

## Shipbuilder tells Navy it found faulty welds

By **WYATT OLSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

Newport News Shipbuilding has notified the Navy and Department of Justice that welding done on some submarines and aircraft carriers at its shipyard was defective, according to a report Thursday by USNI News.

The faulty welds, which may have been done intentionally, were made on noncritical components on in-service subs and carriers, the report states.

Newport News Shipbuilding, a division of Huntington Ingalls Industries, is the sole maker of carriers for the Navy and one of only two firms that make submarines.

Huntington Ingalls told the Navy that welding not following proper procedure was discovered on new construction and

submarines and on Ford-class aircraft carriers now in service, USNI reported.

The report cited a memo from Nickolas Guertin, assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition, to Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti.

The memo said welders did not follow proper methods in welding certain joints, and it appeared that the faulty work was done intentionally, USNI reported.

The shipbuilder informed the Department of Justice of its findings, the report said.

In a statement to USNI on Thursday, Newport News said its internal reporting discovered that some welds did not meet its quality standards.

“Upon this discovery, we took immediate action to communicate with our customers and regulators, investigate, determine root cause, bound these matters and insert immediate corrective actions to prevent any recurrence of these issues,” the statement read last week.

“HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding is committed to building the highest-quality aircraft carriers and submarines for the U.S. Navy,” the statement continued. “We do not tolerate any conduct that compromises our company’s values and our mission of delivering ships that safeguard our nation and its sailors.”

The Navy said in a statement to USNI on Thursday that “a thorough evaluation is underway to determine the scope” of the problem.

“The safety of our Sailors and our ships is of paramount importance,” the statement read. “We are working closely with industry partners to address this situation and will provide additional information when available.”

America’s shipyards have been grappling for years with a shortage of workers, a problem exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Del Toro, while speaking in April at the Stimson Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank, said supply-chain issues arising from the pandemic had hindered shipyards’ ability to meet delivery schedules for ships.

A bigger problem, however, was the “lack of blue-collar workers that we have in this country,” Del Toro said.

## Israel likely used US-made bombs in key strike, visuals show

*The Washington Post*

Israel probably employed U.S.-made 2,000-pound munitions in its strike that killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, according to a review of visuals released by the Israel Defense Forces. Analysts who examined videos of the strike and its aftermath at The Washington Post’s request said the damage was consistent with the use of multiple 2,000-pound bombs.

Three analysts who reviewed a video shared by the Israeli air force on Saturday said it showed fighter jets carrying multiple 2,000-pound-class bombs, at least some of which were U.S.-made BLU-109s and JDAM guidance kits.

In the video, eight F-15 planes carrying at least 16 2,000-pound bombs take off. “Air force planes eliminating Hasan Nasrallah and the Hezbollah headquarters in

Lebanon,” reads the descriptive text accompanying the video. Photos released by the IDF showed individual planes fitted with at least three and as many as six BLU-109s each.

The warheads are designed to penetrate up to six feet of reinforced concrete, according to Trevor Ball, a former explosive ordnance disposal technician for the U.S. Army.

The attack leveled at least two large buildings and caused heavy damage to an area spanning 1,000 feet, according to photos and videos.

Maj. Gen. Patrick Ryder, a Pentagon spokesman, referred questions about the operation to the IDF. An IDF spokesperson told The Post that “Dozens of munitions hit the target within seconds with very high precision, and this is part of what is required to hit underground sites at this

depth.” They declined to comment further on the strike. U.S. officials have said they received no advance warning from the Israelis about the attack.

“It is a mess of a site,” Ball said of the strike’s aftermath. “It’s possible dozens of 2,000-pound bombs were used,” he added after reviewing new video of a large crater where the two buildings previously stood.

One video, filmed from a window, shows at least four distinct columns rising above the southern Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh. The plumes appear to be dozens of feet wide and high, billowing above the buildings below. Screams are audible in the background.

Warplanes then dropped at least five additional munitions, according to a second video verified by The Post. After they land, a fireball erupts. It was not immedi-

ately clear from the video what munition was used.

“Initial available videos of the strike show that numerous large air-delivered bombs were used,” N.R. Jenzen-Jones, director of Armament Research Services, wrote in a message to The Post. Jenzen-Jones added that the repeated impacts from multiple munitions suggests they were aimed at penetrating a heavily protected space.

This kind of quick succession of munitions is often referred to as “daisy chaining,” a Department of Defense official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to candidly discuss targeting strategy, told The Post. He added that daisy-chaining with 2,000-pound bombs is a common tactic in decapitation strikes: Drop the building with the bunker-buster bombs and then deploy a high-explosive demolition charge.

# 'Rock star' NCO has drug conviction tossed

By JENNIFER H. SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

A Marine senior noncommissioned officer found guilty of using ecstasy was exonerated by a Navy appeals court, which ruled in essence that he is too good for the charge to be true.

Three judges from the U.S. Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals unanimously ruled for Gunnery Sgt. Rory Hirst in a decision earlier this month, even calling his legal argument "the good Marine defense."

"Believe people when they tell you who they are," they wrote in the Sept. 4 ruling, quoting the American poet Maya Angelou, a recipient of the Presi-

dential Medal of Freedom.

