

## China using civilian-military strategy

*Associated Press*

BANGKOK — A Chinese scientific ship bristling with surveillance equipment docked in a Sri Lankan port. Hundreds of fishing boats anchored for months at a time among disputed islands in the South China Sea. And ocean-going ferries, built to be capable of carrying heavy vehicles and large loads of people.

All are ostensibly civilian ships, but experts and uneasy regional governments have said they are part of a Chinese civil-military fusion strategy, little concealed by Beijing, that enhances its maritime capabilities.

China's navy is already the world's largest by ship count, and has been rapidly building new warships as part of a wider military expansion. It launched its first domestically designed and built aircraft carrier in June, and at least five new destroyers are on the way soon.

The buildup comes as Beijing attempts to exert broader influence in the region. It is increasing its military activities around the self-governing island of Taiwan, seeking new security agreements with Pacific islands and building artificial islands in disputed waters to fortify its territorial claims in the South China Sea, which the United States and its allies have challenged.

The civilian vessels do more than just augment the raw numbers of ships, performing tasks that would be difficult for the military to carry out.

In the South China Sea's Spratly Islands, for example, China pays commercial trawlers more than they can make by fishing simply to drop anchor for a minimum of 280 days a year to support Beijing's claim to the disputed archipelago, said Gregory Poling, director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

"China is able to use nominally civilian vessels that are clearly state directed, state paid to eat away the sovereignty of its neighbors, but then plausibly deny that the state is responsible," he said.

China has been using civilian fishing trawlers for military purposes for decades, but has significantly increased the numbers recently with the creation of a "Spratly Backbone Fleet" out of a government subsidy program begun under President Xi Jinping, which helps cover building new vessels, among other things.

Those ships "largely appeared almost overnight" after China constructed port infrastructure a few years ago on the artificial islands it built in the Spratlys that could be used for resupply, Poling said.

Now there are about 300 to 400 vessels deployed there at any given time, he said.

The Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and others also have claims to the Spratly Islands, which sit in a productive fishing area and important shipping lane, and are thought to hold untapped reserves of natural gas and oil.

But the Chinese ships deter other trawlers from fishing in the area, and have been slowly displacing them from the grounds, with little that governments can do, said Jay Batongbacal, who heads the University of the Philippines' Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea.

"Because they are ostensibly civilian fishing vessels, navies' ships are unable to deal with them lest China accuse the Philippines of provoking an incident and using force against civilians," he said. "They take advantage of perceived 'grey zones' below the threshold for triggering a self-defense response."

In addition to about 800 to 1,000 commercial fishing boats in the Spratly fleet, China has approximately 200 other vessels as part of a professional maritime militia, according to a November study co-authored by Poling based on an analysis of official Chinese reports, satellite imagery and other sources.

## South's military: N. Korea fires short-range missile

**By DAVID CHOI**  
*Stars and Stripes*

North Korea launched a short-range ballistic missile near its northwestern border Sunday morning, its 18th round of missile tests so far this year, according to South Korea's military.

The missile was launched around 6:53 a.m. from North Pyongan Province, north of the capital city of Pyongyang, the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a text message to reporters.

It flew roughly 372 miles at a

peak altitude of 37 miles toward the East Sea, also known as the Sea of Japan, according to Seoul. The missile is believed to have flown at Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound.

The Joint Chiefs said U.S. and South Korean intelligence officials were analyzing the launch and Army Gen. Paul LaCamera, the U.S. Forces Korea commander, reaffirmed their defenses would be strengthened.

The launch is a "grave provocation that undermines peace and security on the Korean Pen-

insula as well as the international community," the Joint Chiefs said.

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement that it was aware of the launch and was "consulting closely with our allies and partners."

"While we have assessed that this event does not pose an immediate threat to U.S. personnel or territory, or to our allies, the missile launch highlights the destabilizing impact of [North Korea's] ... ballistic missile programs," the statement said.

"The U.S. commitments to the defense of [South Korea] and Japan remain ironclad."

The Japanese Prime Minister's Office in a statement on its website called for the government to "take all possible measures for precaution, including readiness for contingencies."

The launch comes two days after a nuclear-powered U.S. aircraft carrier, the USS Ronald Reagan, steamed into South Korea's largest port for the first time in five years ahead of joint maritime drills.

# US aircraft carrier in S. Korea to start drills

By DAVID CHOI  
*Stars and Stripes*

BUSAN, South Korea — A nuclear-powered U.S. aircraft carrier steamed into South Korea's largest port Friday for the first time in five years as part of scheduled maritime drills in the region.

The USS Ronald Reagan and its roughly 5,000 crew members arrived at Busan Naval Base as a "testament to the tight bond" between the U.S. and South Korean navies, U.S. Naval Forces Korea commander Rear Adm. Mark Schafer said during a news conference aboard the ship.

The Ronald Reagan was joined by the USS Barry, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and the USS Chancellorsville, a Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser. The USS Benfold, another destroyer, was ported roughly 25 miles west of Busan. The ships made their way to Busan after leaving Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on Sept. 12.

South Korean navy Adm. Kim Kyung Cheol, director of the Maritime Operations Center, welcomed the Ronald Reagan's crew and said he looked forward to enhancing their military alliance.

