

China floods airspace near Taiwan

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

China's military sent a record 103 aircraft into the skies around Taiwan on Monday, according to the island's Ministry of National Defense.

The ministry complained of "continued military harassment" by Beijing, which began a campaign of daily sorties and naval activity around the island last week, according to Taiwan's state-run Military News Agency.

The aircraft, along with nine Chinese ships, were detected between 6 a.m. Sunday and 6 a.m. Monday; 40 planes crossed the Taiwan Strait's median line or entered the island's southeast and southwest air defense identification zones, the ministry said in a series of posts on X, formerly Twitter.

The "recent high" number of aircraft threatened to "lead to a sharp increase in tension and

worsen regional security," Taiwan's state-sponsored Military News Agency reported Monday.

The scores of aircraft outnumbered the previous high of 91 planes and a dozen ships reported April 11 by Taiwan's military, amid a three-day series of Chinese drills that encircled the island.

The drills followed Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen meeting with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy in California the week prior.

The new record follows a surge of Chinese activity around Taiwan last week that peaked between Wednesday and Thursday with 68 aircraft and 10 ships. Eighteen aircraft and 14 ships were sighted Friday and nine aircraft and 10 ships on Saturday, according to another series of posts on X from Taiwan's defense ministry.

"We call on the Beijing authorities to take responsibility and immediately stop such destructive unilateral actions," the ministry said in the Military News Agency report.

Taipei is under "severe pressure from these continual exercises" and has had to adjust its former practice of continually intercepting Chinese aircraft, according to Lyle Goldstein, director of Asia engagement at Defense Priorities and a visiting professor at Brown University.

"This could be part of China's strategy to stretch and intimidate Taiwan's forces," he told Stars and Stripes by email Friday.

The surge of activity may be a response to a U.S.-Canada transit of the Taiwan Strait on Sept. 9 or related to Taiwan's upcoming presidential elections in January, Norah Huang, director for international relations at the Prospect Foundation, a se-

curity and foreign affairs think tank in Taipei, said by email Sept. 12.

China considers the 110-mile-wide Taiwan Strait its territorial waters and views the island as a breakaway province that must be reunified with the mainland, possibly by force.

Another defense expert from Prospect Foundation, I-Chung Lai, said the heightened airpower demonstration was more likely related to a major Chinese exercise involving the aircraft carrier Shandong east of Taiwan.

The Shandong and several other vessels appeared to hold an unannounced drill in the Western Pacific between Wednesday and Thursday, with around 60 aircraft sorties, according to a Friday news release from Japan's Joint Staff. The carrier and several ships continued to the South China Sea on Friday, the release said.

Navy to christen oiler to honor Harriet Tubman

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

A second U.S. Navy ship will bear the name of a celebrated abolitionist who was the first African American woman to formally serve in the military during the Civil War, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro recently announced.

The future USNS Harriet Tubman follows a tradition of naming John Lewis-class oilers after civil rights activists, Del Toro said in statement Sunday. The first ship to bear Tubman's name was a Liberty vessel built during World War II, the Navy said.

"Her legacy deserves our nation's continued recognition, and our fleet benefits from having her name emblazoned on the hull of one of our great ships," Del Toro said in the statement.

Del Toro made the announcement during a celebration at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek, Md. The event commemorated the anniversary of Tubman's initial decision to seek her freedom on Sept. 17, 1849.

After her escape, Tubman helped at least 70 men, women and children escape slavery

while conducting them along the Underground Railroad, a network of safe houses and passages that led to freedom.

With courage and fortitude, Tubman served as a Union spy, scout, nurse and cook during the Civil War, according to the statement. She helped plan and execute a raid by Black Union troops that successfully freed more than 750 slaves, the Navy said.

She continued to advocate after the war for the rights of African Americans and women, speaking alongside Susan B. Anthony at several women's suffrage events.

She died in 1913 and was buried at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, N.Y.

USNS Harriet Tubman is the ninth ship of its class and will be sponsored by the abolitionist's great-great-grandniece, Tina Wyatt, Del Toro said.

The class and its lead ship are named for the late civil rights leader and former U.S. Rep. John Lewis of Georgia.

The oilers, which can carry up to 162,000 barrels of oil and have sizable dry cargo capacity, support the Navy's carrier strike groups, according to the statement.

Pentagon to revisit Kabul bombing

The Washington Post

Facing renewed scrutiny, U.S. military officials said Friday that they will interview nearly 20 service members wounded two years ago in a catastrophic bombing as the Biden administration raced to leave Afghanistan, firsthand witnesses whom investigators never consulted but whose public accounts have cast doubt on the Pentagon's determination that the attack was "not preventable."

Gen. Michael "Erik" Kurilla, who oversees U.S. Central Com-

mand, ordered the additional interviews "to ensure we do our due diligence" with information that came to light after the military closed its investigation of the incident, Michael Lawhorn, a CENTCOM spokesman, said in a statement. By itself, the move does not formally reopen the investigation, completed in November 2021, but the general could determine that doing so is necessary once the additional interviews are complete.

Kurilla, the statement says, wants to ensure that "relevant

voices are fully heard and that we take those accounts and examine them seriously and thoroughly so the facts are laid bare."

