

## New rules limit off-base drinking in Japan

By BRIAN McELHINEY  
AND ALEX WILSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

A new liberty order, promised two months ago by the top U.S. commander in Japan following alleged cases of sexual assault and attempted sexual assault by U.S. troops, takes effect Tuesday.

The order from U.S. Forces Japan bans early morning drinking in off-base establishments for all service members and spreads responsibility to every service member for policing one another's conduct, according to a copy of the order obtained Monday by Stars and Stripes.

"Servicemembers should make every reasonable effort to prevent inappropriate or illegal activities by other Servicemembers," the order states. "If Servicemembers are aware of such

misconduct, they are to directly report such misconduct to their chain of command or other appropriate organization/office as soon as possible to do so."

The order, signed by USFJ commander Air Force Lt. Gen. Ricky Rupp, takes effect Tuesday, eight days before he hands over the command to his successor, Air Force Lt. Gen. Stephen Jost.

Rupp, in a public message on July 22, said liberty policies were under review for all service branches in Japan after charges of sexual assault and attempted sexual assault were filed that month by Okinawa prosecutors against two service members in unrelated cases.

"The new Liberty Order applies consistent policies and expectations across the force and throughout Japan, yet commanders at echelon retain the

authority to strengthen their liberty policy, when appropriate, to meet mission requirements," USFJ spokesman Col. Greg Hignite told Stars and Stripes by email Monday.

Under the new regulations, no U.S. service member in Japan is permitted inside an off-base bar or "drinking establishment" between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.

The order defines a drinking establishment as a business that may serve food or have other forms of entertainment, but "whose primary function is serving alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises."

Pubs, taverns, nightclubs and izakayas fall into this category, according to the order.

Additionally, all military personnel 19 years and younger, including those in Japan on temporary or detached duty, on

leave or on a pass, must be off the streets between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m., the order states. They must be on a U.S. military installation or in an off-base home or lodging. They may also be in transit to an appropriate destination.

All service members, regardless of age, are barred from public consumption of alcohol outside a military base between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. on any day, including holidays, other than inside a home, quarters or hotel room, the order states.

No service member may be physically present in an off-base drinking establishment during those hours.

Leaders at all levels are expected to set an example and conduct themselves with proper decorum, to include responsible use of alcohol, according to Rupp's order.

## Supplies rushed to isolated communities after Helene

*Associated Press*

ASHEVILLE, N.C. — Desperate residents isolated by washed out roads and the lack of power and cellular service in western North Carolina lined up for fresh water Monday, days after Hurricane Helene ripped through the Southeastern U.S. and killed more than 100 people.

Government officials and aid groups were working to bring basic supplies by airlift and truck to the hard-hit tourism hub of Asheville and surrounding mountain towns.

At least 120 people in six states were killed as the death toll climbed Monday and a clearer picture emerged of the devastation stretching from Florida's Gulf Coast to the Ap-

palachian Mountains in Virginia. The North Carolina county that includes Asheville reported at least 35 people killed. Georgia's death count was raised Monday from 17 to 25.

North Carolina's governor, Roy Cooper, predicted the toll would rise as rescuers and other emergency workers reached areas isolated by collapsed roads, failing infrastructure and widespread flooding.

Asheville's water system was severely damaged, forcing residents to carry buckets to a creek to get water to flush toilets. They carefully watched their steps where a wall of water had ripped away all of the trees and ground, leaving only mud.

Officials warned that rebuild-

ing from the widespread loss of homes and property would be lengthy and difficult.

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials said Monday that hundreds of roads were closed across western North Carolina and that shelters were housing more than 1,000 people.

Cooper implored area residents to avoid travel for their own safety and to keep the roads clear for emergency vehicles. More than 50 search teams spread throughout the region in search of stranded people.

One rescue effort involved saving 41 people north of Asheville. The teams found people through 911 calls and social media messages, North Carolina National Guard Adjutant

General Todd Hunt said.

Video showed a mass of debris, including overturned pontoon boats and splintered wooden docks, covering the surface of Lake Lure, a picturesque spot tucked between the mountains outside Asheville.

President Joe Biden said Monday that the federal government would be with survivors and others in the nation's southeast affected by Helene "as long as it takes."

He expects to ask Congress for additional money for disaster assistance and intends to travel to North Carolina later this week when his presence wouldn't divert from live-saving search-and-rescue missions.

# Navy destroyers in Indo-Pacific take part in multinational training

BY ALEX WILSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer took part in a joint exercise alongside Australian, Japanese, New Zealand and Philippine forces in the South China Sea over the weekend.

U.S., Japanese and Australian ships also trained together off the coast of northeastern Australia. The USS Howard, homeported in Yokosuka, joined allied warships for a “maritime cooperative activity” in an undisclosed area of the South China Sea on Saturday, the U.S. 7th Fleet said in a Sunday news release.

The exercise included surface operations, deck landings, search and rescue and “hoist-

ing,” according to the release.