"The ROK and U.S. alliance has mutually strived to promote peace and stability on the peninsula for the last 70 years," Kim said, referring to South Korea's official name, the Republic of Korea. "The ROK and U.S. navies will conduct a variety of activities to bolster the navies' friendship."

Rear Adm. Michael "Buzz" Donnelly, commander of Carrier Strike Group 5 and Task Force 70, said the two navies' cooperation is a byproduct of a "watertight" alliance between the United States and South Korea.

"We have a history of shared

blood, we share common values, and have a clear vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific," Donnelly said during the news conference. The strike group's presence in Busan, he said, "is a clear and visible ... understanding and commitment to the alliance."

Donnelly declined comment on what message the "previously scheduled" port call was intended to convey and said he would "leave the messaging to the diplomats."

Neither admiral provided details of the joint exercises or revealed how long the strike group would stay in Busan.

## Coast Guard cutter back in Guam after mission Oceania

By WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Coast Guard's fast response cutter Oliver Henry returned home to Guam last week after completing a 43-day expeditionary patrol across Oceania intended to usher in a greater presence in the region by the service.

The 8,000-nautical-mile mission took the cutter to Papua New Guinea, Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia and along the coast of the Solomon Islands before returning to Guam on Monday.

"What Oliver Henry did this past patrol was really trailblaze a path forward for continued presence in the region," Lt. Freddy Hofschneider, Oliver Henry's commander, said in a phone interview Wednesday from Guam.

The mission timing was ideal because many of the islands of Oceania — a vast geographical area that includes Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia — are only now allowing ship visits after restricting

access during the first years of the coronavirus pandemic, Hofschneider said.

The 154-foot-long Sentinel-class fast response cutters are the newest generation of patrol boats in the Coast Guard's force. Nearly 50 of the cutters have been added to its fleet over the past 10 years.

Oliver Henry was one of three fast response cutters commissioned in Guam last summer. The trio that included Frederick Hatch and Myrtle Hazard replaced the Coast Guard's pair of 110-foot patrol boats on the island, which were designed primarily for search-and-rescue missions close to home.

The fast response cutters are capable of long-distance missions and can be used for drug interdiction, defense operations, maritime law enforcement and environmental protection. They are armed with four, .50-caliber machine guns and a remote-controlled, 25-mm cannon, can reach speeds up to 28 knots and can stay at sea for five days.

## Misawa told to shelter in place after WWII-era grenade found

By SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO—Residents of an Air Force base in northeastern Japan were told to shelter in place Friday after an airman reported finding what turned out to be a Japanese grenade from World War II.

"Out of an abundance of caution the acting Misawa Air Base installation commander issued a shelter in place warning notification for north base housing after a community member discovered an unexploded ordnance 23 Sept," a message on Misawa's official Facebook page stated that day.

"Misawa's Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel immediately responded to the scene and determined the object was not a threat," it added.

Senior Airman Layne Ring, 28, whose job involves testing jet engines at Misawa, told Stars and Stripes he found a strange object while he and his wife were snorkeling at Mutsu Bay last weekend. The bay is about 45

minutes' drive north of the base.

On Wednesday, while cleaning out a bag full of objects he collected, Ring noticed what looked like a fuse, prompting him to do some research, he said.

"I realized I found a Japanese imperial navy Type 4 ceramic grenade ... created from 1944-1945 as a 'last ditch' effort to defend Japan's citizens from the Americans if they invaded," Ring wrote.

The grenades, also issued to the military, weren't very effective and were known to break on impact and have no effect if broken, he added.

"Upon stumbling across this crazy info, I decided the next day to remove the relic from my house," Ring said. "I called [explosive ordnance disposal] who then brought the whole emergency response force to my house to remove the grenade."

A Misawa spokesman, Tech. Sgt. Chris Jacobs, confirmed in an email Friday evening that the object was a grenade from World War II.

# Tropical Storm Ian grows heading to Cuba, Fla.

*Associated Press*

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Authorities and residents in Florida were keeping a cautious eye on Tropical Storm Ian as it rumbled through the Caribbean on Sunday, expected to continue gaining strength and become a major hurricane in the coming days on a forecast track toward the state.

Gov. Ron DeSantis has declared a state of emergency throughout Florida and urged residents to ready for a storm that could lash large swaths of the state with heavy rains, high winds and rising seas.

“We encourage all Floridians

to make their preparations,” DeSantis said in a statement.

President Joe Biden also declared an emergency, authorizing the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to coordinate disaster relief and provide assistance to protect lives and property. The president postponed a scheduled Sept. 27 trip to Florida due to the storm.

The National Hurricane Center said Ian was expected to strengthen before moving over western Cuba and toward the west coast of Florida and the Florida Panhandle by the mid-

dle of the week. The agency advised Floridians to have hurricane plans in place and monitor updates of the storm’s evolving path.

The center issued an updated advisory at 5 a.m. Sunday, which noted the tropical storm was forecast to begin “rapidly strengthening later today” with the “risk of significant wind and storm surge impacts increasing for western Cuba.”

Ian was expected to become a hurricane Sunday and a major hurricane as soon as late Monday. The storm had top sustained winds of 50 mph on Sunday morning as it swirled about

345 miles southeast of Grand Cayman, in the Cayman Islands.