His decision follows complaints from congressional Republicans and the families of those killed, who have demanded deeper scrutiny of the precautions taken by U.S. commanders and other government officials after they warned publicly that Islamic State's local affiliate was plotting an attack.

An estimated 170 Afghans and 13 U.S. troops died in the bomb-

ing, which occurred in the capital, Kabul, on the afternoon of Aug. 26, 2021, as thousands of civilians, desperate to escape the incoming Taliban regime, amassed outside of Hamid Karzai International Airport in a frantic bid to board one of the evacuation flights. Three days later, a U.S. drone strike killed 10 civilians, including seven children, in a botched operation that senior U.S. officials initially called a "righteous" attack on a suspected ISIS suicide bomber preparing to hit the airport again.

US: Adoption of Afghan could be seen as abduction

Associated Press

The U.S. government has warned a Virginia judge that allowing an American Marine to keep an Afghan war orphan risks violating international law and could be viewed around the world as "endorsing an act of international child abduction," according to secret court records reviewed by The Associated Press.

It is rare for the federal government to step into a local custody case, but concern about the child's fate has stretched across the Trump and Biden administrations. The Justice Department argued in the court documents that the dispute has ramifications that extend far beyond the rural courthouse where the girl's future is being decided.

Failing to return the child, now 4, to Afghan relatives in the U.S. could jeopardize American efforts to resettle Afghan refugees, threaten international security pacts and might be used as propaganda by Islamic extremists — potentially endangering U.S. soldiers overseas, Justice Department attorneys and other U.S. officials warned in court filings seeking to intervene in the case.

The Justice Department was particularly scathing in its assessment of how Marine Maj. Joshua Mast and his wife convinced a Virginia judge to sign off on the adoption of the girl, who has been in their custody since 2021.

Citing a litany of "falsehoods," the Justice Department wrote that the court relied on "intentional misrepresentations" from the Marine and skipped critical safeguards to protect children being brought to the United States.

"The grave harm that the Masts have inflicted upon the Child, her family, and the United States is ongoing," Justice Department lawyers wrote in the court documents, which included signed declarations from State and Defense department officials. "Most troublingly, the child remains with the Masts to this day."

The documents were filed under seal this summer in the bitter custody battle over the child, who was pulled by U.S. forces in 2019 from the rubble of a military raid.

Mast, who was on a short assignment as an attorney in Af-

ghanistan, met the baby in a U.S. military hospital and became determined to bring her home.

The Masts and the girl's Afghan relatives, who are suing to get her back, have been ordered not to speak publicly about the case, and their lawyers did not respond to requests for comment.

But in earlier court filings, Mast's attorneys have written that the Marine and his wife acted in good faith and worked at "great personal expense and sacrifice" to protect the baby and "provide her a loving home."

Until now, the federal government's role in the case has remained mostly a mystery. The government filings reviewed by the AP represent just a fraction of the thousands of pages of documents, transcripts and exhibits that remain under seal, locked away with no word of when the public will be allowed to see them.

The AP in January took legal action to unseal the case and a Virginia judge agreed to do so. Yet nine months later, the documents remain secret. It is unclear how the Masts responded to the Justice Department's

court filings.

In arguing that the girl should be returned to her Afghan relatives, the Justice Department wrote that the Masts, who were living in Fluvanna County at the time, convinced their local circuit court judge, Richard E. Moore, in 2019 that the child — 7,000 miles away — was the "stateless" daughter of foreign fighters from an unknown neighboring country, and that the Afghan government intended to waive jurisdiction over her. A year later, Moore, who has since retired, made the adoption permanent.

The child, however, was never "stateless," the Afghan government did not relinquish its claim over her, and the orders "were obtained fraudulently by the Masts, who knowingly made false representations before the Virginia courts," the Justice Department wrote.

Virginia law requires that whoever has physical custody of a child be given an opportunity to be heard in an adoption case. But the Virginia court failed to notify the U.S. government of Mast's custody petition, the Justice Department argued.

Iran frees 5 US prisoners

Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar — Five prisoners sought by the U.S. in a swap with Iran flew out of Tehran on Monday, officials said, part of a deal that saw nearly \$6 billion in Iranian assets unfrozen.

“Today, five innocent Americans who were imprisoned in Iran are finally coming home,” Biden said in a statement released as the plane carrying the group from Tehran landed in Doha, Qatar. A plane carrying the Americans home to the United States was due to land Monday night.

Iran’s hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, on hand for the United Nations General Assembly in New York, suggested that Monday’s exchange could be “a step in the direction of a humanitarian action between us and America.”

Despite the deal, tensions are almost certain to remain high between the U.S. and Iran, which are locked in various disputes, including over Tehran’s nuclear program. Iran says the program is peaceful, but it now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

The exchange has unfolded amid a major American military buildup in the Persian Gulf, with the possibility of U.S.

troops boarding and guarding commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of all oil shipments pass.

After the plane slowed to a stop in Doha, three of the prisoners walked down the stairs. They hugged the U.S. ambassador to Qatar, Timmy Davis, and others.

The three — Siamak Namazi, Emad Sharghi and Morad Tahbaz — then threw their arms over one another’s shoulders and walked off to a building in the airport.