The decision overturned Hirst's drug use conviction in an April 2022 court-martial at Camp Pendleton, Calif. He was sentenced to a reduction in rank from E-7 to E-5 and ordered to serve 90 days in jail.

But a Marine described as "Superman" didn't suddenly begin using ecstasy, also known as MDMA, 18 years into his career, the appellate judges decided.

They also cited the testimony of eight fellow Marines, who spoke at the court-martial of Hirst's strong character and feats in combat.

His supporters "weren't just ordinary Marines either," the

judges said, noting that the government in court had called them "stellar" and "truly impressive."

One lieutenant colonel described Hirst's courage under fire during the 30-day battle for Marjah, Afghanistan, in 2010, for which Hirst received a Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal with a "V" device for valor.

The judges also slammed the handling of Hirst's urine sample, which was taken during a unit sweep after the July 4 holiday. In a sweep, every member of the unit is directed to provide a sample for testing.

The substance abuse control

officer sent the sample for testing nearly a month after it was collected, far later than the limit of 48 hours specified in Marine Corps guidelines, according to court filings. Documentation on the whereabouts of the urine sample during that month was also incomplete, according to court documents.

A discrepancy in the paperwork filed with the sample was chalked up to sloppiness by the substance abuse control officer, according to court records.

Furthermore, in a box that contained Hirst's sample, the urine samples of three other Marines had leaked, court documents state.

## US troops to remain in Iraq as anti-ISIS forces shuffle

By MATTHEW ADAMS  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — U.S. troops will remain in Iraq as the two countries agree to a two-phased transition of the American-led mission to defeat the Islamic State, U.S. officials said Friday.

"To be clear, the United States is not withdrawing from Iraq," a U.S. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity told reporters. "This announcement comes after a decade of success from extraordinary international cooperation between coalition partners, Iraqi security forces and the U.S. military in territorially defeating ISIS in the core regions of Iraq and Syria."

The first phase will conclude the anti-ISIS coalition's military mission in Iraq and end the deployment of coalition forces in certain locations in Iraq by September 2025, the U.S. official said. Officials did not say how many troops will remain in Iraq or where they will be stationed.

"We're not going to speak to our

plans concerning specific base locations or troop numbers," said a defense official, who also spoke on the condition of anonymity. "For now, that remains in a planning process and under review."

But U.S. and Iraq officials have agreed to allow coalition troops to continue to support anti-ISIS operations in Syria from Iraq through the second phase of the transition until at least September 2026.

For 10 years, U.S.-led coalition forces have battled ISIS, since the terrorist group launched a blitzkrieg across eastern Syria and into Iraq, capturing massive swaths of both countries, including about one-third of Iraq. Then-President Barack Obama amassed the coalition for an air campaign against ISIS. Later that year, the U.S. began sending forces back into Iraq to train and advise Iraqi military forces to fight off the group. That campaign has continued, despite ISIS fighters having lost almost all their land in Iraq by 2017.

## Navy shoots down barrage of Houthi missiles, drones

By CAITLYN BURCHETT  
*Stars and Stripes*

Navy ships intercepted a Houthi barrage of missiles and drones launched from Yemen at the shipping lanes of the Red Sea, the Pentagon confirmed Friday, while also denying reports that any ships were hit in the attack.

"We did see a complex attack launched from the Houthis that ranged from cruise missiles and [unmanned aerial vehicles]," said Sabrina Singh, deputy press secretary for the Defense Department.

The Iran-backed Houthi claimed Friday to have damaged three U.S. Navy warships in a bombardment of 23 missiles and bomber drones. The Navy destroyers, the Houthis' military spokesperson said in a televised speech, were targeted as they transited the Bab al-Mandeb Strait in the Red Sea. The Bab al-

Mandeb Strait connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, between Yemen.

"My understanding is that those were either engaged and shot down or failed," Singh said, referring to the Houthi missiles and drones.

No U.S. military ships were struck, and there were no injuries to U.S. service members, she also said.

The USS Abraham Lincoln and its carrier strike group are in the region.

The strike group includes three destroyers: USS Spruance, USS Stockdale, and USS O'Kane.

Singh on Friday declined to say whether the destroyers were the intended targets of the Houthi missiles.

"We did what we had to do to protect our forces, and at the end of the day, no ship was hit — no damage and no injuries to our personnel," she said.

# New Chinese nuclear attack sub sank while under construction

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Satellite imagery showed that China's newest nuclear-powered attack submarine sank alongside a pier while under construction, a senior U.S. defense official said Thursday.

The sinking of China's first Zhou-class submarine represents a setback for Beijing as it continues to build out the world's largest navy. Beijing has become increasingly assertive in pursuing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, which is crucial to international trade.

Meanwhile, China faces long-time territorial disputes involving others in the region including Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. The United States has sought to strengthen ties to its allies in the region and regularly sails through those waters in operations it says maintains the freedom of navigation for vessels

there, angering Beijing.

The submarine likely sank between May and June, when satellite images showed cranes that would be necessary to lift it off the bottom of the river, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details about the submarine loss.

China has been building up its naval fleet at a breakneck pace, and the U.S. considers China's rise one of its main future security concerns.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Friday he was not familiar with the topic and did not provide any information when asked about it at a Beijing press conference.