A hurricane warning remained in effect for the island and hurricane watches were issued for western Cuba.

Cuban state media said emergency authorities have met to plan for the storm’s arrival and prepare for evacuations, though none had been ordered as of Sunday. The track forecast by the National Hurricane Center shows a major storm striking the far western part of the island early Tuesday, close to the country’s most famed tobacco fields.

# NASA spacecraft set to intentionally hit asteroid

*The Washington Post*

Heart rates are spiking in the Washington, D.C., suburbs, where scientists and engineers on Monday evening hope to witness a vending-machine-sized spacecraft that is 7 million miles from Earth crash into an asteroid.

If everything goes as planned, and the laws of gravity and motion don’t change at the last minute, this will happen at 7:14 p.m. Eastern time — or, to be precise: 7:14:23.

There’s nothing major at stake here, other than demonstrating a technology that someday might save civilization.

It’s important to note that the targeted asteroid isn’t a threat to Earth and has done nothing wrong to deserve this attention. But the space collision is a critical moment for the Double Asteroid Redirection Test, NASA’s

first test of “planetary defense.”

This mission is designed to show how a “kinetic impactor” could deflect a dangerous asteroid that might strike the Earth. There are a lot of space rocks out there that could interrupt our usual journey around the sun. The general strategy in planetary defense is to alter the orbits of asteroids so that, even if they come close to Earth, they’ll pass by harmlessly.

The DART team members are confident they’ll succeed, but they admit this is not a slam dunk. The spacecraft could miss. There will be no consolation for the scientists and engineers if they almost hit the target. This isn’t horseshoes or hand grenades: Close doesn’t count when you’re trying to change the course of an asteroid.

“Mission success is pretty clear: You need

to hit that asteroid,” said Elena Adams, an engineer at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Md., which is conducting the mission under contract with NASA.

The asteroid is called Dimorphos, roughly 500 feet in diameter. No one knows precisely what it looks like. It’s just a blob in telescopes. The first time Earthlings will get a good look at it will be under an hour before impact.

The spacecraft was launched last November from California. The bigger asteroid essentially serves as the guide star of the mission, but only the smaller asteroid is being targeted. When the spacecraft gets close to big Didymos, it should see little Dimorphos swinging around from behind its companion. It’ll be a head-on collision.

# Strong typhoon prompts evacuations in Philippines

*Associated Press*

MANILA, Philippines — A powerful typhoon slammed into the northeastern Philippines on Sunday and was barreling across the main Luzon island toward the capital in a densely populated path where thousands have been evacuated to safety.

Typhoon Noru hit the coastal town of Burdeos on Polillo Island in Quezon province shortly

before nightfall. With sustained winds of 121 miles per hour and gusts of up to 149 mph, it was expected to weaken slightly when it hits the Sierra Madre mountain range but will remain dangerously ferocious, forecasters said.

“The typhoon is strong and we live by the sea,” said Marilen Yubatan, who left her shanty in Manila with her two young daughters. “If we fall into the

water, I don’t know where I will end up with my children.”

The typhoon gained considerable strength from a storm with sustained winds of 53 mph on Saturday into a super typhoon just 24 hours later in an “explosive intensification” over the open sea, Vicente Malano, who heads the country’s weather agency, told The Associated Press.

Thousands of villagers were

evacuated — some forcibly — from the typhoon’s path, as well as from mountainside villages prone to landslides and flash floods. Coastal communities could be hit by tidal surges as high as 10 feet in Quezon province, including Polillo island and nearby Aurora province.

The typhoon’s eye could pass about 25 to 30 miles from metropolitan Manila, “which is nearly a direct hit,” Malano said.

# Zelenskyy says Russia's call-up shows weakness

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia's rush to mobilize hundreds of thousands of recruits to staunch stinging losses in Ukraine is a tacit acknowledgement that its "army is not able to fight," Ukraine's president said Sunday, as splits sharpened in Europe over whether to welcome or turn away Russians fleeing the call-up.

Speaking to U.S. broadcaster CBS, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also said he's bracing for more Russian strikes on Ukraine's electrical infrastructure, as the Kremlin seeks to ramp up the pressure on Ukraine and its Western backers as the weather gets colder. Zelenskyy warned that this winter "will be very difficult."

"They will shoot missiles, and they will target our electric grid. This is a challenge, but we are not afraid of that," he said on "Face the Nation."

He portrayed the Russian mobilization — its first such call-up since World War II — as a signal of weakness, not strength, saying: "They admitted that their army is not able to fight with Ukraine anymore."

Although the European Union is now largely off limits to most Russians, with direct flights stopped and its land borders increas-

ingly closed to them, an exodus of Russian men fleeing military service is creating divisions among European officials over whether they should be granted safe haven.

The partial mobilization is also triggering protests in Russia, with new anti-war demonstrations Sunday.

In Dagestan, one of Russia's poorer regions in the North Caucasus, police fired warning shots to try to disperse more than 100 people who blocked a highway while protesting Russian President Vladimir Putin's military call-up, Russian media reported.

At least 2,000 people have been arrested in recent days for similar demonstrations around Russia. Many of those taken away have immediately received a call-up summons.

German officials have voiced a desire to help Russian men deserting military service and have called for a European-wide solution. Germany has held out the possibility of granting asylum to deserters and those refusing the draft.