The training demonstrated the allies’ commitment to a “free and open Indo-Pacific and building our operational skill-sets in one of the most dynamic maritime regions in the world,” 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Fred Kacher said in the news release.

The Howard joined the Australian light cruiser HMAS Sydney and a P-8A Poseidon surveillance aircraft, the Japanese destroyer JS Sazanami, the New Zealand auxiliary ship HMNZS Aotearoa and the Philippine guided-missile frigate BRP Antonio Luna and corvette BRP Emilio Jacinto.

Meanwhile, the guided-missile destroyer USS Dewey, also homeported at Yokosuka, joined the Australian frigate

HMAS Stewart and Japanese destroyer JS Ariake for a six-day exercise in the Timor Sea between Sept. 23 and Saturday, according to a separate news release from 7th Fleet on Sunday.

The ships trained in formation sailing, combined communication, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare, electronic warfare, a replenishment-at-sea and subject matter exchanges.

“Our relationships with Australia and Japan are a cornerstone of security in the Indo-Pacific,” Kacher said in the news release.

Seventh Fleet acknowledged Stars and Stripes’ request for additional information on both exercises Monday morning but did not respond as of Monday evening.

## Navy seeks to increase training in Hawaii

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The Navy intends to significantly increase the level of training on Kauai and an uninhabited island that would exponentially step up the tempo of missile and rocket launches, amphibious and drone operations and airport use by helicopters by the joint force.

The Navy laid out its plans for the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai in a draft environmental assessment issued in August.

The plan would increase the frequency of 13 types of training and testing activities that take place on the Barking Sands installation on Kauai and on Kaula, an uninhabited Hawaiian island to the southwest.

Barking Sands lies on a coastal strip on the west side of Kauai and is part of a missile range with an operational area that includes more than 1,100 square miles of underwater range and more than 42,000 square miles of controlled airspace, according to the Navy.

The range is capable of simultaneously supporting surface, underwater, air and space operations.

The Missile Defense Agency routinely uses the range for testing ballistic missile prototypes.

Under its proposed plan, the Navy would continue using the range as it has in the past but increase training and testing conducted by the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and the Missile Defense Agency.

## Whistleblowers: Company shipped substandard parts for F-35 fighter jets

*Tribune News Service*

Two former employees are suing an Oregon-based aerospace company, alleging it supplied substandard parts to defense contractors for installation in the U.S. military’s F-35 fighter jets.

Selmet Inc. in Albany allegedly falsified records and shipped improperly inspected and poorly finished plane parts to customers to meet production quotas and deadlines, the ex-employees say in the federal suit filed in Eugene.

The company fired one of the two workers and pushed the other out by offering him a lower-level job after they both repeatedly reported the al-

leged fraud to their supervisors, the suit alleges.

The F-35s are built with stealth technology for bombing and strafing ground targets and reconnaissance. Selmet is the major subcontractor for engine exhaust nozzle parts and Pratt & Whitney is the government’s primary contractor for the engines, according to court records.

“Imagine a pilot going in to drop bombs — and his thrusters go out because we didn’t do our work properly,” former inspector Stephen Cardwell would frequently say in front of co-workers when raising concerns internally, according to the suit.

A judge recently unsealed the whistleblower complaint against Selmet. It was originally filed in 2020.

The U.S. government is continuing to investigate the claims and notified the court in August that it hasn’t yet decided whether to intervene on behalf of the two whistleblowers, according to court documents.

The complaint accuses the manufacturer of violating the False Claims Act. False Claims Act litigants can sue on behalf of the government and be rewarded up to 25% of any settlement if the government intervenes and up to 30% if the government decides not to intervene.

# Why Tuesday's VP debate matters

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Tim Walz and JD Vance might have the chance to reshape the political landscape Tuesday in their first and only debate.

Vice presidential picks have traditionally taken on the role of political attack dog, laying into opponents so that their running mate can appear above the political fray. That's generally been less true since former President Donald Trump scrambled political norms.

But Walz, the Democratic governor of Minnesota, made it to national prominence by labeling rival Republicans "weird." Vance, the Republican junior senator from Ohio, has torn into Vice President Kamala Harris' party on immigration, notably by spreading a false story about Haitian immigrants in his home state that Trump then cited during his own debate with Harris.

Here's a look at past vice presidential debates — and the larger role of the office Walz and Vance are both seeking.

■ **What is the vice president's job?** The vice president presides over the Senate and is empowered to break ties, as Harris has done a record 33 times. She exceeded the

previous high mark last year, which had held since John C. Calhoun was vice president from 1825 to 1832. The officeholder also presides ceremonially in Congress over the certification of electoral results, which Vice President Mike Pence did even after a mob of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, in a bid to halt the process and transition of power, with some chanting, "Hang Mike Pence!"

But the vice president's main job is to be ready to take over if something happens to the president. Nine have done so following a president's death or departure from office — the last being Gerald Ford, who became president when Richard Nixon resigned in 1974.

■ **Memorable vice presidential debates featured Stockdale, Palin.** In 1992, Adm. James Stockdale, running mate of third-party candidate Ross Perot, was going for breezy but seemed befuddled when he opened the debate by saying, "Who am I? Why am I here?" His later response to a question, "I didn't have my hearing aid turned up," only reinforced that perception.