The United States did not immediately identify the other two of the five freed American citizens, all of whom were freed in exchange for five Iranians in U.S. custody and for the deal over the frozen Iranian assets. The Biden administration said the five freed Iranians posed no threat to U.S. national security.

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said that the exchange would take place Monday after nearly \$6 billion in once-frozen Iranian assets reached Qatar.

“Fortunately Iran’s frozen assets in South Korea were released and God willing today the assets will start to be fully controlled by the government and the nation,” Kanaani said.

He said two of the Iranian prisoners will stay in the U.S. Meanwhile, Nour News, a website believed to be close to Iran’s security apparatus, said two of the Iranian prisoners had arrived in Doha for the swap.

The cash represents money South Korea owed Iran — but had not yet paid — for oil purchased before the U.S. imposed sanctions on such transactions in 2019.

The U.S. maintains that, once in Qatar, the money will be held in restricted accounts to be used only for humanitarian goods, such as medicine and food. Those transactions are currently allowed under American sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic over its advancing nuclear program.

Iranian government officials have largely concurred with that explanation, though some hard-liners have insisted, without providing evidence, that there would be no restrictions on how Tehran spends the money. Mohammad Reza Farzin, Iran’s Central Bank chief, later came on state television to acknowledge the receipt of over 5.5 billion euros in accounts in Qatar. Months ago, Iran had anticipated getting as much as \$7 billion.

Hunter Biden sues IRS over disclosures

Associated Press

Hunter Biden sued the Internal Revenue Service on Monday, claiming that two agents publicly alleging tax-probe interference wrongly shared his personal information, a case that comes amid escalating legal and political struggles as the 2024 election looms.

The agents “targeted and sought to embarrass Mr. Biden” with the sharing of confidential tax information in press interviews and testimony before Congress, the suit said. His lawyers argue that whistleblower protections don’t apply, but a lawyer for one agent said any confidential information released came under whistleblower authorization.

The lawsuit marks the latest legal pushback from Biden as a federal investigation into him unfolds against a sharply political backdrop. That includes an impeachment inquiry aimed at his father, seeking to tie him to his son’s business dealings.

“Mr. Biden is the son of the President of the United States. He has all the same responsibilities as any other American citizen, and the IRS can and should make certain that he abides by those responsibilities,” the suit states. “Similarly, Mr. Biden has no fewer or lesser rights than any other American citizen, and no government agency or government agent has free reign to violate his rights simply because of who he is.”

The suit says the IRS hasn’t done enough to halt the airing of his personal information. It seeks to “force compliance with federal tax and privacy laws” and damages of \$1,000 for “each and every unauthorized disclosure of tax return information.”

Planned Parenthood resumes offering abortion services throughout Wisconsin

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Planned Parenthood resumed offering abortion services in Wisconsin on Monday after halting them for more than a year since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

Providers across the state stopped offering abortions following the June 2022 decision, fearing enforcement of an 1849 state law that appears to ban the

procedure but had previously been nullified by the 1973 *Roe* ruling. A judge ruled last month that the 144-year-old law actually didn’t apply to medical abortions.

In light of the ruling, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin was again offering abortions at clinics in Madison and Milwaukee on Monday.

The lawsuit challenging the 1849 law was brought by Wis-

consin’s Democratic attorney general and is expected to end up in front of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which flipped to liberal control last month.

Democrats, including Gov. Tony Evers, praised the resumption of abortion services. Meanwhile, anti-abortion rights groups in the state condemned the move and promised to continue fighting in court for the procedure to be outlawed.

F-35 still missing in SC after pilot ejects

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

Military officials in South Carolina were searching for a missing Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter jet after its pilot ejected near Charleston on Sunday afternoon.

The search for the missing jet from the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing based at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., was continuing Monday morning, a Marine spokesman said. MCAS

Beaufort Marines and personnel from Joint Base Charleston were conducting the search, which was focused on two lakes in the city of North Charleston, the Corps said.

The pilot safely ejected about 2 p.m. local time from the jet after experiencing “a mishap” in the air, according to a Joint Base Charleston statement.

Military officials declined Monday to provide further information about the cause of the incident, and they said it was

under investigation.

The pilot, assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501, was transferred to a hospital where he was in stable condition after he ejected over a neighborhood in North Charleston, according to the Joint Base Charleston statement. Charleston is about 70 miles northeast of MCAS Beaufort.

The incident occurred during a routine training flight from MCAS Beaufort, Marine officials said.

A second F-35B flying with the now-missing fighter jet landed safely at Joint Base Charleston during the incident.

The ongoing search is focused on Lake Moultrie and Lake Marion, both north of Joint Base Charleston, installation officials said. The decision to focus in those areas is “based on the jet’s last-known position,” they said.

Military officials were asking for the public’s help in locating the jet.

Ukraine fires 6 defense officials amid scandal

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Six Ukrainian deputy defense ministers were fired Monday following the dismissal two weeks ago of Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov in a corruption scandal, officials said, as heavy fighting continued in the east.