In France, senators are arguing that Europe has a duty to help and warned that not granting refuge to fleeing Russians could play into Putin's hands, feeding his narrative of Western hostility to Russia.

# Freed American veterans return home to Alabama

*Associated Press*

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Two U.S. military veterans who disappeared three months ago while fighting with Ukrainian forces against Russia arrived home to Alabama on Saturday, greeted by hugs, cheers and tears of joy at the state's main airport.

Alex Drueke, 40, and Andy Huynh, 27, had gone missing June 9 in the Kharkiv region of northeastern Ukraine near the Russian border. The Alabama residents were released as part of a prisoner exchange. The pair had traveled to Ukraine on their own and bonded over their shared home state.

"It's them!" a family member shouted as the pair appeared at the top of an escalator at the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport in Birmingham, one of Alabama's largest cities.

Smiling but looking tired, the two were pulled into long emotional hugs by family members after their connecting flight home.

"Surreal," said Drueke's aunt, Dianna Shaw, of her nephew's return. "I still have chill bumps. I always imagined this day. I always held not just hope but belief in this day. But I thought it was going to be two or three years from now at best.

"There are prisoners of war who have been held for months and years. There are people who have been detained wrongfully for years and for this to come about in three months is, just, unimaginable to me," she added. "Even though I'm living it, it feels unimaginable, and I don't want people to forget all the Ukrainians who are still being held."

The families of the two men announced their release Wednesday. The men were among 10 prisoners released by Russian-backed separatists as part of a prisoner exchange mediated by Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Embassy said five British nationals and others from Morocco, Sweden and Croatia also were freed.

Darla Black, whose daughter is engaged to Huynh, said she thought, "there he is. There he is" as Huynh came into view.

"I had to get my hands on him to actually believe it. I'm just overwhelmed with gratitude. We got our miracle," Black said.

"We're looking forward to spending time with family and we'll be in touch with the media soon," Drueke said shortly after arriving in New York with Huynh. "Happy to be home."

# Russia forces vote in Ukraine territory 'under a gun barrel'

*The Washington Post*

KYIV, Ukraine — Officials in Russian-occupied territories in eastern and southern Ukraine are forcing people to vote "under a gun barrel," residents said Saturday as staged referendums — intended to validate Moscow's annexation of territory it occupies — entered their second day.

Voting is taking place in portions of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and will last five days, ending Tuesday. The outcome is not in doubt.

The purported referendums are illegal under Ukrainian and international law and would not remotely meet basic democratic standards for free and fair elections. Western leaders, including President Joe Biden, have denounced the process as a "sham" to prepare

the ground for Russia's theft of Ukrainian land.

Moscow officials and their separatist proxies have said they expect the vote to be in favor of absorbing the areas, a process that will be done "promptly" once the results are official, according to the Kremlin.

Ukrainians who are in contact with friends and relatives in the occupied territories describe groups of men armed with Kalashnikov rifles, accompanied by a person with a portable ballot box, going door-to-door.

"The referendum is taking place in the occupied city of Kherson under the muzzle of an automatic rifle," said Galina Luhova, head of the Kherson City Military Administration, who now lives in Ukrainian-controlled territory.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Bargain hunter scores 700-year-old document

**ME** PORTLAND — A bargain hunter who went to an estate sale in Maine to find a KitchenAid mixer, a bookshelf or vintage clothing walked away with a 700-year-old treasure.

Instead of a kitchen appliance, Will Sideri stumbled upon a framed document hanging on a wall. It had elaborate script in Latin, along with musical notes and gold flourishes. A sticker said 1285 AD. Based on what he'd seen in a manuscripts class at Colby College, the document looked downright medieval.

And it was a bargain at \$75.

Academics confirmed the parchment was from The Beauvais Missal, used in the Beauvais Cathedral in France, and dated to the late 13th century. It was used about 700 years ago in Roman Catholic worship, they said.

An expert on manuscripts said the document, first reported by the Maine Monitor, could be worth as much as \$10,000.

The parchment was part of a prayer book and priests' liturgy, said Lisa Fagin Davis, executive director of the Medieval Academy of America and a professor of manuscript studies at Simmons University in Boston.

### Man brought Molotov cocktails to protest

**WA** SEATTLE — A Renton, Wash., man has pleaded guilty to bringing 12 Molotov cocktails to a protest at the Seattle police union headquarters on Labor Day 2020.

Justin Christopher Moore en-

tered his plea to unlawful possession of destructive devices in U.S. District Court in Seattle, prosecutors said in a press release.

According to the plea agreement, Moore made 12 gasoline devices and carried them to a protest march at the Seattle Police Officers Guild headquarters, prosecutors said. Police smelled gasoline and discovered the box in a parking lot.

Investigators used video and information from other co-conspirators to confirm that Moore was the person carrying the box to the site, prosecutors said.

### 9 sick from substance at plastics recycler

**CA** JURUPA VALLEY — Authorities said nine people were taken to the hospital after being exposed to a caustic substance at a California plastics recycling company.

Seven workers had breathing problems or other symptoms while two firefighters who entered the building were taken to the hospital for examination as a precaution but weren't sickened and they were later released, Riverside County fire officials said.