The debate between No. 2s was highly anticipated in 2008 after Republican Arizona

Sen. John McCain selected Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin as his running mate and saw a bump in the polls. But her showdown with then-Delaware Sen. Joe Biden is best remembered for Palin approaching him before the start and saying, "Can I call you Joe?" That was Palin attempting to keep from mistakenly calling her opponent "O'Biden," conflating Biden's name with that of his running mate, then-Illinois Sen. Barack Obama.

■ **Will the debate affect the campaign?** A nominee's choice of No. 2 has historically made little Election Day difference. This year could be different.

Historical analysis by Mark P. Jones, a political science professor at Rice University in Houston, suggests that voters aren't really swayed by a candidate's running mate. Even the idea of using a pick to balance a ticket — like pairing the first major party nominee who is a woman of color with a white male in the case of Harris selecting Walz — may also be overstated.

"The evidence we have is that they're really voting for the presidential nominee," Jones said of Americans through the decades.

## Harris rebuts Trump on size of her crowds

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Vice President Kamala Harris poked at Donald Trump over crowd sizes, his refusal to debate again and his privileged background on Sunday as she hauled in campaign cash in California and held a raucous rally at the same Nevada venue where the Republican nominee had appeared just two weeks ago.

During the presidential debate, Harris appeared to get under the former president's skin when she said people were leaving his rallies early because of his rambling speeches.

And she's kept it up on the campaign trail.

The vice president told donors at a tony Los Angeles fundraiser that, as she campaigns around the country, her "crowds are pretty big."

And then before a roaring Las Vegas crowd estimated at 7,500, she renewed her jabs at Trump over being reluctant to debate again, saying, "The American people have a right to hear us discuss the issues. And as you say here in Las Vegas, I'm all in. I'm all in."

Harris' four-day West Coast trip had dual purposes: She opened and closed it with

stops in Sun Belt battlegrounds — Arizona and Nevada — where the vice president is trying to shore up support as Trump pounds her relentlessly over illegal migration.

And her mid-stay in California was devoted to hauling in campaign contributions from donors in her blue home state.

Harris also moved into what Trump considers his terrain — immigration — with a Friday visit to the border town of Douglas, Ariz. It was her first trip to the U.S.-Mexico border since taking over for President Joe Biden atop the Democratic presidential ticket.

## Trump escalates attacks on Harris' mental fitness

Associated Press

ERIE, Pa. — Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump escalated his personal attacks on his Democratic rival, Kamala Harris, on Sunday by repeating an insult that she was "mentally impaired" while also saying she should be "impeached and

prosecuted."

Trump's rally in Erie, Pa., took on similar themes as an event one day earlier that he himself described as a "dark speech." He told a cheering crowd Sunday that Harris was responsible for an "invasion" at the U.S.-Mexico border and "she should be im-

peached and prosecuted for her actions."

"Crooked Joe Biden became mentally impaired," he added. "Sad. But lying Kamala Harris, honestly, I believe she was born that way. There's something wrong with Kamala. And I just don't know what it is, but there is definitely something missing."



# Acting Hezbollah leader vows to fight on

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Hezbollah's acting leader vowed Monday to keep battling Israel and said the Lebanese militant group was prepared for a long fight even after much of its top command was wiped out, including its leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

Israeli strikes have killed Nasrallah and six of his top commanders and officials in the last 10 days, and have hit what the military says are thousands of militant targets across large parts of Lebanon. Over 1,000 people have been killed in the country in the past two weeks, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry.

Early Monday, an airstrike hit a residential building in central Beirut, wiping out one apartment, damaging others, and killing three Palestinian militants, as Israel appeared to send a clear message that no part of Lebanon is out of bounds.

Later Monday, Israel launched small ground raids against Hezbollah as it prepares for a larger ground operation in Lebanon, officials said.

A U.S. official said Israel has informed the U.S. about the raids that are underway and that Israel has not provided timing on plans for a larger operation. The U.S. has not told Israel to halt all of its operations in Lebanon and wouldn't do so as Washington

supports Israel's right to defend itself, according to the official.

A Western official, a diplomat in Cairo whose country is directly involved in de-escalation efforts, said an Israeli ground operation in Lebanon is "imminent." The diplomat said Israel has shared its plans with the United States and other Western allies and that the operation will "be limited."

Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation. It was not clear if Israel had made a final decision on a broader operation. The Israeli military did not comment.

Despite the heavy blow Hezbollah has suffered in recent

weeks, acting leader Naim Kassem said in a televised statement that if Israel decides to launch a ground offensive, the group's fighters are ready. He said the commanders killed have already been replaced.

"Israel was not able to affect our (military) capabilities," Kassem said in a televised statement, the first time any senior Hezbollah figure has been seen since Nasrallah was killed.

He added that Hezbollah, which fought Israel to a stalemate in their monthlong war in 2006, anticipated "the battle could be long."