The U.S. official said it was "not surprising" that China's navy would conceal it. The submarine's current status is unknown.

The identification of the sunk nuclear submarine was first reported by The Wall Street Journal. Thomas Shugart, a former

U.S. Navy submariner and an analyst at the Center for a New American Security, first noticed the incident involving the submarine in July, though it wasn't publicly known at the time that it involved the new Zhou-class vessel.

Satellite images from Planet Labs PBC analyzed by The Associated Press show what appears to be a submarine docked at the Shuangliu shipyard on the Yangtze River before the incident.

An image taken June 15 appears to show the submarine either fully or partially submerged just under the river's surface, with rescue equipment and cranes surrounding it. Booms surround it to prevent any oil or other leaks from the vessel.

A satellite image taken Aug. 25 shows a submarine back at the same dock as the submerged vessel. It's not clear if it was the same one.

# S. Korean agency warns of nuke test

By DAVID CHOI

*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — Pyongyang could test a nuclear weapon or launch an intercontinental ballistic missile on the heels of the U.S. presidential election, South Korea's spy agency recently told lawmakers, according to a local media report.

The National Intelligence Service believes North Korea has 154 pounds of plutonium and an unspecified amount of highly enriched uranium to craft nuclear weapons, according to the Yonhap News report, which cited South Korean lawmakers reportedly briefed by the agency.

A show of force by North Korea could be "an attempt to boost confidence among the population amid the extremely dire economic situation," Rep. Lee Seong-Kweun of the ruling People Power Party said in the report.

South Korean national security adviser Shin Won Sik, during a separate televised interview with Yonhap on Monday, said it was "entirely possible" that Pyongyang could conduct a nuclear test around the "time of the U.S. presidential election."

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un can conduct a nuclear test at a time of his choosing, Shin said.

A Sept. 13 report by the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency unveiled a purported uranium enrichment facility at an undisclosed location. Kim at the time said increasing the production of nuclear materials was "necessary for the manufacture of tactical nuclear weapons," according to KCNA.

# F-16 crashed in Yellow Sea due to instrument failure and bad weather

By DAVID CHOI

*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The crash of an Air Force fighter jet off South Korea's western coast last year was due to the loss of instrumentation and poor weather, according to a 7th Air Force news release Friday.

The F-16C Fighting Falcon was over the Yellow Sea on Dec. 11 when it crashed "due to loss of primary flight and navigation instruments during adverse weather conditions," the release states.

The fighter belonged to the 8th Fighter Wing at Kunsan Air Base, 115 miles south of Seoul. The pilot survived the crash al-

though the aircraft was a total loss, according to 7th Air Force.

The Accident Investigation Board found that the F-16's loss of flight and navigation instruments was prompted by the failure of an embedded GPS inertial navigation system.

That system's failure, along with the unidentified pilot's reliance on other indicators that showed inaccurate readings, led to "spatial disorientation," according to the release.

Weather conditions, including dense cloud coverage 13 minutes after takeoff, exacerbated problems that popped up during the flight, the release

said.

Guided by navigation and altitude information from a wingman, the pilot attempted to fly at a lower altitude to find a "cloud-free sky."

However, the "mismatch in data between the standby indicator ... and the wingman's cues resulted in further spatial disorientation" and prompted the pilot's decision to eject over water at 1,730 feet, according to the release.

The pilot was later rescued by the South Korean navy and coast guard and airlifted to Kunsan by a South Korean air force helicopter, 7th Air Force said at the time.

# Hurricane Helene barrels across Southeast

*Associated Press*

PERRY, Fla. — Authorities rushed to airlift supplies and restore communications and roads in flooded Asheville, N.C., on Sunday as residents along the storm-battered Florida coast gathered for church services amid the wreckage of Hurricane Helene.

Massive rains from the powerful Helene left people stranded, without shelter and awaiting rescue around the Southeast. Cleanup continued Sunday from a tempest that killed at least 64 people, caused widespread destruction across the southeastern states and knocked out power to several million people.

As the sun rose over Florida's Big Bend on the Sunday after

Helene battered the region, many houses of worship were still dealing with power outages, damaged roofs and hurricane debris — and the knowledge that many of their congregants are shouldering another hit from a devastating storm.

More than 1,000 miles away in Texas, Jessica Drye Turner begged for someone to rescue her family members stranded on their rooftop in Asheville, surrounded by rising flood waters. "They are watching 18 wheelers and cars floating by," Turner wrote in an urgent Facebook post on Friday.

But in a follow-up message, which became widely circulated on social media on Saturday, Turner said help had not arrived in time to save her par-

ents, both in their 70s, and her 6-year-old nephew. The roof had collapsed and the three drowned.

"I cannot convey in words the sorrow, heartbreak and devastation my sisters and I are going through nor imagine the pain before us," she wrote.

Helene blew ashore in Florida's Big Bend region as a Category 4 hurricane late Thursday with winds of 140 mph.

From there, it quickly moved through Georgia, where Gov. Brian Kemp said Saturday that it "looks like a bomb went off" after viewing splintered homes and debris-covered highways from the air.

Weakened, Helene then soaked the Carolinas and Tennessee with torrential rains,

sending creeks and rivers over their banks and straining dams.

