

US, S. Korea, Japan plan advanced drills

By DAVID CHOI
AND YOOJIN LEE
Stars and Stripes

The United States, South Korea and Japan are slated to carry out the most advanced version of their trilateral air and naval drills this month in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats.

The five-day exercise, dubbed Freedom Edge, will begin Sept. 15 in the southeastern waters off South Korea's Jeju Island, the country's Ministry of National Defense said in a news release Friday.

The ministry said the training "complies with the international law and norms" and is necessary for the three countries to maintain a credible deterrent against threats from Pyong-

yang.

The exercise will include U.S. Marine Corps and Air Force aerial assets and is described by U.S. Indo-Pacific Command as "the most advanced demonstration of trilateral defense cooperation to date."

"The continued cooperation of all three nations tangibly demonstrates strength and an unwavering commitment to the defense of our vital interests against shared threats and strengthens deterrence in the Asia-Pacific," the command said in a statement Thursday.

The first Freedom Edge ran three days starting June 27, 2024. It involved U.S. warships, including the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, and destroyers USS Halsey and USS

Daniel Inouye. The South Korean and Japanese navies each deployed two destroyers and several maritime patrol aircraft.

Drills included anti-submarine operations, ballistic missile defense, search-and-rescue and maritime interception.

Two days before the training, then-South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol boarded the Theodore Roosevelt and called the drills a "powerful deterrent" against North Korea.

The exercise began a day after Pyongyang fired an intermediate-range ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea. The South said the missile exploded mid-air, while North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency claimed

the launch was successful.

The second Freedom Edge ran three days starting Nov. 13, with 7,000 service members and seven warships, led by the aircraft carrier USS George Washington.

Trilateral air and naval drills between the U.S., South Korea and Japan have been carried out regularly since 2023, when Yoon, then-President Joe Biden and Japan's then-Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pledged to form a military partnership to counter Pyongyang.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry has denounced the training, calling Freedom Edge "provocative military muscle-flexing," according to a statement published by KCNA on June 30, 2024.

US set to send F-35s to Puerto Rico after Venezuelan fly-by

Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — The United States will deploy stealth fighter jets to the Caribbean, according to a government official, after two Venezuelan military aircraft flew over an American naval vessel in the area, reflecting rising tensions between the two adversaries.

Venezuela's fly-by on Thursday followed a U.S. strike on a speedboat purportedly carrying drugs from the country. "This highly provocative move was designed to interfere with our counter-narcotics operations," the Pentagon said. It said the "cartel" running Venezuela is "strongly advised" not to interfere with any other operations by the U.S.

Ten Marine Corps F-35s will be dispatched to an air base in Puerto Rico, the U.S. official said Friday, to bolster Washing-

ton's fight against illegal narcotics. The deployment was first reported by Reuters.

The Pentagon didn't offer any further information on Thursday's incident, such as how close the jets got to the U.S. ship or where exactly the vessel was

Secretary of State Marco Rubio signaled that the Trump administration was willing to take even more aggressive action.

located at the time. Venezuela's information ministry didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. CBS News said the planes were armed F-16 fighter jets. CBS News citing DOD sources reported the flyover involved the destroyer

USS Jason Dunham.

On Tuesday, the U.S. struck what it described as a drug-smuggling vessel, killing all 11 people aboard in a move that drew criticism at home and abroad over the apparent use of lethal force on civilians.

Washington's decision to send several ships carrying 4,000 sailors and Marines to the region has prompted speculation that President Donald Trump — who has vowed not to involve the U.S. in more foreign entanglements — may be seeking to push Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro from power. Earlier Thursday, the socialist strongman went on state television and called on all military reservists and more than 10 million militia members to mobilize to their local communal offices.

The fly-by also coincided with

Secretary of State Marco Rubio's visit to Ecuador on a trip aimed at rallying support for the U.S. pressure campaign.

Rubio said the U.S. was prepared for more such strikes against Venezuela and signaled that the Trump administration was willing to take even more aggressive action.