Kassem will remain in his acting position until the group's leadership elects a replacement.

## Russian missiles, drones target 11 Ukrainian regions

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia fired missiles and drones at 11 regions of Ukraine, the Ukrainian air force said Monday, in a 33rd consecutive night of aerial attacks behind the front line and set a new monthly record of drone barrages.

In Kyiv, multiple explosions and machine gun fire could be

heard throughout the night as the Ukrainian capital's air defenses fought off a drone attack for five hours.

No casualties were reported in Kyiv or elsewhere.

Russia has increasingly deployed Shahed drones, rather than more expensive missiles, in its aerial bombardment of Ukrainian cities since its full-scale

invasion of its neighbor in February 2022.

It launched more than 1,300 Shahed drones at Ukraine in September alone — the highest number of drone attacks in a single month since the war began.

Ukraine, too, has developed a new generation of drones for the battlefield and for long-range strikes deep inside Russia. More

than 100 Ukrainian drones were shot down over Russia on Sunday, Russian officials said.

Also Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin released a video marking the second anniversary of the annexation of four Ukrainian territories and again accused the West of turning Ukraine into "a military base aimed at Russia."

## Austria's Freedom Party secures victory in election

Associated Press

VIENNA — The Freedom Party secured the first far-right national parliamentary election victory in post-World War II Austria on Sunday, finishing ahead of the governing conservatives after tapping into anxieties about immigration, inflation, Ukraine and other issues. But its chances of governing were unclear.

Preliminary official results showed the Freedom Party finishing first with 29.2% of the vote and Chancellor Karl Nehammer's Austrian People's Party was second with 26.5%. The cen-

ter-left Social Democrats were in third place with 21%. The outgoing government — a coalition of Nehammer's party and the environmentalist Greens — lost its majority in the lower house of parliament.

Herbert Kickl, a former interior minister and longtime campaign strategist who has led the Freedom Party since 2021, wants to be chancellor.

But to become Austria's new leader, he would need a coalition partner to command a parliamentary majority. Rivals have said they won't work with Kickl in government.

The far right has benefited from frustration over high inflation, the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also built on worries about migration.

In its election program, titled "Fortress Austria," the Freedom Party calls for "remigration of uninvited foreigners," for achieving a more "homogeneous" nation by tightly controlling borders and suspending the right to asylum via an emergency law.

The Freedom Party also calls for an end to sanctions against Russia, is highly critical of West-

ern military aid to Ukraine and wants to bow out of the European Sky Shield Initiative, a missile defense project launched by Germany. Kickl has criticized "elites" in Brussels and called for some powers to be brought back from the European Union to Austria.

"We don't need to change our position, because we have always said that we're ready to lead a government, we're ready to push forward this change in Austria side by side with the people," Kickl said in an appearance alongside other party leaders on ORF public television.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Over 700 pounds of illegal bologna seized

**TX** PRESIDIO — A 43-year-old woman crossing the U.S.-Mexico border into Texas told officers that she had cooked meat in her vehicle.

As agriculture specialists at the Presidio port looked further, they found several heavy suitcases containing 40 rolls, weighing in at 748 pounds, of bologna in her SUV.

But the rolls were not the type of bologna that can be bought at a deli counter in the U.S., rather it was an illegal meat that posed a threat to the U.S. pork industry, U.S. Customs and Border Protection said.

"Mexican bologna is a prohibited product because it is made from pork and has the potential for introducing foreign animal diseases," CBP said.

Officials said they seized the illegal meat and destroyed it.

Officers continued to look through her vehicle and found hundreds of boxes of prescription drugs hidden within the SUV's panels, which the woman had not declared, according to the release.

### Deadly house explosion tied to propane system

**PA** CRESCENT — A propane system is believed to have been the source of a massive explosion that killed two people and destroyed a house in the Pittsburgh area near the Ohio River earlier this year, authorities said.

A spokesperson for the Allegheny County fire marshal's office told the Pittsburgh Post-

Gazette that the investigation of the March 12 blast in Crescent Township had been closed and "will remain undetermined," but "the source of the blast is related to the privately owned propane system."

Aerial images from the scene in Crescent Township in the northwest Pittsburgh suburbs showed smoking ruins with the structure reduced to rubble and some large pieces lodged in trees above. Chief Andrew Tomer of the Crescent Township fire department said the blast was "severe, absolutely extreme — ... you could feel it in your chest." The homeowners, David Mitchell, 89, and Helen Mitchell, 87, were killed.

### Multiple dead after plane crash at airport

**NC** MANTEO — Multiple people died after a single-engine plane crashed Saturday afternoon in a wooded area at Wright Brothers National Memorial's First Flight Airport, the National Park Service said.

The crash occurred at 5 p.m. as, according to eyewitnesses, the airplane was trying to land at the airport, the park service said in a news release.

The airplane caught fire after the crash, the park service said. The Kill Devil Hills Fire Department and other local fire departments put out the fire.

The airport is closed until further notice, the park service said.

The National Transportation Safety Board will investigate the incident. The Federal Aviation Administration has also been notified.