Western North Carolina was isolated because of landslides and flooding that forced the closure of Interstate 40 and other roads. There have been hundreds of water rescues, none more dramatic than in rural Unicoi County in East Tennessee, where dozens of patients and staff were plucked by helicopter from a hospital rooftop Friday. And the rescues continued into the following day in Buncombe County, N.C., where part of Asheville was under water.

The storm was expected to hover over the Tennessee Valley on Saturday and Sunday, the National Hurricane Center said.

## SpaceX launches rescue mission for 2 astronauts

*Associated Press*

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — SpaceX launched a rescue mission for the two stuck astronauts at the International Space Station on Saturday, sending up a downsized crew to bring them home but not until next year.

The capsule rocketed into orbit to fetch the test pilots whose Boeing spacecraft returned to Earth empty earlier this month because of safety concerns. The switch in rides left it to NASA's Nick Hague and Russia's Alexander Gorbunov to retrieve Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams.

Because NASA rotates space station crews approximately every six months, this newly launched flight with two empty seats reserved for Wilmore and Williams won't return until late February. Officials said there wasn't a way to bring them back earlier on SpaceX without interrupting other scheduled missions.

By the time they return, the

pair will have logged more than eight months in space. They expected to be gone just a week when they signed up for Boeing's first astronaut flight that launched in June.

NASA ultimately decided that Boeing's Starliner was too risky after a cascade of thruster troubles and helium leaks marred its trip to the orbiting complex. The space agency cut two astronauts from this SpaceX launch to make room on the Dragon capsule's return leg for Wilmore and Williams.

Wilmore and Williams watched the liftoff via a live link sent to the space station, prompting a cheer of "Go Dragon!" from Williams, NASA deputy program manager Dina Contella said.

Once Hague and Gorbunov arrive on Sunday, four astronauts living there since March can leave in their own SpaceX capsule. Their homecoming was delayed a month by Starliner's turmoil.

## Hundreds rally for injured DODEA football player

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

*Stars and Stripes*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Hundreds of community members are rallying in support for a Kaiserslautern High School football player reported to be in critical but stable condition in a German hospital after experiencing a medical emergency in a Friday game at Stuttgart High School.

Fellow players, coaches, parents, students and school personnel attended a prayer vigil Sunday at KHS Babers Stadium for Aiden Hall.

Hall, a sophomore, was playing center for the Raiders in a junior varsity game against the Panthers when the emergency occurred, said several people at the vigil. Details on how the emergency happened were unavailable Sunday.

Bill Conley, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and the senior aerospace science instructor for the KHS JROTC program, said he visited with

Hall and his family Saturday. Hall, he said, is a second-year JROTC cadet with aspirations of attending one of the service academies after graduation.

"He's in critical but stable condition," Conley said. "Every day, every hour is getting better and better for him."

Hall was rushed to the hospital as his condition progressively worsened, Conley said, after he appeared to be injured.

A spokeswoman for Defense Department schools in Europe confirmed a KHS player "experienced a medical emergency during the game."

"The player received immediate medical attention and was transported to a local hospital," spokeswoman Jessica Tackaberry said in a statement Sunday. "We are in close contact with the family and offer our full support. Our thoughts and prayers are with the players and his family as we hope for a full recovery."

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Tenure revoked from porn-making professor

**WI** MADISON — The University of Wisconsin Board of Regents voted unanimously Friday to revoke the tenure of a former campus chancellor who was fired after making pornography and wanted to remain a communications professor.

Joe Gow, who had served as chancellor of UW-La Crosse for nearly 17 years, argued last week that he should be allowed to retain a teaching position on campus. But university attorneys argued he was unethical, violated terms of his employment contract, damaged the reputation of the university and interfered with its mission.

Gow has said he is considering filing a lawsuit to retain his job.

Gow has been on paid leave from his faculty position since the regents fired him as chancellor in 2023, shortly after university leaders became aware of the videos, which were posted on pornographic websites.

### Nashville DA secretly recorded defense lawyers

**TN** NASHVILLE — Nashville's district attorney secretly recorded defense attorneys, colleagues and other visitors without their knowledge, according to an investigation's findings released Wednesday.

In a scathing report, the Tennessee comptroller's office found that District Attorney Glenn Funk installed an extensive surveillance system for audio and video recordings nearly four years ago. While investiga-

tors say numerous signs were posted that visitors were being filmed, there was only one small warning in an "obscure" place that audio surveillance was also happening.

Despite the common practice, the defense attorneys who spoke with the state investigators said they were largely unaware they were being audio recorded while examining evidence, stating that they often discussed privileged information and defense strategies while in the viewing rooms.

### Gunman hijacks city bus, leads police on chase

**CA** LOS ANGELES — A passenger was killed after a gunman hijacked a city bus in Los Angeles, leading to a slow police chase through downtown before the suspect was eventually arrested, authorities said.

The armed man boarded the Metro bus Wednesday with the driver and two passengers aboard shortly before 1 a.m. in South Los Angeles, according to the Los Angeles Police Department. The department described it as a kidnapping.

Officers approached the bus as it slowly rolled away, and police were in pursuit as the driver drove at gunpoint for the next hour. It does not appear the suspect was ever behind the wheel, police said.