Russia claimed to have struck key Ukrainian facilities in air attacks overnight, hitting stores of Storm Shadow missiles and depleted uranium ammunition along with electronic intelligence centers and training facilities for Ukrainian military scouts.

The deputy defense ministers fired included Hanna Maliar, Vitalii Deyneha and Denys Shapovalov, as well as the state secretary of the Ministry of Defense, Kostiantyn Vashchenko, according to the Telegram account of Taras Melnychuk, permanent representative of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Melnichuk provided no explanation of the firings, but the government has been investigating accusations of corruption in the military related to purchasing equipment. Rustem Umerov, a Crimean Tatar lawmaker who took over as defense minister, did not immediately issue a statement.

Reznikov was removed earlier

this month after a scandal involving the defense ministry’s procurement of military jackets at three times their cost. Reznikov denied the allegations but resigned.

The reshuffling of the department came a day after Ukraine’s military said it captured the village of Klishchiivka from Russian troops after months of fierce battles. Fighting continued Monday as troops tried to hold the village south of the Russian-held city of Bakhmut in the eastern Donetsk region.

Its recapture followed the retaking of the nearby village of Andriivka.

“The enemy is trying with all his might to regain lost positions,” Maliar said in a briefing Monday before she was fired. “Therefore, our fighters hold back the enemy’s attacks there and are entrenched at the achieved frontiers.”

Retaking Klishchiivka is considered tactically important, allowing Ukrainian forces to further extend their gains around Bakhmut.

Russia invaded Ukraine in February last year. Ukraine launched a counteroffensive in June that has been marked by small victories so far, but no major breakthroughs.

Tens of thousands march, seeking end to fossil fuels

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Yelling that the future and their lives depend on ending fossil fuels, tens of thousands of protesters on Sunday kicked off a week where leaders will try once again to curb climate change primarily caused by coal, oil and natural gas.

But protesters have said it’s not going to be enough. And they aimed their wrath directly at President Joe Biden, urging him to stop approving new oil and gas projects, phase out current ones and declare a climate emergency with larger executive powers.

“We hold the power of the people, the power you need to win this election,” said Emma Buretta, 17, of Brooklyn, of youth protest group Fridays for Future. “If you want to win in 2024, if you do not want the blood of my generation to be on your hands, end fossil fuels.”

The March to End Fossil Fuels featured such politicians as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and actors Susan Sarandon, Ethan Hawke, Edward Norton, Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon. But the real action on Broadway was where protesters crowded the street, pleading for a better but not-so-hot future. It was the opening salvo to New York’s Climate Week, where world leaders in

business, politics and the arts gather to try to save the planet, highlighted by a new special United Nations summit Wednesday.

Many of the leaders of countries that cause the most heat-trapping carbon pollution will not be in attendance. And they won’t speak at the summit organized by U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in a way that only countries that promise new concrete action are invited to speak.

Organizers estimated 75,000 people marched Sunday.

“We have people all across the world in the streets, showing up, demanding a cessation of what is killing us,” Ocasio-Cortez told a cheering crowd. “We have to send a message that some of us are going to be living on, on this planet 30, 40, 50 years from now. And we will not take no for an answer.”

But industry officials said their products are vital to the economy.

“We share the urgency of confronting climate change together without delay; yet doing so by eliminating America’s energy options is the wrong approach and would leave American families and businesses beholden to unstable foreign regions for higher cost and far less reliable energy,” said American Petroleum Institute Senior Vice President Megan Bloomgren.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

20 rattlesnakes found at base of hot water heater

AZ MESA — An Arizona man called a snake removal company after seeing what he thought were three rattlesnakes lurking in the garage of his Mesa home. He was wrong.

There actually were 20 snakes — five adult western diamondback rattlers and 15 babies. One of the adult snakes also was pregnant.

Snake wrangler Marissa Maki found most of the rattlers coiled around the base of a hot water heater in the unidentified homeowner's cluttered garage.

Maki used tongs to pick up each snake before dropping them into large plastic buckets and relocating them to a natural habitat in a desert area.

Public library to create controversial book list

AL MONTGOMERY — The Alabama Public Library Service has voted to create a list of books that parents might consider inappropriate for children and teenagers.

The list will be compiled from submissions from the public and posted to the Library Service website and distributed to libraries, news outlets reported.

The proposal was sponsored by Alabama Republican Party Chairman John Wahl, who is a member of the library board. Wahl told The Associated Press that the list is meant to be a resource for librarians and parents. He said it will be up to local libraries to decide what books they stock and where they are

placed.

The board is seeking an opinion from the Alabama attorney general's office on the scope of their authority.

Doctor accused of lewd act in front of teen

MA BOSTON — A Boston doctor was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges that he masturbated and exposed himself within the view of a 14-year-old female seated next to him on a flight from Honolulu to Boston in May 2022.

Dr. Sudipta Mohanty, 33, was indicted on one count of lewd, indecent and obscene acts "while in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States."

He was arrested and charged by criminal complaint and released.

Claudia Lagos, an attorney representing Mohanty, said he is "completely innocent" of the allegations.

Mohanty worked as a doctor at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

The hospital has said the Cambridge resident is on leave and no longer practicing at the hospital.