"This time we're not just going to hunt for drug dealers or their little fast boats and say, 'Let's try to arrest them,'" Rubio told reporters at a briefing. "The president has said he wants to wage war on these groups because they've been waging war on us for 30 years and no one has responded."

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Rubio have defended the U.S. strike and warned that more could follow, saying the U.S. government aimed to send a message to drug traffickers.

DOD may face mandate on Okinawa crime

By BRIAN McELHINEY
AND HANA KUSUMOTO

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Defense Department could be required to study ways to prevent criminal conduct by U.S. troops stationed on Okinawa under a draft defense policy bill advanced by the House Armed Services Committee.

The measure, sent to the full House this summer, directs the Pentagon to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and policies aimed at curbing crimes by service members on the island.

“The committee remains concerned by sexual assault cases involving U.S. military service-members stationed in Okinawa, Japan, and reports that the Okinawa Prefectural Government and the local community were not promptly informed,” the

committee wrote in an Aug. 19 report accompanying the bill.

The bill, totaling \$848 billion, differs from the Senate Armed Services Committee’s version, which adds \$32 billion and makes no mention of Okinawa. Lawmakers must reconcile the two drafts before passing the annual National Defense Authorization Act, which sets defense priorities.

Okinawa has faced a series of sexual assault cases involving U.S. troops since 2023.

In December, Senior Airman Brennon Washington was convicted of kidnapping and sexually assaulting a minor the previous year.

In July, Marine Lance Cpl. Jamel Clayton was convicted of an attempted sexual assault from May 2024. Both cases are under appeal, and two others remain pending.

U.S. Forces Japan tightened liberty rules in September. The military and local leaders also launched the Okinawa Community Partnership Forum in May and have conducted several joint patrols of Okinawa city since April.

Under the House bill, the Pentagon would contract with a federally funded research and development center to develop recommendations to strengthen crime-prevention programs. The Defense Department would be required to submit a report within 30 days of the study’s conclusion. Each service branch would then have 180 days to draft plans and brief Congress.

That report also directs the defense secretary to provide details about the Okinawa cooperation forum by Feb. 1, 2026.

USFJ spokesman Col. John

Severns declined to comment on pending legislation. Joint patrols are “an essential tool for commanders to maintain good order and discipline and foster strong, positive relations with local communities,” he said in a follow-up message. “We look forward to continuing these cooperative efforts with our partners in Okinawa.”

An official in charge of Okinawa’s Military Base Affairs Division called the draft “extremely significant” and said the provisions “are effective measures to prevent recurrences.”

“We believe this is a reflection of our past visits to the United States and our appeals by our Washington office staff to members of the Congress,” she said. In Japan, some government officials are required to speak to reporters on condition of anonymity.

US, allies drill near Guam, Philippines amid parade

By ALEX WILSON

Stars and Stripes

U.S. and allied naval forces wrapped two separate exercises on Wednesday, coinciding with a massive Chinese military parade in Beijing that prominently displayed anti-ship missiles and other advanced weaponry.

Near Guam, Pacific Vanguard concluded after 10 days of live-fire missile drills, anti-submarine and anti-air warfare maneuvers involving ships and personnel from the United States, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea, according to a Thursday news release from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force.

Participating U.S. vessels included the guided-missile destroyer USS Higgins and an un-

named submarine.

Japan contributed the flat-top JS Ise, destroyer JS Suzunami and an unnamed submarine. Allied forces also deployed aircraft and personnel from Australia, New Zealand and South Korea.

Meanwhile, in the Philippine Sea, another joint exercise involving the U.S., Australia, Canada and the Philippines emphasized maritime cooperation and freedom of navigation, according to a Wednesday statement from U.S. 7th Fleet.

The drills concluded the same day China held a 90-minute parade featuring thousands of troops, hypersonic missiles, underwater drones and a showcase of anti-ship missiles, a clear signal of Beijing’s growing naval capabilities.