Police deployed spike strips, which punctured one of the tires. After traveling more than 7 miles, the bus eventually came to a stop at a downtown intersection, and the suspect surrendered, officials said.

The bus driver was seen on TV news footage climbing out a bus window.

A man was found inside the bus with gunshot wounds. The victim was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead, ABC 7 reported. The second passenger was not injured.

### Operator of high-end brothels pleads guilty

**MA** BOSTON — A Massachusetts woman accused of operating a high-end brothel network with wealthy and prominent clients in that state and the Washington, D.C., suburbs pleaded guilty in federal court Friday.

Han Lee and two others were indicted earlier this year on one count of conspiracy to persuade, entice, and coerce one or more individuals to travel in interstate or foreign commerce to engage in prostitution and one count of money laundering, according to prosecutors.

James Lee of Torrance, Calif. and Junmyung Lee of Dedham, Mass., also were indicted.

Han Lee initially had entered a not guilty plea. She remained in custody and faces up to 25 years in prison for the two felonies.

Authorities said the commercial sex ring in Massachusetts and northern Virginia catered to politicians, company executives, military officers, lawyers, professors and other well-connected clients.

### Nanny gets \$2.78M over hidden bedroom camera

**NY** NEW YORK — A jury has awarded \$2.78 million to an au pair whose employer used a hidden camera to videotape her while she slept in their New York City home.

The jury in Brooklyn federal court ordered Michael and Da-

nielle Esposito to pay Kelly Andrade \$780,000 for emotional distress and \$2 million in punitive damages for the camera that Michael Esposito had placed over Andrade's bed after she moved in to their Staten Island home to care for their four children.

Andrade noticed over the next few weeks that the smoke detector over her bed was constantly being repositioned. She examined the smoke detector and found a hidden camera with a memory card that contained hundreds of recordings of her nude or getting dressed and undressed, the lawsuit said.

### State sues over listing of lizard as endangered

**TX** AUSTIN — Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced last week that his office is suing the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Biden administration officials for declaring a rare lizard endangered earlier this year.

The dunes sagebrush lizard burrows in the sand dunes in the Mescalero-Monahans ecosystem 30 miles west of Odessa — the same West Texas land that supports the state's biggest oil and gas fields.

For four decades, biologists warned federal regulators about the existential threat that oil and gas exploration and development poses for the reptile's habitat, while industry representatives fought against the designation, saying it would scare off companies interested in drilling in the nation's most lucrative oil and natural gas basin.

— From wire reports

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# No. 4 Alabama knocks off No. 2 Georgia

Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Georgia and Alabama, Jalen Milroe and Carson Beck, put on quite a show even with a different Crimson Tide coach prowling the sideline.

Ryan Williams caught a 75-yard touchdown pass from Milroe with 2:18 left and No. 4 Alabama beat No. 2 Georgia 41-34 on Saturday night in a wild Southeastern Conference debut for Tide coach Kalen DeBoer.

Then, Alabama's other freshman sporting a No. 2 jersey, defensive back Zabien Brown, intercepted Carson Beck's pass in the end zone to secure the victory.

"We pushed each other to the very end," DeBoer said.

That's no surprise with two teams that have battled for SEC and even national supremacy almost annually. It was DeBoer's initiation into a captivating rivalry of SEC powers that added another memorable chapter, even without Nick Saban on the sideline opposite protégé Kirby Smart of Georgia.

The postgame message from DeBoer wasn't all that different.

"We expect to win these games," he said. "Of course the

locker room is full of excitement, but I also want to make sure they realize that's the expectation. There's a lot of season left."

The dynamic 17-year-old Williams turned back to grab Milroe's deep pass in tight coverage, did a quick spin and sprinted down the right sideline. Milroe then hit Germie Bernard for the 2-point conversion for the Tide (4-0, 1-0).

"I did a spin move and it was like in slow motion," Williams said. "It looked faster on the screen."

It was fast enough.

The long TD pass came one play and 13 seconds after Carson Beck's 67-yard bomb to Dillon Bell gave the Bulldogs (3-1, 1-1) their first lead of the game.

A rematch of last season's SEC Championship Game, also won by Alabama, turned into a scintillating quarterback duel.

Milroe completed 27 of 33 passes for 374 yards with two touchdowns and an interception that bounced off the receiver. He also ran for 117 yards and a pair of TDs. Williams had six catches for 177 yards.

Beck was 27-for-50 passing for 439 yards with three touch-

downs. He also threw three interceptions in the first multi-interception game of his career, but put on a show in the second half.

Beck is 16-2 as a starter with both losses coming to the Tide.

The Bulldogs scored three touchdowns over the final 9:46. Alabama got the only one it needed.

Milroe led Alabama to touchdowns on its first four drives against a defense that stood as the only one in FBS not to allow one coming into the game.

"Obviously we were not really prepared, and that falls on me in the first half," said Smart, who is just 1-6 against Alabama while dominating almost everyone else.

The Bulldogs were down 28-0 a few minutes into the second quarter, their streaks of 42 consecutive regular-season victories and 28 straight regular-season SEC wins seemingly all but over by halftime.

Georgia and Beck fought back instead of folding.

