado)," said Roberts, who is from a Denver suburb and went to a few Buffaloes games growing up. "We played a really good game and our de-

fense really stepped up to the plate."

The Falcons (2-0) and Colorado (0-2) combined for six turnovers in the rainy conditions, including each team fumbling at the goal line while going in for a score.

The Buffaloes' goal-line fumble occurred in the third and right after Air Force set them up in good field position after a snap sailed well over the head of punter Carson Bay. Alex Fontenot was trying to wiggle into the end zone when the ball was ripped away. It would have made it a one-score game.

Falcons quarterback Haaziq Daniels scored from a yard out late in the third to wrap up a second straight win over Colorado. Air Force won in Boulder in 2019.

"Just being able to come out here and dominate, can't put it into words," said Daniels, who completed one pass for 8 yards and rushed for 29 yards. "It's a good feeling."

The Buffaloes are off to an 0-2 start for the first time since 2012. They tried to shake things up by going with quarterback J.T. ShROUT over Brendon Lewis. ShROUT finished 5 of 21 for 51 yards and one interception. He also slid too early on a fourth-and-short play in the fourth quarter when he could have had the first down.

UTSA 41, Army 38 (OT): Frank Harris threw for 359 yards and three touchdowns, including the game-winner to JT Clark in overtime, rallying the visiting Roadrunners over the Black Knights.

UTSA (1-1) missed a 41-year field-goal attempt on the final play of regulation and Army (0-2) took the lead on the first possession of overtime on Quinn MARETZKI field goal.

Harris directed the Roadrunners to three straight touchdowns, taking the lead 34-28 with Brenden Brady's 1-yard run.

Memphis 37, Navy 13: Seth Henigan threw for 415 yards and two touchdowns and the visiting Tigers led all the way.

Henigan completed passes to eight receivers. Javon Ivory had seven catches for 89 yards, and Gabriel Rogers caught five for 95.

Tai Lavatai threw for 99 yards and Maquel Haywood had eight carries for 54 yards for the Midshipmen (0-2, 0-1).

Swiatek tops Jabeur for 3rd Slam title

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Good as she's been this year, Iga Swiatek came to the U.S. Open unsure of what to expect.

She complained that women use different, slightly lighter, tennis balls than the men do at Flushing Meadows, where she'd never been past the fourth round. She was trying to grow accustomed to the noise and distractions, the hustle and bustle, of the Big Apple. And she arrived with a record of just 4-4 since her 37-match winning streak ended in July.

None of that matters now. Cementing her status as her sport's new dominant figure by winning what is expected to be the last tournament of Serena Williams' career, the No. 1-ranked Swiatek outplayed No. 5 Ons Jabeur 6-2, 7-6 (5) in Arthur Ashe Stadium on Saturday to claim her first championship at the U.S. Open and third Grand Slam title overall.

"It's something that I wasn't expecting, for sure. It's also like a confirmation for me that the sky's the limit," said Swiatek, who is 55-7 in tour-level matches with seven trophies in 2022, both best in the WTA. "I'm proud. Also surprised little bit."

She acknowledged harboring concerns about the U.S. Open after a couple of shaky showings at hard-court tuneup tourna-

ments.

It turned out OK: She is the first top-seeded woman to win the U.S. Open since 23-time major champion Williams in 2014.

"I feel like on court, I can just do my job," Swiatek said, "and I'm happy about it, that I kind of can make these doubts go away."

Swiatek, like Jabeur, travels with a sports psychologist, and it took some fortitude to finish this one off. At 6-5 in the second set, Swiatek held her first championship point. Right before Jabeur served, Swiatek jogged over to the sideline to change rackets — an unusual choice at that moment.

When action resumed, Swiatek missed a backhand. That could have been tough to recover from. Indeed, Jabeur pushed things to the tiebreaker, which she then led 5-4. But Swiatek steeled herself, took the last three points and soon was accepting the silver trophy and a \$2.6 million winner's check, joking: "I'm really glad that is not in cash."

The 21-year-old from Poland won the French Open for the second time in June and is the first woman since Angelique Kerber in 2016 to collect two major titles in a single season.

"She's really set the bar very high. It's great for our sport," said Jabeur, a 28-year-old from Tunisia who will rise to No. 2 in the

rankings on Monday.

She is the first African woman and first Arab woman to reach a Grand Slam final and was participating in her second in a row.

But she is 0-2 at that stage, including a runner-up showing at Wimbledon in July.

"Definitely, I'm not someone that's going to give up," said Jabeur, whose support team wore black shirts with white writing that read "Yalla Habibi," Arabic for "Let's go, my love!"

"I am sure," she added, "I'm going to be in the final again."