The Wright Brothers Nation-

al Memorial was closed Sunday, the park service said.

### Ex-Chili Peppers member denies charge for death

**CA** ALHAMBRA — Guitarist Josh Klinghoffer, a former Red Hot Chili Peppers member who has also played with Pearl Jam, pleaded not guilty through his attorney to a misdemeanor manslaughter charge in the death of a pedestrian.

Authorities said Klinghoffer, 44, was driving an SUV and making a left turn in Alhambra, Calif., just east of Los Angeles on March 18 when he hit Israel Sanchez, 47, who was walking in a crosswalk. Sanchez was later pronounced dead at a hospital.

Klinghoffer was charged with vehicular manslaughter without gross negligence, a misdemeanor that can bring a maximum of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

### Man convicted of killing 3 in 1999 put to death

**AL** ATMORE — Alabama used nitrogen gas Thursday to execute a man convicted of killing three people in back-to-back workplace shootings, the second time the method that has generated debate about its humaneness has been used in the country.

Alan Eugene Miller, 59, was pronounced dead at 6:38 p.m. local time at a south Alabama prison. He shook and trembled on the gurney for about two minutes with his body at times pulling against the restraints. That was followed by about six minutes of periodic gulping breaths before he became still.

Miller was convicted of killing three men — Lee Holdbrooks, Christopher Scott Yancy and Terry Jarvis — in 1999.

"I didn't do anything to be in here," Miller said in his final words that were at times muffled by the blue-rimmed gas mask. However, witnesses at the trial had expressed no doubt about his guilt, describing Miller shooting the three men.

### Video of JFK rushed to hospital sold at auction

**TX** DALLAS — Newly emerged film footage of President John F. Kennedy's motorcade speeding down a Dallas freeway toward a hospital after he was fatally wounded sold at auction for \$137,500.

The 8 mm color home film was offered up by RR Auction in Boston. The auction house said the buyer wishes to remain anonymous.

The film has been with the family of the man who took it, Dale Carpenter Sr., since he recorded it on Nov. 22, 1963. It begins as Carpenter just misses the limousine carrying the president and first lady Jacqueline Kennedy but capturing other vehicles in the motorcade as it traveled down Lemmon Avenue toward downtown. The film then picks up after Kennedy has been shot, with Carpenter rolling as the motorcade roars down Interstate 35.

Carpenter's footage from I-35, which lasts about 10 seconds, showed Secret Service Agent Clint Hill — who famously jumped onto the back of the limousine — hovering in a standing position over the president and Jacqueline Kennedy.

-From The Associated Press

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# Ravens rout previously unbeaten Bills

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Derrick Henry busted out the longest run in the team's 29 years in Baltimore on the way to a 199-yard game, Lamar Jackson threw for two touchdowns and rushed for another, and the Ravens handed Josh Allen and the Bills their first loss of the season, 35-10 on Sunday night.

Henry took his first handoff 87 yards to the house to give the Ravens (2-2) an early lead they never relinquished. Jackson, the two-time and reigning NFL MVP, completed 13 of 18 passes for 156 yards with TD throws to Henry and Justice Hill and ran for 54 yards, with Buffalo (3-1) finding no answers to stop Baltimore's offense.

Henry tormented the Bills in prime time for the second time in his career, averaging 8.3 yards on his 24 carries three years after running for 143 yards and three TDs against them while with Tennessee. His 5-yard reception from Jackson in the end zone in the second quarter was just the fourth TD catch of his career and first since 2019.

So much went right for the Ravens that even when Henry fumbled at the goal line early in the fourth, Patrick Ricard fell on the ball for their fifth touchdown of the night.

**Vikings 31, Packers 29:** Sam Darnold threw three touchdown passes and Jordan Addison scored twice as visiting Minnesota built an early 28-point lead and hung on down the stretch to beat Green Bay.

The Vikings (4-0) are off to their best start since 2016, when they won their first five games before slumping to an 8-8 finish. They have trailed for less than 3½ minutes all season.

Minnesota spoiled the return of Packers quarterback Jordan Love, who returned after missing two games with an injured left medial collateral ligament. He threw for 389 yards and four

touchdowns, both career highs. But he also matched a career high with three interceptions while going 32-for-54.

**Buccaneers 33, Eagles 16:** Baker Mayfield threw for 347 yards and two touchdowns, while Mike Evans became the Buccaneers' career scoring leader during host Tampa Bay's victory over Philadelphia.

Mayfield, who completed 30 of 47 passes without an interception, also ran for a TD in helping the Bucs (3-1) dominate the rematch of a lopsided NFC wild-card game they won against the Eagles (2-2) last January.

Rebounding from a poor performance in a loss to Denver the previous week, Mayfield and the offense scored a touchdown on its opening possession for the first time in 21 games. Evans' 2-yard scoring reception finished a 10-play, 79-yard drive that set the tone for the Bucs, who outgained the Eagles 254 yards to zero in building a 24-0 lead.