"The first half, we played terrible," Beck said. "I don't think we need to watch the film to go see that we didn't play our best. You know, that starts with me.

I've got to be better.

"But I'm happy about how we fought, we brought it all the way back and took the lead, just weren't able to close it out."

## The takeaway

Georgia: Has looked vulnerable for a program that has won two of the last three national titles in the last two games, including a 13-12 victory over Kentucky. But the Bulldogs showed they haven't gone anywhere with the dominant second half.

Alabama: The Tide have so far shown no signs of slippage under DeBoer, especially offensively, rolling on the road against Wisconsin and surviving at home against their recent SEC nemesis.

## Poll implications

Alabama will jump at least one spot in the AP poll. The Bulldogs' second-half play probably means they won't fall far.

## Fourth downs

Georgia went for it five times on fourth down and made them all. That helped make up from a 3-of-15 performance on third down.

# Horvath, Midshipmen trounce UAB, improve to 4-0

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Blake Horvath threw two long touchdown passes and led Navy's potent ground game with 84 yards rushing in a 41-18 victory over UAB on Saturday.

With the win, Navy improved to 4-0 overall and 3-0 in the American Athletic Conference for the first time since 2017.

Horvath had a 20-yard touchdown run for the game's first score. Later, his 77-yard pass to Nathan Kent made it 21-3 with 31 seconds left in the first half. Kent tracked down a deep throw and raced the final 35 yards untouched for the score.

On the first possession of the third quarter, Horvath connected with Eli Heidenreich on a 74-yard pass play that made it 28-3.

The Midshipmen led 31-3 before UAB found the end zone when Jacob Zeno threw to Iverson Hooks for a 39-yard touchdown that made it 31-10 with about 5 minutes left in the third.

Daba Fofana ran 16 yards for a Navy touchdown early in the fourth quarter and Lee Beebe Jr.'s 2-yard run for UAB made it 38-18 with about 9 minutes remaining in the game.

Horvath completed 9 of 11 passes for 225 yards with the two touchdowns. Navy's ground

total was nearly the same, with 227 yards on 42 carries.

Zeno was 14-for-22 passing for 202 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions. Beebe added 82 yards on 15 carries. The Blazers (1-3, 0-1) had 193 yards rushing.

**Wyoming 31, Air Force 14:** Quarterback Evan Svoboda ran for three touchdowns and the host Cowboys collected their first victory of the season by beating the Falcons.

Svoboda ran for an 8-yard score in the first quarter, and his 1-yard touchdown run gave Wyoming a 14-13 lead early in the third quarter. Svoboda

broke loose on a 17-yard TD run to cap the scoring with 2:13 remaining.

Svoboda finished 15-for-21 passing for 165 yards with 70 yards rushing on 12 carries.

Sam Scott carried the ball 19 times for 97 yards that included an 8-yard touchdown run for Wyoming (1-4, 1-0 Mountain West Conference). Tyler King also scored on a 3-yard run.

Aiden Calvert and Kade Few combined for 106 yards rushing on 10 carries and two touchdowns for Air Force (1-3, 0-2). Calvert's 37-yard scoring run pulled the Falcons to 24-19 with 7:00 left.

# Kentucky gets late TD, upsets Ole Miss

Associated Press

OXFORD, Miss. — Kentucky dragged another highly ranked opponent into the muck, and this time coach Mark Stoops and the Wildcats closed the deal.

Kentucky upset No. 6 Mississippi 20-17 on Saturday, when Rebels kicker Caden Davis hooked a 48-yard field-goal attempt way wide with 48 seconds left in the fourth quarter to give the Wildcats their highest-ranked win of Stoops' 12-year career.

"It was our kind of game. A dirty, ugly, hard-fought game," Stoops said. "We went out and did what we had to do. We played our way. I know it's only one game, but it was a very important game for us. Obviously, I could not be more proud of this team."

The Rebels (4-1, 0-1 South-eastern Conference) had a seven-game winning streak snapped and were shocked as 15½-point favorites, according to BetMGM Sportsbook, in

their SEC opener.

"Beyond disappointing. It's a disappointing day," Mississippi coach Lane Kiffin said. "The game comes down at the end with us having a chance to win in every phase and we didn't do it. Got to give credit to Stoops."

The Wildcats (3-2, 1-2) took a three-point lead with 2:25 left in the fourth quarter, with a little fumble luck. Backup quarterback Gavin Wimsatt was heading toward the goal line with a keeper when an Ole Miss defender knocked the ball free — right to tight end Josh Kattus, who fell into the end zone.

Two weeks after Stoops faced criticism for not being aggressive enough late in the game on fourth down in a 13-12 loss to then-No. 1 Georgia, the Wildcats' go-ahead drive was kept alive with a 63-yard completion from Brock Vandagriff to Barrion Brown on fourth-and-7 at the Kentucky 20.

Vandagriff passed for 243 yards and a touchdown, helping Kentucky play keep-away from

the Rebels' high-powered offense. The Wildcats held the ball for nearly 40 minutes.

Jaxson Dart converted a fourth-and-11 with a 42-yard pass to Caden Prieskorn on the Rebels' final drive, but two plays later, Dart took a sack that sent Ole Miss the wrong way as it tried to get in field-goal range.