US shipyard to begin new phase of quake resilience

By GARY WARNER

Stars and Stripes

BREMERTON, Wash. — The U.S. Navy plans to invest \$377.7 million to strengthen Dry Dock 4 at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility, enhancing its survivability in the event of a major earthquake in the Pacific Northwest, the Navy announced.

The project, awarded to Kiewit-Alberici Joint Venture, is part of the Pentagon’s 20-year, \$20-billion Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP) to overhaul all four of the nation’s public shipyards in Puget Sound; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Norfolk, Va.; and in Kittery, Maine.

Recent Government Accountability Office surveys have indicated the cost of the SIOP pro-

gram could be significantly higher; retrofitting the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard alone could cost up to \$21 billion.

The shipyard on the Kitsap Peninsula just west across Puget Sound from Seattle is the “primary provider for the maintenance, repair, modernization, inactivation and disposal of ships, submarines and nuclear-powered aircraft carriers in the Pacific Fleet,” the Navy said in a statement.

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Northwest is providing oversight on the project.

The shipyard is located about 100 miles east of the offshore Cascadia Subduction Zone — a 700-mile fault stretching from British Columbia to Northern California.

Job market under Trump falling flat

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. job market has gone from healthy to lethargic during President Donald Trump's first seven months back in the White House, as hiring has collapsed and inflation has started to climb once again as his tariffs take hold.

Friday's jobs report showed employers added a mere 22,000 jobs in August, as the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.3%. Factories and construction firms shed workers. Revisions showed the economy lost 13,000 jobs in June, the first monthly losses since December 2020.

The new data exposed the widening gap between the booming economy Trump promised and the more anemic reality of what he's managed to deliver so far. The White House prides itself on operating at a breakneck speed, but it's now asking the American people for patience, with Trump saying better job numbers might be a year away.

"We're going to win like you've never seen," Trump said Friday. "Wait until these factories start to open up that are being built all over the country, you're going to see things hap-

pen in this country that nobody expects."

The plea for patience has done little to comfort Americans, as economic issues that had been a strength for Trump for a decade have evolved into a persistent weakness. Approval of Trump's economic leadership hit 56% in early 2020 during his first term but that figure was 38% in July of this year, according to polling by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

The situation has left Trump searching for others to blame, while Democrats say the problem begins and ends with him.

Trump maintained Friday that the economy would be adding jobs if Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell had slashed benchmark interest rates, even though doing so to the degree that Trump wants could ignite higher inflation. Investors expect a rate cut by the Fed at its next meeting in September, although that's partially because of weakening job numbers.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Trump's tariffs and freewheeling policies were breaking the economy and the jobs report proved it.

Trial over alleged Trump assassination attempt set

Associated Press

FORT PIERCE, Fla. — A man charged with trying to assassinate President Donald Trump last year in South Florida was given clear instructions on Tuesday on how he should behave in court — including a warning against making sudden movements — while representing himself during a trial that begins this week.

Barring any delays, jury selection is scheduled to begin Monday in Fort Pierce federal court for the case against Ryan Routh. U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon signed off on Routh's request to represent himself in July but said court-appointed attorneys need to remain as standby counsel.

Cannon confirmed during a hearing Tuesday that Routh would be dressed in professional business attire for the trial. She also explained to Routh that he would be allowed to use a podium while speaking to the jury or questioning witnesses, but he would not have free rein of the courtroom.

"If you make any sudden movements, marshals will take decisive and quick action to respond," Cannon said.

Jury selection is expected to take three days, with attorneys questioning three sets of 60 prospective jurors. They're trying to find 12 jurors and four alternates. Opening statements are scheduled to begin Thursday, and prosecutors

will begin their case immediately after that. The court has blocked off four weeks for the trial, but attorneys are expecting they'll need less time.

Also during Tuesday's hearing, Routh presented about a dozen additional witnesses that he would like to subpoena, including Trump himself. The court had already approved four character witnesses for Routh, but he requested several more, including a former romantic partner, to testify on his gentleness.

"That is clearly absurd," Cannon said.