The business recycles empty containers but when one container was cut open gas escaped and was inhaled by seven workers, fire Battalion Chief Andrew Kibby said.

### Seal that lived in pond surrenders to police

**MA** BEVERLY — After evading the authorities, a wayward seal that made its home in a Massachusetts pond surrendered at a police

station.

The gray seal first appeared earlier this month in Shoe Pond in the city of Beverly, northeast of Boston. The animal is believed to have traveled to the pond from the sea via a river and drainage pipes.

The seal quickly became a local attraction and even named "Shoebert" after its chosen pond.

Firefighters and wildlife experts used boats and giant nets in an effort to capture the wily animal Thursday, but gave up after several fruitless hours. Early Friday morning, however, Shoebert left the pond, crossed a parking lot and appeared outside the side door of the local police station, according to a police statement, looking "for some help."

The seal was transported to Mystic Aquarium in Mystic, Conn., where marine biologists will care for it before deciding whether to release it back into the wild.

### Man gets hate crime charge in cross burning

**MS** JACKSON — A Mississippi man has been charged with a federal hate crime for burning a cross in his front yard to threaten his Black neighbors, the U.S. Justice Department announced.

Axel Cox, 23, has been charged with one count of criminal interference with the right to fair housing and one count of using fire to commit a federal felony.

According to court records, Cox chose to burn a cross in front of a Black family because of their race. He also allegedly addressed the family with ra-

cially derogatory language, the records showed.

Federal prosecutors said the Gulfport man violated his neighbors' housing rights.

### Police call fentanyl bust 'largest' in its history

**AZ** PHOENIX — Phoenix police said they made the largest fentanyl bust in the department's history.

Authorities said more than 1 million fentanyl pills were discovered during a police search of a home and a car in the Phoenix suburb of Avondale.

According to detectives, two men connected to the seized drugs have been arrested. The car belonged to one of them.

### Man broke windows at Planned Parenthood

**OR** PORTLAND — A man who broke windows and security cameras at a Planned Parenthood clinic in southwestern Oregon because he opposed abortion has pleaded guilty to two counts of violating the federal Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act.

Devin Kruse, 27, of Grants Pass, Ore., admitted he broke five security cameras, a window and a sign at the Grants Pass clinic, according to his plea agreement. He also said he returned several days later and threw a concrete block through a window, tore down an intercom system and broke lightbulbs, documents said.

He told officers who arrested him that all Planned Parenthood facilities needed to be shut down, according to the agreement.

-From Associated Press

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# Martinez, K-State stun No. 6 Oklahoma

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Kansas State has done it again.

Quarterback Adrian Martinez ran for 148 yards and four touchdowns, and the Wildcats stunned No. 6 Oklahoma 41-34 on Saturday night.

Kansas State beat Oklahoma in 2012, 2014, 2019 and 2020, but an upset seemed unlikely this time — the Wildcats were coming off a home loss to Tulane the previous week.

“I just know that our kids believe that they’re a good football team, and they have to go out there and prove it,” Kansas State coach Chris Klieman said. “And tonight, they proved it.”

Martinez also passed for 234 yards and a score. He was Nebraska’s quarterback last year when the Cornhuskers lost to the Sooners 23-16 in the same stadium.

Martinez, a senior, said it was his best college performance.

“Absolutely, beating a team like this, on a team like this — it’s a special feeling, and

one I’ve never had in my career,” he said.

Deuce Vaughn rushed for 116 yards for the Wildcats (3-1, 1-0 Big 12).

It was first-year Oklahoma coach Brent Venables’ first loss as a head coach, and it came against his alma mater.

“I don’t think that we played, obviously, like we have these first three weeks,” he said. “It starts with the man in the mirror and it starts with us as coaches. Obviously, we did a poor job of getting our guys ready to play. Obviously, we didn’t handle success very well. Sometimes, it’s just the other team. They just outplayed you, outcoached you.”

Dillon Gabriel passed for 330 yards and four touchdowns and Eric Gray ran for 114 yards for the Sooners (3-1, 0-1).

Kansas State broke out to a 14-0 lead about nine minutes into the game behind Martinez’s 6-yard touchdown run and 6-yard scoring pass to Malik Knowles.

“I think coming out really fast helped us as a unit,” Martinez said. “Immediately, we knew we could score on these guys.”

The Wildcats gained 279 yards in the first half to take a 24-17 lead at the break.

Martinez scored his third touchdown run of the game from 15 yards out to put Kansas State up 34-20 with 8 minutes to play.

Gabriel found Brayden Willis for a 1-yard touchdown pass with 4:36 remaining to cut the Wildcats’ lead to 34-27. But on the Kansas State’s next possession, Martinez broke loose for 55 yards on a third-and-16. He finished the drive with a 1-yard scoring run — his fourth touchdown rushing of the game.

Gabriel found Willis for a 10-yard touchdown pass with 35 seconds left, and Oklahoma cut the deficit to 41-34, but Kansas State’s Kade Warner recovered the Sooners’ onside kick.

“They onside kicked it to the kid that’s got the best hands on our team in Kade Warner, and I felt pretty good,” Klieman said. “When he recovered that, I was like, ‘Wow. We’re going to beat these guys again here.’ It’s amazing to do this two times in a row here.”