Davis' potential tying kick came on a fourth-and-7.

Dart finished with 261 yards passing, but after Ole Miss averaged 55 points against overmatched nonconference opponents, the Rebels found the end zone only once after an opening drive touchdown.

Tre Harris led the Rebels with 11 receptions for 176 yards, including a 48-yard touchdown that gave them a 17-13 lead.

## The takeaway

**Kentucky:** The combination of winning the turnover battle (1-0), effectiveness in the red zone (3 for 3) and converting on fourth down (3 for 3) proved to

be the difference. The defense has given up only 36 points in the last three games.

"On the critical downs, we made the critical plays," Stoops said. "We were not sloppy, we got a turnover and we've gotten better every week."

**Mississippi:** A season of high expectations, spurred by a star-studded transfer portal class, already has hit a bump. Ole Miss will need a strong October bounceback against a schedule that includes three road games and home dates with No. 21 Oklahoma and No. 2 Georgia.

## Big-play defense

The Kentucky defense limited Ole Miss to season lows in nearly every statistical categories, allowing 353 total yards. The Wildcats had seven tackles for loss, four sacks and held the Rebels to 1 of 10 on third down.

"Our coaches have preached consistency and we really had a lot of confidence coming into this game," said Octavious Oxendine, who had two sacks.

# Singleton, Allen help No. 9 Penn State edge Illinois

Associated Press

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — James Franklin asked Penn State fans to bring White-Out energy into Beaver Stadium on Saturday night.

They didn't let him down, wearing white, painting their faces and shaking pom poms to help rally the Nittany Lions in their Big Ten opener.

Nick Singleton ran for 102 yards and a touchdown, Kaytron Allen added 94 yards and a score and No. 9 Penn State pulled away in the second half to beat No. 19 Illinois 21-7.

Penn State (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) took a 14-7 lead on Singleton's 4-yard touchdown run on its opening second-half possession. The Nittany Lions then went into lockdown mode as 109,911 fans

all clad in white helped shut down what had been a surging Illinois offense.

"That was a phenomenal environment," Franklin said. "We thought the fans had several impacts on the game, whether it was timeouts, false starts, penalties or bad snaps."

The Nittany Lions' defense was there to capitalize. Penn State forced four punts, recovered a fumble and A.J. Harris intercepted Luke Altmyer's pass late in the fourth quarter.

After scoring easily on their opening drive, the Illini (4-1, 1-1) managed just 25 rushing yards the rest of the way. They were tackled 13 times behind the line of scrimmage and allowed seven sacks.

Both teams scored on their

first possessions before sputtering for the rest of the first half.

The Illini calmly marched 75 yards through the lingering smoke of pregame fireworks, converting a pair of third downs and getting help from a late hit to set up Altmyer's 4-yard touchdown pass to Carson Goda.

The Nittany Lions needed just eight plays over 4:02 to pull even. After big runs from quarterback Drew Allar and Singleton, tight end Tyler Warren leaped over the line of scrimmage from 3 yards out.

Penn State drove into Illinois territory again late in the second quarter, but stalled out at the 23 and Sander Sahaydak missed a 40-yard field goal.

Illinois botched its best shot to retake the lead moments later.

Having directed his offense down to Penn State's 2, Altmyer had to retreat as the first-down snap sailed over his head. He then lost 3 yards on a keeper before he was sacked and called for intentional grounding on third down.

With the noise swelling, the Illini jumped early on their field-goal try and kicker David Olano missed on the retry from 45 yards. It was one of five pre-snap penalties by the Illini on the night.

"Some moments that we could've capitalized on just didn't happen," Illinois coach Bret Bielema said. "You can't beat the No. 9 team in the country having a first-and-goal at the 2 and come away with zero points. It doesn't add up."

# Mets shut out but keep last wild card

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Joey Ortiz drove in three runs for Milwaukee and the New York Mets mustered just two hits as their playoff hopes sustained another blow with a 6-0 loss to the Brewers on Saturday night.

New York (87-72) lost its third straight and fell one game behind the Braves (88-71) in the NL wild card race when Atlanta beat Kansas City 2-1 on a ninth-inning, walk-off homer from former Met Travis d'Arnaud.

The Mets did get some help later Saturday night when the Diamondbacks lost 5-0 to the Padres. New York, Atlanta and Arizona (88-73) are competing for the NL's final two wild-card playoff berths.

"It's a really short runway, but we do have three games, and three games are opportunities for us," Mets first baseman Pete Alonso said. "In order for us to get where we need to go, we need to capitalize on opportunities."

Both New York and Atlanta have head-to-head tiebreaker advantages over the Diamondbacks. The Mets and Braves would play a Monday double-header in Atlanta if their postseason fates haven't been settled.

**Braves 2, Royals 1:** Travis d'Arnaud hit a walk-off homer in the ninth inning and host Atlanta kept up its postseason push with a win over playoff-bound Kansas City.

Reynaldo López came off the injured list to throw six strong innings for the Braves, who moved one game ahead of the New York Mets and a half-game in front of Arizona for the final two wild-card spots in the National League. The Mets lost 6-0 at Milwaukee and the Diamondbacks were hosting San Diego.