Didn't help on this sunny, 85-degree Fahrenheit afternoon that Jabeur needed to deal with Swiatek, who has won her past 10 finals — all in straight sets — and was great from the get-go.

Jabeur did not face a single break point in her semifinal victory, but she got broken right away when Swiatek laced a cross-court backhand winner off a short ball to cap a 15-stroke exchange.

"The only match here where I started that well," said Swiatek, who had to come back from a set down in the fourth round and the quarterfinals.

Eight minutes in against Jabeur, Swiatek had grabbed 12 of the first 14 points for a 3-0 edge.

Diaz caps chaotic UFC 279 by choking out Ferguson

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Nate Diaz stopped Tony Ferguson with a guillotine choke in the fourth round of the hastily arranged main event of UFC 279 on Saturday night.

The 37-year-old Diaz (21-13) finished his current UFC contract by finishing fellow veteran Ferguson (25-9) in a matchup only made on Friday after Khamzat Chimaev badly missed weight for his main-event bout with Diaz.

Chimaev stopped Kevin Holland with a D'Arce choke 2:13 into the first round of their grudge match, which was also created after Chimaev (12-0) missed weight by 7½ pounds on Friday morning. The UFC dramatically shuffled its card to

keep both Chimaev and Diaz on the show, resulting in three new matchups for the final three fights at T-Mobile Arena.

Diaz's desire to fight the vaunted Chimaev seemed foolhardy in a distinctly Diaz way, but the late matchup with Ferguson was much more competitive than the original booking likely would have been. Ferguson, who only agreed to be on the card three weeks ago, had lost his previous four fights over the past three years, while Diaz was 1-2 in the last six years.

"At the end of the day, I love the UFC," Diaz said. "I feel like I've had the longest career in the UFC, and I've had the most successful one out of everybody."

Diaz landed punches regular-

ly on Ferguson in the first two rounds, and he played to the crowd in the third with long walks around the cage between exchanges, even resting with one arm atop the cage momentarily.

Ferguson got Diaz's attention with leg kicks — but when Ferguson attempted to get into a grappling match, Diaz applied the choke and finished at 2:52 of the fourth.

Diaz has already announced plans to start his own promotional company outside the UFC, and each fight could be the last for a well-loved fighter who has competed only four times in the last six years.

But Diaz might not be done with the UFC, since he got a tweet earlier Saturday from Co-

nor McGregor, who promised to complete their trilogy. Diaz and McGregor split two largely thrilling bouts in 2016, and the results catapulted Diaz into the top echelon of celebrities in mixed martial arts.

"I want to get out of the UFC for a minute and show these UFC fighters how to take over and own up another sport how you're supposed to do it," Diaz said. "Because Conor McGregor didn't know how to do it, and none of these other fighters know how to do it, so I'm going to go out there and I'm going to take over another organization, another profession, and become the best at that, and then I'm going to be right back here to get another UFC title. It's the best battle in the world."

Pujols ties A-Rod, Cards top Pirates

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Albert Pujols hit his 696th home run, tying Alex Rodriguez for fourth place on the career list, and the St. Louis Cardinals rallied past the Pittsburgh Pirates 7-5 Saturday night.

Pujols trails only Barry Bonds (762), Hank Aaron (755) and Babe Ruth (714) on the all-time homer chart. The 42-year-old Pujols has 22 games left in his 22nd and final season in the big leagues.

With St. Louis down 3-1 in the sixth, Pujols connected on a first-pitch slider from JT Brubaker. He sent a two-run shot 418 feet into the left-field bleachers at PNC Park, launched with an exit velocity of 111.2 mph.

Pujols also doubled and singled for the NL Central leaders. His RBI single in the eighth made it 4-all.

Nolan Arenado broke the tie with a three-run double with two outs in the ninth off Wil Crowe (5-9).

Giovanny Gallegos (3-5) pitched a perfect eighth inning for the Cardinals. Ryan Helsley allowed a two-out RBI single by Bryan Reynolds in the ninth before getting Rodolfo Castro to ground out for his 15th save.

Angels 6, Astros 1: Mike Trout homered in his sixth straight game to set a Los Angeles franchise record. Shohei Ohtani threw five solid innings before exiting because of a blister in a win at Houston.

Trout hit his 34th homer, a three-run drive to left field in the second inning. The three-time AL MVP broke the club mark of five games in a row with a homer set by Bobby Bonds in 1977.

Ohtani (12-8) yielded one run on six hits with seven strikeouts before leaving.

Dodgers 8, Padres 4: Freddie Freeman drove in four runs on four hits, including a two-run homer, and Trea Turner hit a go-ahead, three-run double for visiting Los Angeles, which beat San Diego and reduced its magic number to four for clinching the NL West.