## No. 5 Clemson hangs on, outscores Wake Forest

Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.— DJ Uiagalelei kept delivering the ball on target downfield for No. 5 Clemson in a shootout with No. 21 Wake Forest.

That offered enough cover for a defense that struggled for stops — right up until finally coming up with the winning play to cap a double-overtime classic.

Nate Wiggins broke up Sam Hartman’s fourth-down pass in the end zone to help the Tigers hold off the Demon Deacons 51-45 on Saturday. That marked their 14th straight win in the series, this one coming in a tense road game pairing two of the Atlantic Coast Conference’s top teams.

Uiagalelei threw for 375 yards and five touchdowns to lead Clemson (4-0, 2-0 ACC), including the go-ahead score over the middle to Davis Allen to

start the second overtime.

“Honestly, man, that was a crazy game,” Uiagalelei said, adding: “You could just see the heart of our team — the heart of the offense, the heart of the defense. When plays had to be made, we made the plays. That just shows a great sign of a good football team.”

Or, at the least, plenty of perseverance — particularly for Wiggins.

He had been targeted frequently by Hartman and the Wake Forest receivers but came through to knock away Hartman’s final ball for A.T. Perry. He fell to the end zone turf, then sprung up to join his team in celebration.

Before that stop, Wiggins had thrice been flagged for pass interference in an injury-battered secondary and was beaten on Donavon Greene’s 25-yard TD haul.

## Buckeyes bury Badgers as Stroud throws 5 TDs

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — No. 3 Ohio State is striking the right balance.

C.J. Stroud threw five touchdown passes, and both top running backs had 100-yard games as the Buckeyes blew by Wisconsin early and cruised to a 52-21 win on Saturday night.

“I thought the tempo and the mix of run and pass today is what we’re looking for,” Ohio State coach Ryan Day said.

Cade Stover and Emeka Egbuka each caught two touchdown passes, and Miyan Williams rushed for two more scores.

The Buckeyes (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) controlled the line of scrimmage and scored touchdowns on their first four drives on the way to a 31-7 halftime lead. The Badgers could only slow them down after that but didn’t get closer than 21 points.

TreVeyon Henderson rushed for 121 yards, and Williams averaged more than 9 yards per carry in rumbling for 101.

“We know how long the season is going to be,” Day said. “When you have two guys going back and forth and back and forth who are unselfish, who understands what it is to be a team, that’s the key.”

Stroud completed 17 of 27 attempts for 281 yards, and also threw an interception for the first time this season. He has 16 touchdown passes in four games.

Egbuka caught scoring passes of 32 and 8 yards, finishing with 118 yards. Julian Fleming also caught a touchdown pass for Ohio State.

“In the first half we distributed the ball pretty well, had some good momentum coming out quick, and that’s something we definitely want to do,” Stroud said.

# Navy takes down East Carolina in 2 OTs

Associated Press

GREENVILLE, N.C. — Daniel Davies, who came into the game without a field goal attempt this season, made all three of his tries Saturday night, including a 36-yarder in the second overtime and Navy beat East Carolina 23-20.

The teams exchanged field goals in the first overtime before Davies connected again. Owen Daffer's 37-yard attempt went wide left.

The Pirates (2-1, 1-0 American Athletic Conference) had the ball in the final minutes, but Tyler Fletcher intercepted Holton Ahlers at the Midshipmen 35 with 25 seconds left to send the game to overtime.

The score was 3-3 headed into the fourth quarter when both teams scored two touchdowns apiece.

ECU tied the game at 17-all with eight minutes left when a Navy defender tried to jump a route on a short pass but missed and Isaiah Winstead went down the left sideline for a 67-yard score.

Right after the Pirates took a 10-3 lead, Tai Lavatai found Vincent Terrell II 15 yards down the middle and Terrell turned it into a 65-yard score with just under 12 minutes left. On the first play after the ensuing kickoff, Eavan Gibbons recovered a fumble at the ECU 25. That turnover turned into a 7-yard TD by Anton Hall Jr.

for a 17-10 lead. Ahlers threw a 14-yard TD pass to Ryan Jones for a 10-3 lead to complete an eight-play, 70-yard drive that began when the Midshipmen turned the ball over on downs.

Ahlers, the Pirates' fifth-year starting quarterback, became the all-time total yards leader for the AAC with 12,617, passing Cincinnati's Desmond Rider at 12,418. Ahlers threw for 262 yards with two touchdowns and one interception. Winstead had 138 yards receiving on 10 catches.

Lavatai threw for 152 yards and a touchdown for Navy (1-2, 1-1). Terrell had 114 yards receiving on three catches.

# Hooker paces No. 11 Volunteers past No. 20 Gators

Associated Press

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Despite an upper-body injury and the absence of his favorite target, Hendon Hooker was at his best Saturday night.

The Tennessee quarterback threw for 349 yards and two touchdowns and ran for 112 yards and a score to lead the No. 11 Volunteers to a 38-33 victory over No. 20 Florida.

It was Tennessee's second win over the Gators in the last 18 meetings and snapped a six-game losing streak in the series. The win gave the Volunteers their first 4-0 start since 2016.

"This is one of the great stories in college football," Tennessee coach Josh Heupel said of his team. "The game-day atmosphere... That is Rocky Top. It's what we built."