**Padres 5, Diamondbacks 0:** Kyle Higashioka, Brandon Lockridge and Donovan Solano homered in the ninth inning, lifting visiting San Diego to a win

over Arizona, which continued to lose ground in the National League playoff race.

The Diamondbacks have lost five of six as they chase a wild card. They were behind the Braves and Met going into their season finale Sunday.

**Dodgers 13, Rockies 2:** Shohei Ohtani had two hits and raised his average to .310 in his bid to overtake batting leader Luis Arraez and become the National League's first Triple Crown winner since 1937, helping playoff-bound Los Angeles beat host Colorado.

Ohtani went 2-for-5 and closed within four points of Arraez, who got a night off from San Diego and was hitting .314 going into the regular season's final day.

**Pirates 9, Yankees 4:** Paul Skenes pitched two perfect innings in his Yankee Stadium debut and Pittsburgh hit five homers, including four off rookie Luis Gil, in a win that delayed New York clinching home-field advantage throughout the American League playoffs. The Yankees later clinched when the Guardians lost to the Astros.

Yasmani Grandal and Nick Gonzales hit solo homers in the first four innings off Gil (15-7). Rookie Billy Cook in the fifth and Jared Triolo in the sixth added two-run drives. Nick Yorke hit a two-run homer in the ninth against Will Warren.

**Astros 4, Guardians 3:** Justin Verlander gave up three runs in six innings for his 262nd victory and AL West champion Houston beat host Cleveland.

José Ramírez hit his 39th homer, stole his 41st base and drove in three runs for the AL Central champion Guardians, moving within one home run of becoming the seventh player in major league history with 40 home runs and 40 stolen bases in a season.

**White Sox 4, Tigers 0:** Sean Burke pitched two-hit ball over five innings, Andrew Benintendi

di tied his career high with his 20th homer and visiting Chicago beat playoff-bound Detroit to stay at 121 losses going into its season finale.

Making his fourth big league appearance, Burke (2-0) struck out six and walked three, helping stop Detroit's six-game winning streak.

**Cubs 3, Reds 0:** Kyle Hendricks waved to appreciative fans after what may have been his final start for the Cubs, and host Chicago beat Cincinnati.

Hendricks allowed only a pair of singles, one an infield hit, and walked two over 7½ innings. The 34-year-old right-hander struck out two and retired 11 in a row in one stretch. He has pitched for the Cubs his entire career since 2014 and is the last remaining member of the 2016 championship team, but is set to hit free agency this offseason.

**Nationals 6, Phillies 3:** Philadelphia lost to host Washington, who got a three-run homer from Joey Gallo in a four-run eighth-inning.

James Wood hit a two-run, opposite-field homer in the sixth off Zack Wheeler, who finished 16-7 with a 2.57 ERA after allowing three hits in 6½ innings while tying his season high with 11 strikeouts.

**Orioles 9, Twins 2:** Emmanuel Rivera went 4 for 4 with two homers and four RBIs to lead visiting Baltimore to a win over Minnesota.

Ryan O'Hearn also homered and Jackson Holliday added three hits for the Orioles, who have clinched the top wild card in the American League and will face either the Kansas City Royals or Detroit Tigers in the first round of the playoffs.

**Giants 6, Cardinals 5:** Tyler Fitzgerald reached on an infield single and scored the eventual winning run in the eighth inning on a throwing error by St. Louis pitcher Matthew Liberatore, leading host San Francisco to a win over the Cardinals.

The Cardinals rallied with three runs in the seventh inning to tie the game at 5. In the bottom of the eighth, Fitzgerald singled off the leg of Liberatore (3-4). He wound up scoring when Brett Wisley dropped down a two-out bunt that Liberatore fielded and threw into foul territory beyond first base.

**Marlins 8, Blue Jays 1:** Dane Myers hit a three-run homer and finished with a career-high five RBIs, Griffin Conine had three hits and an RBI and visiting Miami claimed a series against Toronto for the first time since 2009 with a victory.

Myers was activated off the 60-day injured list Tuesday. He fractured his left ankle when he kicked a door out of frustration after being ejected in a 10-6 loss at Cincinnati on July 13.

**Rays 7, Red Sox 2:** Kutter Crawford allowed his major league-high 34th home run, a go-ahead drive by Junior Caminero, and took his big league-worst 16th loss when visiting Tampa Bay beat Boston.

Caminero had three RBIs for the Rays (80-81), who with a series sweep would avoid their first losing season since 2017.

**Mariners 7, Athletics 6 (10):** Leo Rivas scored on Justin Turner's fielder's choice grounder to lift host Seattle over Oakland.

Pinch-runner Rivas avoided Shea Langeliers' tag attempt at the plate with a wide slide, giving Seattle its 11th victory in its final at-bat of the season.

**Rangers 9, Angels 8:** Jonathan Ornelas had a two-run single in visiting Texas' four-run ninth inning and the Rangers scored six times in the final two innings to beat Los Angeles.

Nathaniel Lowe had a home run among his three hits and drove in three runs, including one on a bases-loaded walk for the Rangers' first run of the ninth. Dane Dunning (5-7) pitched a scoreless inning for the win and Kirby Yates earned his 33rd save.