Higher power bill rates proposed to fight fires

CA SACRAMENTO — Power bills for about 16 million people in Northern California will likely increase after state regulators released two rate proposals for one of the nation's largest utilities.

The California Public Utilities Commission is finishing up its once-every-four-years review of Pacific Gas & Electric, the Oakland-based utility that

provides electric and gas service to a 70,000-square-mile area in northern and central parts of the state. The commission must approve how much PG&E can charge customers and how it will spend that money.

The commission could not say what the increase would be for the average residential customer. But it is likely to be far less than what PG&E had initially requested — the company had asked for rate increases large enough to boost its revenue by 26%, but the two proposals the commission released would increase revenue by a maximum of 13%.

PG&E had asked for more revenue in part to pay for a plan to bury about 2,100 miles of power lines to help prevent wildfires.

State could require flood disclosures in home sales

NY HIGHLAND FALLS — Alan Oligario's home is prone to flooding — and he wishes someone had told him before he bought it.

His initial flood came in the first year after he bought the house in Highland Falls, N.Y. The second came about a decade later. The third occurred in July when torrential rains drenched the region and he woke up to water about knee deep in his home.

"If we were made aware, or if our neighbors were made aware of the flooding situation, some things might have been done differently," said Oligario, adding that he wouldn't have bought his home or at least would have sprung for flood insurance if he had known.

A bill in New York could soon require people selling their

homes to disclose whether their properties have been flooded or are at risk for future flooding — a move supporters argue is necessary as rising sea levels and intense storms with climate change lead to more flooding in the state.

State lawmakers passed the proposal earlier this year and it now awaits a signature from Democratic New York Gov. Kathy Hochul.

The legislation comes as more counties in New York experience flooding and inland areas that have been considered safe from such events have become more vulnerable to floods.

Man who hung swastika on overpass is arrested

FL CAPE CANAVERAL — A Florida man who authorities described as being a member of an extremist group has been arrested in displaying a banner with swastikas on a highway overpass, a violation of a new state law that makes it a crime to display images onto a structure without permission.

The law was passed earlier this year in response to the distribution of antisemitic literature and the projection of racist and antisemitic words on buildings.

The man from Cape Canaveral was arrested and booked into the Brevard County Jail on an arrest warrant from Orange County in Orlando.

According to the arrest warrant, the man, along with others dressed in black and camouflage, displayed the banner with swastikas and a "white power" flag over an overpass that crossed Interstate 4 in Orlando.

— From wire reports

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Chiefs get past early errors to beat Jaguars

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs insist they're fine despite another lackluster offensive effort.

Mahomes threw two touch-down passes, including one to returning star Travis Kelce, and the Chiefs overcame three early turnovers to beat Jacksonville 17-9 on Sunday for their third victory against the Jaguars in 10 months.

"You play bad and win, it's a lot better than playing bad and losing," Mahomes said. "So I was glad we were able to find a way to get a win at the end of the day, but a lot of stuff that we have to be better at."

At the top of the list: 12 penalties for 94 yards in stifling heat and humidity that caused numerous issues for fans baking in the sun and players cramping on the field.

"It's still early in the season and you guys just saw the second game, bringing all the new pieces together," Kelce said. "But right now, hats off to the defense, the way they're planning to keep us in games. We love them for it. We got to stop shooting ourselves in the foot on offense."

The Jaguars certainly should have a better plan for All-Pro defensive tackle Chris Jones in a potential rematch.

Making his season debut after ending his holdout and signing a one-year contract, Jones dominated his one-on-one matchups. He manhandled rookie right tackle Anton Harrison and was equally effective against the rest of Jacksonville's line. He finished with 1½ sacks on five QB pressures.

Commanders 35, Broncos 33: Sam Howell threw for two touchdowns and visiting Washington rallied from an 18-point deficit to beat Denver, holding on after Russell Wilson connected with Brandon Johnson on a 50-yard Hail Mary but failed to complete the tying 2-point try.

Washington cornerback Ben-

jamin St-Juste broke up Wilson's pass to Courtland Sutton on the 2-point conversion attempt. St-Juste appeared to get away with pass interference, but no flag was thrown and the Commanders celebrated the franchise's first 2-0 start since 2011.

Howell threw for 299 yards on 27-of-39 passing in his first road start and led Washington to the second-biggest comeback in franchise history. Washington overcame a 21-point deficit to beat Detroit on Nov. 4, 1990.

Ravens 27, Bengals 24: Lamar Jackson tossed two touchdown passes, Gus Edwards ran for another score and visiting Baltimore held off slow-starting Cincinnati.

The AFC North champion Bengals fell to 0-2 for the second consecutive season. The Ravens (2-0), their division rival, certainly looked like the better team.

Jackson was 24-for-33 for 237 yards. He ran for 54 more, and Edwards — with more chances because of a season-ending Achilles tendon injury to J.K. Dobbins — picked up 62 yards on 10 carries.

Seahawks 37, Lions 31 (OT): Geno Smith threw a 6-yard touchdown pass to Tyler Lockett on the opening drive of overtime, lifting visiting Seattle past Detroit.

The Seahawks (1-1) allowed the Lions (1-1) to rally from a 10-point deficit late in the fourth quarter. Detroit extended the game with Riley Patterson's 38-yard field goal on the final play of regulation.