**No. 23 Texas A&M 23, No. 10 Arkansas 21:** Devon Achane rushed for 159 yards and a touchdown, Demani Richardson sprinted the final 82 yards on a wild fumble return for another score and the Aggies beat the Razorbacks.

**Texas Tech 37, No. 22 Texas 34:** Trey Wolff kicked a 20-yard field goal in overtime, lifting Texas Tech over Texas after the Red Raiders overcame a two-touchdown deficit in the second half but let a lead slip away in the

final seconds.

The Longhorns' Bijan Robinson fumbled on the first play of overtime, and Donovan Smith led the Red Raiders To The 1-yard line before Wolff's winning kick in the Big 12 opener for both teams.

**No. 2 Alabama 55, Vanderbilt 3:** Bryce Young passed for a season-high 385 yards and four touchdowns, and the host Crimson Tide beat the Commodores in the Southeastern Conference opener for both teams.

It was the first 300-yard game of the season for the reigning Heisman Trophy winner, who didn't play in the fourth quarter and completed 25 of 36 passes.

**No. 4 Michigan 34, Maryland 27:** Blake Corum rushed for a career-high 243 yards and two touchdowns to help the host Wolverines top the Terrapins in the Big Ten opener for both teams.

Corum, who tied the school record with five rushing touchdowns against UConn a week earlier, had a career-high 30 carries. He became the first Michigan back to rush for 200 yards since Karan Higdon in 2017.

**No. 7 Southern California 17, Oregon State 14:** Jordan Addison caught a go-ahead 21-yard touchdown pass with 1:13 left and the visiting Trojans over-

came a shaky performance.

The Beavers, vying to start 4-0 for the first time since 2012, took the lead on Jam Griffin's 18-yard touchdown run with 4:41 remaining. But USC quarterback Caleb Williams led an 11-play, 84-yard drive that ended with Addison's sixth touchdown catch of the season.

**No. 8 Kentucky 31, Northern Illinois 23:** Wildcats quarterback Will Levistied a career best with four touchdown passes, including critical scores of 70 and 40 yards to Barion Brown and Tayvion Robinson, after half-time to hold off the visiting Huskies.

**No. 12 North Carolina State 41, Connecticut 10:** Devin Leary threw for 320 yards and four touchdowns — including a 75-yarder on the first play from scrimmage — and the host Wolfpack State routed the Huskies.

**No. 13 Utah 34, Arizona State 13:** Cameron Rising threw for 260 yards and two touchdowns to tight end Dalton Kincaid, and the Utes won on the road against the Sun Devils.

**No. 14 Penn State 33, Central Michigan 14:** Sean Clifford completed 22 of 34 passes for 217 yards and accounted for four touchdowns to lead the host Nittany Lions past the Chippewa.

**No. 15 Oregon 44, Washing-**

**ton State 41:** Quarterback Bo Nix threw a 50-yard touchdown pass to Troy Franklin with 1:21 left to give the visiting Ducks their first lead as they scored three late touchdowns to defeat the Cougars.

**No. 16 Mississippi 35, Tulsa 27:** Jaxson Dart and Quinshon Judkins accounted for four touchdowns in the second quarter as the host Rebels rallied from an early deficit to beat the Hurricane.

**No. 17 Baylor 31, Iowa State 24:** Blake Shapen threw for 238 yards and three touchdowns as the visiting Bears held on to beat the Cyclones in the Big 12 opener for both teams.

**No. 18 Washington 40, Stanford 22:** Wayne Taulapapa rushed for a career-high 120 yards and one touchdown, and the host Huskies sacked Cardinal quarterback Tanner McKee eight times and forced two fumbles.

**No. 19 BYU 38, Wyoming 24:** Jaren Hall threw for 337 yards and four touchdowns to lead the host Cougars.

**No. 24 Pittsburgh 45, Rhode Island 24:** Tailback Israel Abanikanda rushed for four touchdowns, and quarterback Kedon Slovis was solid in his return from injury for the host Panthers.

# Yankees win 6th straight on Rizzo HR

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge went homerless for the fourth straight game and remained one shy of Roger Maris' American League record of 61 as the New York Yankees beat the Boston Red Sox 7-5 on Saturday to close in on their first AL East title since 2019.

Judge was 0-for-3 with two strikeouts and a walk. Since hitting No. 60 to spark a ninth-inning comeback Tuesday night, the slugger is 3-for-13 with two doubles, five walks and six strikeouts.

Anthony Rizzo hit a two-run homer off John Schreiber (3-4) that broke a 5-all tie in the seventh inning. Rizzo equaled his career high, reaching 32 for the fourth time.

The Yankees (93-58) have won six straight and 10 of 12, surpassing last year's wins total and opening an 8½-game division lead with 11 to play.

**Blue Jays 3, Rays 1:** Alek Manoah pitched seven shutout innings, Whit Merrifield hit a three-run homer and visiting Toronto regained the top AL wild-card spot with a victory over Tampa Bay.

The Blue Jays lead the Rays by one game. The top wild card finisher will host all games in their best-of-three opening-round series, while the other two wild cards play strictly on the road.

Manoah (15-7) scattered four hits, walked two and struck out eight while throwing a season-high 113 pitches.