**Falcons 26, Saints 24:** Younghoe Koo kicked a 58-yard field goal with two seconds remaining and host Atlanta rallied past New Orleans without scoring an offensive touchdown.

Koo kicked four field goals in all, also connecting from 53, 44 and 42 yards to give the Falcons (2-2) a desperately needed home victory.

**Bears 24, Rams 18:** Caleb Williams led four scoring drives and D'Andre Swift had 165 yards from scrimmage and a touchdown as host Chicago held off Los Angeles.

Jaquan Brisker intercepted Matthew Stafford with about a minute remaining after the Bears punted on the previous play, helping Chicago (2-2) end a two-game skid.

Swift had his best game since signing with the Bears in March. He finished with 16 rushes for 93 yards and seven catches for 72 yards.

**Commanders 42, Cardinals**

**14:** Jayden Daniels threw for 233 yards and a touchdown and ran for a score in his desert return, and visiting Washington extended its winning streak to three with a victory over Arizona.

Daniels — the No. 2 overall pick last spring — became the fourth quarterback in the Super Bowl era to run for four touchdowns in his first four career games, joining Cam Newton, Robert Griffin III and Anthony Richardson.

Daniels also completed 26 of 30 passes and has an absurd 82% completion percentage in his short career.

**Colts 27, Steelers 24:** Joe Flacco threw two touchdown passes in relief of the injured Anthony Richardson and host Indianapolis came up with a stop in the final minute to beat Pittsburgh.

Indy (2-2) has won two straight since opening the season with back-to-back losses — and two straight against Pittsburgh.

The Steelers (3-1) fought back from a 17-0 deficit but fell just short of extending their six-game regular-season winning streak. Pittsburgh's top-ranked defense allowed a season-high point total.

**Texans 24, Jaguars 20:** C.J. Stroud threw for 345 yards and two touchdowns, capped by a 1-yard pass to Dare Ogunbowale with 18 seconds left, to give host Houston a win over Jacksonville.

Houston forced a three-and-out to get the ball back with less than three minutes to go.

Stroud then led a nine-play, 69-yard drive to give the Texans (3-1) their first points of the second half and survive a scare by the winless Jaguars (0-4).

**Broncos 10, Jets 9:** Bo Nix threw his first NFL touchdown and visiting Denver overcame a miserable first half on offense and held on to beat New York in a defensive standoff.

Aaron Rodgers came up limping a bit after a sack late in the fourth quarter and seemed to be favoring his left leg.

Rodgers came back on the Jets' next possession with 2:31 remaining but couldn't get anything going. Facing fourth-and-10 on New York's 45, Rodgers was sacked from behind by a blitzing P.J. Locke to give the Broncos the ball at the 35.

**Bengals 34, Panthers 24:** Joe Burrow threw for 232 yards and two touchdowns, Chase Brown ran for 80 yards and two scores and visiting Cincinnati held on to beat Carolina for its first win of the season.

Ja'Marr Chase had three catches for 85 yards, including a 63-yard catch-and-run touchdown as the Bengals avoided a potentially disastrous fourth straight loss to open the season.

**49ers 30, Patriots 13:** Brock Purdy threw a touchdown pass, Fred Warner returned an interception for a score and host San Francisco snapped a two-game skid by beating New England.

San Francisco got field goals from Jake Moody on the opening two drives before Warner delivered his latest big play of the season, making a diving interception against Jacoby Brissett and returning it 45 yards for his second career TD. Warner has three forced fumbles and two interceptions through four games this season.

**Chiefs 17, Chargers 10:** Patrick Mahomes passed for 245 yards and a touchdown while rediscovering his connection with Travis Kelce, and visiting Kansas City rallied from an early 10-point deficit to beat Los Angeles.

**Raiders 20, Browns 16:** Las Vegas used a strong defense as well as a balanced running game to hold off a late rally to beat visiting Cleveland.

Cleveland drove to the Raiders' 9-yard line, but Deshaun Watson was sacked by Charles Snowden with 41 seconds left to seal the victory.



# NL still has playoff berths to decide

*Associated Press*

The Major League Baseball playoffs are approaching, and a Shohei Ohtani vs. Aaron Judge matchup in the World Series looms as an enticing October possibility.

But first, the National League needs to get its waterlogged mess of a playoff race out of the way.

While the rooting interests of baseball fans vary widely, there's little doubt MLB and television executives are drooling over the potential matchup between two of the top sluggers of this generation. Ohtani recently became the first player to have 50 homers and 50 stolen bases in one season while Judge hit 58 homers.

On top of that, Ohtani (Los Angeles Dodgers) and Judge (New York Yankees) play in the nation's top two media markets for two of the sport's most storied franchises.

Of course, there will be 10 other teams trying to block those teams from the Fall Classic. Last season, the Texas Rangers beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 4 games to 1 for their first title in franchise history.

This time around, the Diamondbacks were big fans of the New York Mets or Atlanta Braves for a few hours Monday afternoon.

They just weren't sure which one.