But the Seahawks won the overtime coin toss and Smith marched them 75 yards in nine plays for the game-ending score. Smith finished 32-for-41 for 328 yards and two touchdowns.

Titans 27, Chargers 24 (OT): Nick Folk kicked a 41-yard field goal in overtime in a sudden downpour and host Tennessee beat Los Angeles to snap an eight-game skid.

The Titans (1-1) won for the first time since last Nov. 17 at

Green Bay. They had to rally from an 11-point deficit, at which point the Chargers had more points than Tennessee had yards (8).

Giants 31, Cardinals 28: Daniel Jones threw for 321 yards and two touchdowns, Graham Gano connected on a 34-yard field goal with 19 seconds remaining and visiting New York rallied from a 21-point third-quarter deficit to stun Arizona.

It was the biggest comeback win for the Giants since a 21-point rally in 1949 — also against the Cardinals. Arizona blew its biggest lead since 2011.

Dolphins 24, Patriots 17: Raheem Mostert had a pair of TD runs, including a 43-yard romp in the fourth quarter, and Tua Tagovailoa added a 2-yard touchdown pass to Tyreek Hill to help visiting Miami hold off New England.

Mostert carried 18 times for 121 yards and Tagovailoa completed 21 of 30 passes for 249 yards and an interception. Miami has opened with two road wins and will try for its second straight 3-0 start under coach Mike McDaniels when it hosts Denver next weekend.

Cowboys 30, Jets 10: Dak Prescott threw for two touchdowns, Zach Wilson had three interceptions in his first start after Aaron Rodgers' season-ending Achilles tendon injury and host Dallas beat New York.

CeeDee Lamb had 143 yards receiving and Brandon Aubrey kicked five field goals in the 28-year-old rookie's second game as the Cowboys (2-0) finished a season-opening sweep of the New York teams.

49ers 30, Rams 23: Brock Purdy passed for 206 yards and ran for an early touchdown, Deebo Samuel rushed for an 11-yard TD with 11:28 left and visiting San Francisco hung on for its ninth consecutive regular-season victory over Los Angeles.

Christian McCaffrey rushed for 116 yards and a score for the 49ers (2-0), whose only loss to the Rams since December 2018 was

in the NFC championship game in January 2022.

Falcons 25, Packers 24: Younghoe Koo booted a 25-yard field goal with 57 seconds remaining and rookie Bijan Robinson turned in another dynamic performance, rallying host Atlanta past Jordan Love and Green Bay.

Robinson rushed for 124 yards on 19 carries and hauled in four catches for another 48 yards, showing why the Falcons (2-0) selected him No. 8 in the draft even though running backs aren't supposed to go that high anymore.

Bills 38, Raiders 10: Josh Allen rebounded from a four-turnover, season-opening dud by throwing three touchdown passes and host Buffalo routed Las Vegas.

Allen completed his first 13 attempts for 94 yards, and finished 31 of 37 for 274 yards and no turnovers. His 13 consecutive completions to start the game set an individual record and matched his best run at any point of an outing. He improved to 13-4 in games following a loss, and 23-4 when he doesn't turn the ball over.

Buccaneers 27, Bears 17: Baker Mayfield passed for 317 yards and a touchdown, adding to his strong debut with host Tampa Bay to beat Chicago.

With Mayfield playing turnover-free for the second straight week and Mike Evans catching six balls for 171 yards and a TD, the Bucs improved to 2-0 while handing the Bears a franchise-record 12th consecutive loss.

Colts 31, Texans 20: Anthony Richardson rushed for two touchdowns before leaving with a concussion and backup Gardner Minshew threw for 171 yards and a TD as visiting Indianapolis held off Houston.

The Texans' C.J. Stroud, the second overall pick in the draft, threw for 384 yards and two touchdowns. But he was sacked six times and hit nine other times playing behind a line filled with backups.

Nacua's 15 catches sets rookie record

Associated Press

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — With Cooper Kupp sidelined by a hamstring injury, Puka Nacua is picking up the slack for the Los Angeles Rams.

So far, so record-breaking good.

Nacua, a fifth-round pick out of BYU, set the NFL game record for most receptions by a rookie with 15 catches for 147 yards in Sunday's 30-23 loss to the San Francisco 49ers.

"I don't know if I can wrap my head all the way around it," Nacua said. "I'm executing in the moments where I'm asked and try to stay as present as I can."

Nacua broke the record with a 17-yard reception late in the fourth quarter that put the Rams in the red zone and set up a 38-yard field goal by Brett Maher on the game's final play.

The reception surpassed the former mark of 14 held by Washington's Roy Helu, the New York Giants' Saquon Barkley and Pittsburgh's Najee Harris.

Nacua is the fifth player to have double-digit receptions and 100 yards receiving in the first two games of a season, and the first to do it in his first two career games. Isaac Bruce (1998) and Kupp (2022) also did it with the Rams, along with Atlanta's Andre Rison (1994) and Miles Austin with Dallas in 2010.

Nacua was questionable going into Sunday's game after he missed practice Thursday due to rib and oblique injuries on his right side. Despite being less than 100 percent, he was targeted 20 times and averaged 9.8 yards per catch.