The Dodgers are closing in on their ninth division title in 10 seasons. They continue to dominate the Padres, winning for the 11th time in 14 games this season and for the 21st time in their last 24 matchups.

Julio Urías (16-7) allowed two home runs to Manny Machado but otherwise quieted the Padres for seven innings to win his third straight start and for the 12th time in 13 decisions.

Yankees 10, Rays 3: Leadoff man Aaron Judge singled twice during a six-run first inning off Corey Kluber as host New York

started with seven straight hits for the first time since 1990 and routed Tampa Bay.

Josh Donaldson homered early and Giancarlo Stanton connected late as both players returned to the lineup and helped the AL East-leading Yankees move 4½ games ahead of Tampa Bay.

Judge hit three singles and is the first Yankee to reach base at least three times in seven straight games since Mickey Mantle in June 1957.

New York hit six singles on the first 21 pitches from Kluber (10-8).

Phillies 8, Nationals 5: Bryce Harper ended the longest home run drought of his career and Kyle Schwarber hit his 37th homer of the year to help host Philadelphia over Washington.

Harper homered for the first time since June 5, a span of 102 plate appearances that also included a two-month stint on the IL with a broken thumb. Schwarber homered for the first time since Aug. 29 to keep the National League lead.

Mariners 3, Braves 1: Sam Haggerty and Eugenio Suárez each hit a solo homer, George Kirby pitched into the seventh inning and host Seattle snapped Atlanta's eight-game winning streak.

In the 21st start of his rookie season, Kirby (7-3) struck out six and didn't walk a batter. In his past 11 starts, he has a 1.99 ERA.

White Sox 10, Athletics 2: Elvis Andrus connected for a three-run homer against host Oakland, which cut him last month, and Chicago had 20 hits in its fourth straight win.

AJ Pollock and Andrew Vaughn each had four hits, helping Lance Lynn (6-5) and the surging White Sox win for the ninth time in 11 games. Lynn allowed three hits in six innings.

Andrus is 22-for-60 with five homers over his past 14 games.

Mets 11, Marlins 3: Francisco Lindor had three hits, including his 22nd home run, Mark Canha launched a grand slam to cap an eight-run fourth inning and visiting New York took down Miami.

Eduardo Escobar also went deep among his three hits for the Mets, who moved back into first place in the NL East by a half-game over Atlanta.

Guardians 6, Twins 4: Triston McKenzie pitched seven shutout innings, Amed Rosario hit a two-run homer and AL Central-leading Cleveland held off host Minnesota.

José Ramírez went 3-for-4 with two runs, a walk and an RBI for the Guardians, who

improved to 13-5 in its past 18 road games and stayed 1½ games ahead of Chicago in the three-team division race. Minnesota dropped 3½ games back and fell to .500 for the first time since April 24.

Red Sox 17, Orioles 4: Rafael Devers hit a first-inning grand slam, Kiké Hernández had four hits and visiting Boston slugged its way to a lopsided win over Baltimore.

Jordan Lyles (10-10) couldn't make it out of the fourth in his first start this month, and the Orioles lost for the fifth time in seven games.

Blue Jays 11, Rangers 7: Danny Jansen homered and matched a career high with four hits, Santiago Espinal tied career bests with three hits and three RBIs, and Raimel Tapia hit a three-run homer as the bottom of Toronto's order led an early onslaught in a win over host Texas.

All 11 Blue Jays runs came in the first four innings, helping Kevin Gausman to his fourth consecutive win. Toronto is a season-best 18 games over .500 and pulled within one-half game of AL wild-card leader Tampa Bay.

Giants 5, Cubs 2: Joey Bart and David Villar each homered, doubled and drove in two runs, helping visiting San Francisco end a five-game losing streak.

Logan Webb (13-8) allowed two runs on six hits in seven innings, while striking out six and walking none. The 25-year-old right-hander retired 17 of his last 19 hitters, and extended his career highs for wins and innings pitched.

Brewers 5, Reds 1: Willy Adames and Andrew McCutchen each hit a two-run homer, Adrian Houser allowed one hit in six innings and host Milwaukee beat Cincinnati.

Houser (6-9) permitted a leadoff double by José Barrero in the third and a sacrifice fly by TJ Friedl — but nothing more.

Rockies 4, Diamondbacks 1: C.J. Cron hit a three-run home run, José Ureña gave up one run in 5½ innings and host Colorado beat Arizona for its fourth-consecutive victory.

Cron's 457-foot shot to center field off Madison Bumgarner (6-14) was his team-high 28th home run of the season and his fourth in the past seven games.

Tigers 8, Royals 4 (8): Victor Reyes drove in three runs, and visiting Detroit beat Kansas City in a rain-shortened game.

Javier Báez and Harold Castro each had two hits and two RBIs as the Tigers earned their third straight win