The National League playoff race came down to a doubleheader between the Mets and Braves on Monday. The two games were moved to the day after the scheduled end of the regular season because of Hurricane Helene, which washed out two games of the crucial Mets-Braves series last week.

The Mets (88-72) and Braves (88-72) would both make the playoffs if they split the doubleheader. But if there was a sweep, the Diamondbacks (89-73) would sneak into the bracket as the No. 6 seed while the team that gets swept was eliminated.

Once the first game was over, the D-backs knew who they were supporting. They went through a light workout at Chase Field on Monday in case their season continued.

The Dodgers, Phillies, Brewers and Padres had already clinched four of the six NL playoff spots. Both the Brewers and Padres will host a Wild Card Series starting Tuesday while the Dodgers and Phillies earned some rest by claiming the top seeds.

The American League's bracket is set. The No. 6 Tigers travel to face the No. 3 Astros while the No. 5 Royals are on the road against the No. 4 Orioles in the two Wild

Card Series starting Tuesday. The Yankees and Guardians are the top seeds.

The best-of-three wild-card format is in its third season. The format was changed in 2022 from the sudden death one-game format that was in place since 2012 with the exception of the COVID-19 pandemic-affected 2020 season.

Six teams each from the American League and National League qualify for the postseason, including the three division winners in each league. The three wild-card teams in each league are the teams with the best record that didn't win their division.

The top two division winners with the best records in each league get a bye and don't have to play in the wild-card round. Those four teams get a few days of rest. Those teams are the Yankees and Guardians in the American League and the Phillies and Dodgers in the National League.

The wild-card round will feature four series: The No. 6 seed will play at the No. 3 seed in both the AL and NL. The No. 5 seed will play at the No. 4 seed.

One big advantage for the higher seed in those wild-card series is they get to host all three games.

# Hall of Famer Mutombo dies of brain cancer at 58

*Associated Press*

Dikembe Mutombo, a Basketball Hall of Famer who was one of the best defensive players in NBA history and a longtime global ambassador for the game, died Monday from brain cancer, the league announced. He was 58.

His family revealed two years ago that he was undergoing treatment in Atlanta for a brain tumor. The NBA said he died surrounded by his family.

"Dikembe Mutombo was simply larger than life," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said. "On the court, he was one of the greatest shot blockers and defensive players in the history of the NBA. Off the floor, he poured his heart and soul into helping others."

Mutombo was distinctive in so many ways — the playful fin-

ger wag at opponents after blocking their shots, his height, his deep and gravelly voice, his massive smile. Players of this generation were always drawn to him and Philadelphia 76ers star Joel Embiid, who was born in Cameroon, looked to Mutombo as an inspiration.

"It's a sad day, especially for us Africans, and really the whole world," Embiid said Monday. "Other than what he's accomplished on the basketball court, I think he was even better off the court. He's one of the guys that I look up to, as far as having an impact, not just on the court, but off the court. He's done a lot of great things. He did a lot of great things for a lot of people. He was a role model of mine. It is a sad day."

Mutombo spent 18 seasons in the NBA, playing for Denver,

Atlanta, Houston, Philadelphia, New York and the then-New Jersey Nets. The 7-foot-2 center out of Georgetown was an eight-time All-Star, three-time All-NBA selection and went into the Hall of Fame in 2015 after averaging 9.8 points and 10.3 rebounds per game for his career.

"It's really hard to believe," Toronto President Masai Ujiri said Monday, pausing several times because he was overcome with emotion shortly after hearing the news of Mutombo's death. "It's hard for us to be without that guy. You have no idea what Dikembe Mutombo meant to me. ... That guy, he made us who we are. That guy is a giant, an incredible person."

Mutombo last played during the 2008-09 season, devoting his time after retirement to charitable and humanitarian causes.

He spoke nine languages and founded the Dikembe Mutombo Foundation in 1997, concentrating on improving health, education and quality of life for the people in the Congo.

Ryan Mutombo, the Hall of Famer's son, said in a tribute posted on social media that his father "loved others with every ounce of his being."

"My dad is my hero because he simply cared," Ryan Mutombo wrote. "He remains the purest heart I have ever known."

Mutombo served on the boards of many organizations, including Special Olympics International, the CDC Foundation and the National Board for the U.S. Fund for UNICEF.

Mutombo is one of three players to win the NBA's Defensive Player of the Year four times.

# US captures 10th straight Presidents Cup

*Associated Press*

MONTREAL — U.S. captain Jim Furyk raised the gold trophy before a team that dressed in red shirts that filled the scoreboard early with red scores. The Presidents Cup is one trophy the Americans own, for two decades and counting.

It didn't feel like another rout at Royal Montreal, not with 20 of the 30 matches — nine of them Sunday — not decided until at least the 17th hole.

The score suggested otherwise: United States 18½, International 11½.

It was the largest margin of victory on the road for the Americans in the Presidents Cup — even if it was just north of the border — and they won for the 10th straight time.

Xander Schauffele, a double

major this year, was tapped to lead the way and delivered four straight birdies to set the tone in a 4-and-3 victory over Jason Day. Patrick Cantlay was bogey-free with seven birdies, three on his last four holes for a 3-and-1 win over Taylor Pendrith.