Nacua's longest reception was a 20-yarder on a second-quarter drive that ended with Kyren Williams' 6-yard TD catch, tying it at 10. Nacua ran a drive route on third-and-4, and he was able to get separation before he was pushed out of bounds at San Francisco's 34-yard line. Nacua also had a 9-yard catch on a fourth-down play in the fourth quarter to keep a drive alive.

"I thought he played great. He is winning his matchup, doing a great job of separating and catching the ball," said Matthew Stafford, who was 34-for-55 for 307 yards and a touchdown with two interceptions. "If we're in zone, I'm just clicking through progressions. He's on the front side of a few of them and doing a nice job getting catches."

Nacua's 25 receptions are also an overall league mark for a rookie in his first two games. The previous mark was 19 by San Francisco's Earl Cooper in 1980.

"I feel like I'm doing my job when (Stafford) throws the ball my way. It's my job to come down with it and he always makes it super easy," Nacua said.

With Kupp on injured reserve and not able to be activated until Week 5, Nacua will remain a prime target for Stafford.

"The game makes sense to him. Physically and mentally he's tough and works hard," Rams coach Sean McVay said. "He's got great guys to be able to lean on. I think Puka is going to continue to improve. I love Puka."

Alabama out of the top 10 for the first time since 2015

Associated Press

Alabama is out of the top 10 of The Associated Press college football poll for the first time in eight years, falling to No. 13. Georgia remained No. 1 on Sunday.

Georgia received 57 first-place votes in the AP Top 25. Michigan held at No. 2 with two first-place votes. No. 3 Texas flipped spots with No. 4 Florida State.

After scraping by South Florida on Saturday, Alabama (2-1) saw its streak of consecutive AP poll appearances ranked in the top 10 snapped at 128. That was the second-longest such streak in the history of the poll behind Miami's 137 from 1985-93.

The Crimson Tide are out of the top 10 for the first time since Sept. 27, 2015. The Tide dropped out of the top 10 that September after losing at Mississippi but moved back in on Oct. 3 and went on to win a national championship.

Georgia now has the longest active run of top-10 rankings with 37.

The ugly 17-3 win against USF marked Alabama's first game against a non-Power Five conference opponent since 2007 in which the Tide failed to score at least 20 points. In its previous 42 games against non-Power Five opponents, Alabama was unbeaten, with an average margin of victory of 40 points.

The rest of the top 10 included No. 6 Ohio State, No. 7 Penn State, No. 8 Washington, No. 9 Notre Dame and No. 10 Oregon.

The Buckeyes will visit the Fighting Irish next Saturday as the centerpiece of a huge schedule of ranked vs. ranked games.

Poll points

Alabama still has the longest streak in the country of consecutive weeks being ranked at 249.

That's the second-best of all time but still a long way behind

the record. Nebraska, under Tom Osborne, was ranked for 348 straight weeks from 1981-2002.

The next-best active streak behind Alabama belongs to Ohio State at 182, though the Buckeyes were not eligible for the first few regular-season polls of the 2020 season.

Georgia's streak is at 102. Michigan is fourth best at 34 and Utah has the fifth-longest active Top 25 streak at 25.

In and out

Kansas State was the only team to fall out of the ranking this week after losing at Missouri on a 61-yard field goal as time expired.

No. 25 Florida moved back in for the first time since Sept. 24 of last season after upsetting Tennessee.

With the Gators back in the AP Top 25, Florida State, Miami and Florida are all ranked for the first time since Sept. 17,

2017.

Ranked vs. ranked

Doesn't get much better than this slate of games.

No. 6 Ohio State at No. 9 Notre Dame. For the second straight year, it's a top-10 matchup.

No. 15 Ole Miss at No. 13 Alabama. Tide leads series 9-3 when both are ranked.

No. 22 UCLA at No. 11 Utah. The second meeting with both teams ranked. The first was last year.

No. 19 Colorado at No. 10 Oregon. First regular-season meeting with both teams ranked.

No. 14 Oregon State at No. 21 Washington State. The Beavers and Cougars, the Pac-12's left-behinds, have played 98 times but never before when both teams were ranked.

No. 24 Iowa at No. 7 Penn State. Three of the last four meetings came when both were ranked.

Mullins lifts Orioles with sac fly in 11th

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — With the division title still in doubt, it wasn't clear if the Baltimore Orioles would stage a big celebration when they merely clinched a postseason berth.

After a win like this, how could they not?

Cedric Mullins hit a sacrifice fly in the bottom of the 11th inning, and the Orioles edged the Tampa Bay Rays 5-4 on Sunday after both teams clinched spots in the playoffs. Cleveland's win over Texas meant Baltimore and Tampa Bay were both in — but Orioles fans ended up with more to cheer about than just that.

Moments later, Adam Frazier doubled home the tying run in the bottom of the ninth off Pete Fairbanks to send the game to extra innings. That was the first of two occasions when the Orioles tied it while down to their last out. Adley Rutschman hit an RBI single for Baltimore in the 10th.