**Athletics 10, Mets 4:** Jacob deGrom got hit around and lasted a season-low four innings as visiting New York squandered an early lead and lost to Oakland.

Handed a 3-0 advantage, deGrom (5-3) gave up four runs in the bottom of the first. He was tagged for five runs and four walks overall — the worst start for the two-time Cy Young Award winner since 2019.

In his past three starts, the right-hander has allowed 11 earned runs in 15 innings. The four walks doubled his previous season total.

**Braves 6, Phillies 3:** Kyle Wright became the first 20-game winner in the majors this season and visiting Atlanta beat Philadelphia to stop a three-game losing streak.

William Contreras and rookie Michael Harris II each homered and had three hits for the Braves (94-58), who moved within 1½ games of the first-place Mets in the NL East. The teams play three games in Atlanta next weekend.

Bryce Harper hit a two-run homer for the Phillies, who hold the third and final NL

wild card spot by 1½ games over Milwaukee.

**Padres 9, Rockies 3:** Yu Darvish settled in after serving up a leadoff homer and equaled a career high with his 16th win as visiting San Diego climbed into second place in the NL wild-card race by beating Colorado.

Jake Cronenworth and Ha-Seong Kim each had a two-run single as part of a six-run seventh inning that broke open a 3-2 game. The Padres moved a half-game ahead of Philadelphia, with the surging Brewers just 1½ games behind the Phillies for the third and final slot.

**Guardians 4, Rangers 2:** Cal Quantrill won his career-best 10th consecutive decision, rookie Oscar Gonzalez hit two home runs and visiting Cleveland moved closer to clinching the AL Central by beating Texas.

The streaking Guardians won for the 17th time in 20 games. They can wrap up the division title with one more win or a White Sox loss.

Quantrill (14-6) hasn't lost in 15 starts dating to July 5 while setting a career high for wins. He allowed only Marcus Semien's solo homer in six innings.

**Brewers 10, Reds 2:** Hunter Renfroe hit a pair of two-run homers and had a season-high five RBIs against Cincinnati in visiting Milwaukee's fourth straight victory.

Renfroe tied his career high with four hits in support of Corbin Burnes (11-8). The reigning NL Cy Young Award winner gave up four hits and two runs with eight strikeouts in 6½ innings.

**Dodgers 6, Cardinals 2:** Miguel Vargas hit his first big league home run, Clayton Kershaw won his third straight start and host Los Angeles bounced back with a victory over St. Louis.

Will Smith and Trayce Thompson also went deep for the NL West champion Dodgers, who had dropped three of four — including an 11-0 blowout by the Cardinals on Friday night.

Nolan Arenado had a solo shot for St. Louis, but its NL Central lead dropped to 6½ games over Milwaukee.

**Mariners 6, Royals 5:** Cal Raleigh homered and drove in three runs as visiting Seattle rallied past Kansas City.

The Mariners have won two of three after dropping five of six as they try to hold off Baltimore for the third and final AL wild card. They closed to a half-game behind Tampa Bay for the second spot.

With one out in the ninth inning, Jarred

Kelenic and Jesse Winker singled ahead of Raleigh's tiebreaking RBI double off Brad Keller (6-14).

**Astros 11, Orioles 10:** Yuli Gurriel hit a two-run single to cap a ninth-inning uprising that carried visiting Houston past Baltimore, giving manager Dusty Baker his milestone 100th win of the season.

The AL West champion Astros trailed 9-7 before mounting a four-run rally against closer Félix Bautista (4-4). Kyle Tucker tied it with a two-out RBI double and Gurriel followed with a single.

On the brink of making up ground in the playoff hunt, the Orioles dropped four games behind Seattle for the third and final AL wild card. Both teams have 11 games left.

Baker joined Hall of Famers Sparky Anderson, Tony La Russa and Whitey Herzog as the only managers in major league history to have 100-win seasons in both leagues.

**Tigers 7, White Sox 2:** Javier Báez taunted Chicago fans after hitting a home run, and visiting Detroit pushed the White Sox closer to elimination in the AL Central.

Cleveland has a magic number of one to close out the White Sox to win the division. Before Chicago lost its fifth in a row, the team announced manager Tony La Russa will not return to the dugout this season.

**Twins 8, Angels 4:** Gary Sánchez drove in four runs, including a three-run homer in the fifth inning, and host Minnesota snapped a five-game losing streak with a win against Los Angeles.

Jose Miranda and Gio Urshela each had three hits for the Twins, who won for only the second time in 10 games. They were eliminated from contention in the AL Central on Friday night.

**Pirates 6, Cubs 0:** Johan Oviedo tied his career high with seven strikeouts in seven innings, and host Pittsburgh blanked Chicago to snap an eight-game losing streak.

Oviedo (4-2) retired his final 16 batters, allowing just three hits on 82 pitches without issuing a walk.

**Marlins 4, Nationals 1:** Sandy Alcantara struck out 11 in eight dominant innings and host Miami shut down Washington.

Bryan De La Cruz homered, doubled twice and singled for the Marlins.

**Diamondbacks 5, Giants 2:** Merrill Kelly pitched seven strong innings and host Arizona ended San Francisco's five-game winning streak.

Kelly (13-7) permitted just four hits and two runs to drop his season ERA to 3.13. He struck out six and walked one.