Routh also wanted to question several Harvard professors who he believes could testify that his actions were justified, but Cannon previously ruled that she would not allow Routh to use a justification defense.

The trial will begin nearly a year after prosecutors say a U.S. Secret Service agent thwarted Routh's attempt to shoot Trump as he played golf. Routh, 59, has pleaded not guilty to charges of attempting to assassinate a major presidential candidate, assaulting a federal officer and several firearm violations.

Prosecutors have said Routh methodically plotted to kill Trump for weeks before aiming a rifle through the shrubbery as Trump played golf on Sept. 15, 2024, at his West Palm Beach country club.

Postal traffic to US sank 80% after exemption ended

Associated Press

Postal traffic into the United States plunged by more than 80% after the Trump administration ended a tariff exemption for low-cost imports, the United Nations postal agency said Saturday.

The Universal Postal Union says it has started rolling out new measures that can help postal operators around the world calculate and collect duties, or taxes, after the U.S. eliminated the so-

called "de minimis exemption" for lower-value parcels.

Eighty-eight postal operators have told the UPU that they have suspended some or all postal services to the United States until a solution is implemented with regard to U.S.-bound parcels valued at \$800 or less, which had been the cutoff for imported goods to escape customs charges.

"The global network saw post-

al traffic to the U.S. come to a near-halt after the implementation of the new rules on Aug. 29, 2025, which for the first time placed the burden of customs duty collection and remittance on transportation carriers or U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency-approved qualified parties," the UPU said.

The UPU said information exchanged between postal operators through its network

showed traffic from its 192 member countries had fallen 81% on Aug. 29, compared to a week earlier.

The Bern, Switzerland-based agency said the "major operational disruptions" have occurred because carriers indicated they weren't willing or able to collect such duties, and foreign postal operators had not established a link to CBP-qualified companies.

Ishiba to resign as Japanese prime minister

Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba announced Sunday he will step down following growing calls from his party to take responsibility for a historic defeat in July's parliamentary election.

Ishiba, who took office in October, had resisted demands from mostly right-wing opponents within his own party for more than a month, saying such a step would cause a political vacuum when Japan faces key challenges in and outside the country.

The resignation came one day before his Liberal Democratic Party was to decide whether to hold an early leadership election, a virtual no-confidence motion against him if approved.

Ishiba said during a televised

press conference he would start a process to hold a party leadership vote to choose his replacement and that there was no need for Monday's decision.

If the prime minister had stayed on, he would have inevitably struggled to manage his divided party and minority government.

In July, Ishiba's ruling coalition failed to secure a majority in the 248-seat upper house in a crucial parliamentary election, further shaking the stability of his government. The loss added to an earlier election defeat in the lower house, where the party-led coalition also had lost a majority.

His decision came after his meeting Saturday with Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and his perceived mentor, for-

mer Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, who apparently suggested Ishiba's resignation.

He had previously insisted on staying, stressing the need to avoid a political vacuum at a time Japan faces big challenges, including U.S. tariffs and their impact on the economy, rising prices, rice policy reforms and growing tension in the region.

Since the LDP's last week adoption of its review of the election loss, which called for "a complete overhaul" of the party, requests for an early leadership vote or for Ishiba's resignation.

Conservative heavyweight Taro Aso, known for his anti-Ishiba stance, and a minister and several deputy ministers in the Ishiba Cabinet have requested an early vote, prompt-

ing others to follow suit.

Former Health Minister Norihisa Tamura told an NHK talk show earlier Sunday that the best way to stop the party divide and move forward is for Ishiba "to settle" the dispute, urging his resignation. The party has already been distracted from work on economic measures and on figuring out ways to gain opposition support.

With Ishiba stepping down as party leader, the LDP is expected to set a date for its party presidential election, likely to be held in early October.

Lacking a majority in both houses, the next LDP leader will have to work with the main opposition parties to get bills passed, experts say, or else face constant risks of no-confidence motions.