"That's exactly how we've played all year," Mullins said after his team's major league-leading 47th comeback win. "We pass it off to the next guy, and even if one guy doesn't get through the other guy's going to."

Dodgers 6, Mariners 1: Jason Heyward, Austin Barnes and James Outman homered to lead visiting Los Angeles to a three-game sweep one day after clinching the NL West title.

J.P. Crawford had two hits and

drove in the only run for the Mariners, who have lost seven of nine in the midst of a playoff race.

Marlins 16, Braves 2: Jazz Chisholm Jr. hit a grand slam for the second consecutive game and host Miami routed Atlanta to complete a three-game sweep of the NL East champions.

Jorge Soler, Jake Burger and Nick Fortes also went deep, and Luis Arraez had three hits for the Marlins, who began the day a half-game out of the third NL wild-card spot. It was Miami's first three-game sweep over Atlanta since 2015.

Nationals 2, Brewers 1 (11): Joey Meneses hit a sacrifice fly in the 11th inning and visiting Washington defeated NL Central-leading Milwaukee to prevent a three-game sweep.

With right-hander Thyago Vieira (0-1) on for his second inning of relief in the 11th, automatic runner CJ Abrams advanced to third base on Lane Thomas' flyout and scored on Meneses' third sacrifice fly of the season.

Astros 7, Royals 1: Yordan Alvarez and Jake Meyers homered and Framber Valdez pitched seven strong innings as visiting Houston beat Kansas City.

The Astros salvaged the final game of the series, expanding their AL West lead to 1½ games.

Blue Jays 3, Red Sox 2: Matt Chapman hit a game-ending double off the center-field wall in the ninth inning, lifting host

Toronto over Boston for a three-game sweep.

The sweep of Boston put the Blue Jays back in the postseason picture after they were swept by Texas in a four-game series last week.

Guardians 9, Rangers 2: José Ramírez homered on his 31st birthday to touch off host Cleveland's nine-run outburst in the fourth inning, leading the Guardians to a three-game sweep of playoff-chasing Texas.

Ramírez connected off rookie Cody Bradford (4-2) leading off the fourth and the Guardians kept swinging away. They scored a season-high nine runs on a season-best nine hits — the homer, two doubles and six singles.

Cardinals 6, Phillies 5: Jordan Walker hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning and Paul Goldschmidt drove in three runs to lead host St. Louis over NL wild-card-leading Philadelphia.

St. Louis avoided a season sweep after losing its first five meetings with the Phillies this year.

Diamondbacks 6, Cubs 2: Ketel Marte homered and host Arizona got a fantastic performance from its bullpen as the Diamondbacks defeated Chicago to pass them for the second National League wild-card spot.

The latest victory moved Arizona a half-game ahead of the Cubs for the second NL wild card, while the Cubs fell into a tie

with Miami for the league's final playoff spot.

Giants 11, Rockies 10: Thairo Estrada and Joc Pederson had two hits each in a 10-hit sixth inning as visiting San Francisco opened a nine-run lead, and the Giants hung on to beat Colorado and stop a three-game skid that hurt their wild-card chances.

Twins 4, White Sox 0: Sonny Gray closed on Gerrit Cole for the AL ERA lead, Edouard Julien and Jorge Polanco homered for visiting Minnesota and the AL Central-leading Twins earned their 11th shutout this season.

Mets 8, Reds 4: Pinch-hitter Daniel Vogelbach had a three-run double in the seventh inning, and host New York hurt Cincinnati's wild-card chances.

Pirates 3, Yankees 2: Jason Delay hit a tiebreaking double in the seventh inning that benefited from a fortunate bounce off third base, and host Pittsburgh edged New York to avoid a three-game sweep.

Padres 10, Athletics 1: Juan Soto homered twice, including his first career grand slam, and visiting San Diego won its fourth straight game for the first time this season.

Tigers 5, Angels 3: Los Angeles was assured of its eighth consecutive losing season, falling to visiting Detroit as the Tigers completed a three-game sweep behind two home runs from Jake Rogers in the first three innings.

Columbus coach quits amid probe into viewing players' photos

Associated Press

Mike Babcock, the coach with a Stanley Cup championship and two Olympic gold medals on his résumé, has lost his last two jobs in the NHL.

Last time, it was for losing too many games. This time, it was for his interactions with players that followed a disturbing pattern of past behavior.

Babcock resigned as coach of the Columbus Blue Jackets on Sunday after just two months on the job, less than a week after his

requests for personal photos from players in a bonding effort drew criticism as too invasive.

The team announced Babcock's abrupt departure in the aftermath of an investigation by the NHL Players' Association into his conduct. Pascal Vincent was named Babcock's replacement and signed a two-year contract through the 2024-25 season.

"Our players deserve to be treated with respect in the workplace," NHLPA executive director Marty Walsh said. "Unfortunately,

that was not the case in Columbus. The club's decision to move forward with a new head coach is the appropriate course of action."

Former NHL player Paul Bissonnette reported on his podcast Tuesday that Babcock was asking players to show him photos and projecting them for others to see in an invasion of privacy. Babcock and captain Boone Jenner denied the report, saying it was just a way of the new coach getting to know players. Still, the players union launched a review and updated the league Friday on its findings.