Perhaps fittingly the clinching point came from Keegan Bradley, who had gone 10 years without competing for the U.S. team and has already been appointed the Ryder Cup captain for next year. He thought he might never play in another cup, and he was mobbed when he won over Si Woo Kim on the 18th hole.

“We talked about taking care of business today, and we all went out there and did it. I was just lucky enough to be in that

spot in the day, but really a meaningful moment in my life,” Bradley said. “The last time I played in one of these I was the clinching point for the Europeans in the Ryder Cup. Fast forward 10 years later, and I got to do that today.

“Really something I’ll remember the rest of my life.”

For the Americans, it was old hat. Max Homa finished the scoring with his first point of the week, a 2-and-1 victory over Mackenzie Hughes.

They won four of the five sessions, with the Internationals picking up most of their points in a 5-0 shutout Friday in the four-somes matches.

“These guys get along so well, but as you know, they can flat play,” Furyk said. “When it got tough, anytime the Internation-

als put some pressure on us, they played their (tails) off for us. I’m just so proud to be a part of it.”

The Internationals needed everything to go right at Royal Montreal. All they could manage was a good fight, more tight matches, but still no cup.

Their only victory since these matches for players from everywhere but Europe came in 1998 at Royal Melbourne, so long ago that Tiger Woods was making his Presidents Cup debut. The U.S. winning streak dates to 2005.

“A lot of these matches were so close,” International captain Mike Weir said. “It’s disappointing not to get a win. We put our team together to win this thing, and when you don’t get a win, it’s disappointing, but a lot of great things to take away.”

## Chastain plays spoiler for playoff drivers with Kansas win

*Associated Press*

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — Ross Chastain finally got to smash a watermelon for the first time this season Sunday at Kansas Speedway. He smashed the hopes of a bunch of playoff drivers trying to earn an automatic berth in the next round, too.

The seventh-generation watermelon farmer took the lead from Martin Truex Jr. on a restart with 20 laps to go, then held off title contender William Byron the rest of the way to the finish line. It was the first win for Chastain since last year’s finale at Phoenix, when he also played a bit of a spoiler on the day that the NASCAR Cup Series crowned its champion.

“We haven’t gone anywhere. We keep showing up,” said Chastain, who barely missed out on qualifying for the playoffs. “It’s not easy when you’re failing or struggling at something, and you just can’t get to where you want to get to.”

The retiring Truex, who was eliminated from the playoffs last week, finished third in what was likely his final Kansas race.

He was leading when Carson Hocevar brought out the final caution of a wreck-filled day. Truex picked the top on the restart, and Chastain opted for the bottom, and it was the No. 1 car from Trackhouse Racing that got the big push to the front.

“It’s pretty deflating when you don’t make the playoffs, and we knew the last couple of races of the regular season, we were right on that cut line,” said Chastain’s crew chief, Phil Surgen. “But there’s no give-up here. We’re not laying down.”

Byron’s second-place run was the best among the 12 drivers going on to the second round of the playoffs. And while the win would have locked him into the next round of the playoffs with unpredictable Talladega up next, the result was enough to move the No. 24 car to the top spot in the playoff points standings.

“You’re so close, and going to Talladega, you know what that is,” Byron said. “But proud of the effort.”

Ryan Blaney had a loose left wheel in the final stage but rallied to finish fourth, giving the defending champ’s postseason hopes a big boost. Ty Gibbs was fifth, followed by four more playoff contenders: Alex Bowman was sixth, pole sitter Christopher Bell recovered from a couple of scrapes with the wall to finish seventh, Denny Hamlin salvaged an eighth-place run after trouble on pit road and Chase Elliott was ninth after starting at the rear of the field due to an engine change.

“Considering yesterday and starting last and everything, it could have been a lot worse,” Elliott said. “But I’m always on the

side of the fence where our car was good enough. I felt like (the results) could have been a lot better, but we’ll take it.”

Kyle Busch looked like he might finally extend his streak to 20 seasons with a Cup Series win when he passed Chastain with 64 laps to go. But cycling back to the front after pit stops, Busch was trying to squeeze by Chase Briscoe as the latter fought to stay on the lead lap. Busch ended up hitting the wall and skidding down the back stretch with 30 laps to go.

He wound up 19th, extending his winless streak to 51 races dating to last year in St. Louis.

“I guess I got in too big of a hurry,” Busch said. “I mean, I’m numb. I don’t know what to do.”

Kyle Larson had perhaps the longest day of anyone. The winner last week at Bristol had a right rear go down 18 laps into the race, sending him into the wall. The damage appeared to be minimal, and his Hendrick Motorsports crew kept working at it the rest of the race. But he still finished 26th, just behind fellow playoff drivers Briscoe and Tyler Reddick.

Austin Cindric had to pit twice at the end of Stage 1 because of a loose wheel, but he was back in contention when his left rear went down near the end of Stage 2, sending him spinning down the back stretch. He finished four laps down in 34th.