Undersea cables cut in the Red Sea, disrupting internet

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Undersea cable cuts in the Red Sea disrupted internet access in parts of Asia and the Middle East, experts said Sunday, though it wasn't clear what caused the incident.

There has been concern about the cables being targeted in a Red Sea campaign by Yemen's Houthi rebels, which the rebels describe as an effort to pressure Israel to end its war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. But the Houthis have denied attacking the lines in the past.

Undersea cables are one of the backbones of the internet, along with satellite connections and land-based cables. Typically, internet service providers have multiple access points though it can slow down access.

Microsoft announced via a status website that the Mideast "may experience increased latency due to undersea fiber cuts in the Red Sea." The Redmond,

Wash.-based firm did not immediately elaborate, though it said that internet traffic not moving through the Middle East "is not impacted."

NetBlocks, which monitors internet access, said "a series of subsea cable outages in the Red Sea has degraded internet connectivity in multiple countries," which it said included India and Pakistan.

The South East Asia—Middle East—Western Europe 4 cable is run by Tata Communications, part of the Indian conglomerate. The India-Middle East-Western Europe cable is run by another consortium overseen by Alcatel Submarine Networks. Neither firm responded to requests for comment.

Subsea cables can be cut by anchors dropped from ships, but can also be targeted in attacks. It can take weeks for repairs to be made as a ship and crew must locate themselves over the damaged cable.

Russian aerial attack largest since start of war

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia hit Ukraine's capital with drones and missiles Sunday in the largest aerial attack since the war began, killing four people across the country and damaging a key government building.

Russia attacked with 810 drones and decoys, Ukraine's air force said, adding it shot down 747 drones and four missiles.

Associated Press reporters saw a plume of smoke rising from the roof of Kyiv's government headquarters. It was not immediately clear if the smoke was the result of a direct hit or debris, which would mark an escalation in Russia's air campaign, which has so far spared government buildings in the city center. The building is the home of Ukraine's Cabinet and its ministers. Police blocked access to the building as firetrucks and ambulances arrived.

Yuriy Ihnat, an air force

spokesperson, confirmed to The Associated Press that Sunday's attack was the largest Russian drone strike since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Russia also launched 13 missiles. Hits from nine missiles and 54 drones were recorded at 33 locations across Ukraine.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that four people were killed and 44 wounded. He said he spoke on the phone with French President Emmanuel Macron about the attack.

In the Ukrainian capital, the attack killed two people and wounded 20 others, according to city officials.

Those killed were a mother and her 3-month-old child, whose bodies were dug out of the rubble, said Tymur Tkachenko, the head of Kyiv's city administration. At least 10 locations in Kyiv were damaged, he added.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Plea deal for ex-pilot who tampered with airliner

OR PORTLAND — A former Alaska Airlines pilot accused of trying to cut the engines of a passenger flight in 2023 while riding off-duty in the cockpit has reached plea agreements with prosecutors, his attorney said Thursday.

Attorney Noah Horst said that Joseph Emerson reached the agreements because he wants to take responsibility for his actions and hopes to avoid further time behind bars.

Emerson was subdued by the flight crew after trying to cut the engines of a Horizon Air flight from Everett, Wash., to San Francisco on Oct. 22, 2023. The plane was diverted to Portland, where it landed safely with more than 80 people on board.

Emerson told police he was despondent over a friend's death, had taken psychedelic mushrooms about two days earlier, and hadn't slept in over 40 hours.

He was charged in federal court with interfering with a flight crew. A state indictment in Oregon separately charged him with 83 counts of endangering another person and one count of endangering an aircraft.

School's 'Thunderbirds' to become 'T-Birds'

NY BOHEMIA — A school district in New York City's suburbs agreed last week to change its "Thunderbirds" nickname to simply the "T-Birds" in order to comply with the state's mandate to retire all Native American

sports names and mascots.

According to the deal, Connetquot Central School District on Long Island would be allowed to continue using imagery such as an eagle, thunderbolt or lightning bolt, so long as it can attest the "T-Birds" moniker has "never been associated with any Indigenous imagery of any kind."

But Native American advocates complain the proposed name change still falls short of the spirit of a 2023 state regulation, which districts had to comply with by the end of June.

John Kane, a member of the Mohawk tribe of New York, argues there's no other etymology for "Thunderbird" than Native American culture. The mythical creature is associated with storms and often viewed as a powerful spirit and benevolent protector in many indigenous traditions.

In more recent times, the striking moniker has been adopted as the name of a Ford convertible, the U.S. Air Force's aerial demonstration team, a beloved 1960s children's science fiction TV show, as well as numerous sports teams across the country.

Body found in truck revealed by drought

AZ PAGE — Low water levels casued by years of drought have revealed a submerged pickup truck containing human remains at Lake Powell near the Arizona-Utah border.

Investigators say the truck belonged to a 54-year-old man who has been missing since December 2023. The identity of the remains hasn't yet been deter-

mined.

People spotted the truck just below the water line over the Labor Day weekend at Lone Rock Beach, located in Utah within the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Authorities pulled the truck out of the water Wednesday.

As the lake has suffered from a yearslong drought, its water level has fallen about 20 feet since when the man was reported missing, Lt. Alan Alldredge of the Kane County Sheriff's Office in Utah said.

10 from American Samoa plead in voting case

AK ANCHORAGE — Ten Alaska residents pleaded not guilty Thursday to voter misconduct or other charges in cases that have renewed attention on the complex citizenship status of people born in the U.S. territory of American Samoa.

Those facing charges — most of them related to one another — were born in American Samoa but live in the isolated Alaska community of Whittier. The state contends they falsely claimed U.S. citizenship when registering or attempting to vote. An attorney representing the defendants says many of them are citizens.

American Samoa is the only U.S. territory where residents are not automatically granted citizenship by being born on American soil, as the 14th Amendment to the Constitution dictates. Instead, they are considered U.S. nationals. American Samoans can serve in the military, obtain U.S. passports and vote in elections in American Samoa. But they cannot hold public office in the U.S. or par-

ticipate in most U.S. elections.

A grand jury last week returned indictments with felony and misdemeanor counts, almost a year after Alaska State Troopers descended on Whittier to deliver court summonses.

Man freed after 27 years as witness admits killing

MN MINNEAPOLIS — A man who spent nearly three decades in prison after being falsely implicated by a woman who has since confessed to the crime was released Thursday.

State District Court Judge Marta Chou had vacated Bryan Hooper Sr.'s first-degree murder conviction the day before. He was released Thursday morning from Stillwater Correctional Facility, a Great North Innocence Project spokesperson said.

Hooper reunited with his children and planned to enjoy a meal with them and spend time with family, Project spokesperson Hayley Poxleitner said. He also plans to make his home for now in the Twin Cities area, where his children live.

In 1998, a jury convicted Hooper of premeditated murder, felony murder while committing burglary and felony murder while committing kidnapping in connection with the death of 77-year-old Ann Prazniak. His conviction hinged largely on testimony from a woman who authorities say has since confessed to the crime.

The woman who officials said confessed to the killing is in prison in Georgia for an assault-related crime and will be released in about four years.

— From wire reports

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South Florida gets big upset vs. No. 13 Florida

Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — South Florida got plenty of help in upsetting a ranked team for the second straight week.

Florida committed 11 penalties for 103 yards, including two major infractions on the final drive, and questionably managed the clock as the Bulls stunned the Gators 18-16 in the Swamp on Saturday.

Nico Gramatica hit a 20-yard field goal as time expired to lift South Florida (2-0) to its first victory over the Gators (1-1) in five tries. This one put Florida coach Billy Napier back on the proverbial hot seat.

"There's no excuse here," Napier said. "I'm not up here to make excuses."

Napier called two pass plays in the waning minutes when his offense needed to milk the clock and was in charge of a team that

melted down at every turn in crunch time. The Gators gave up a 66-yard TD pass mostly because defenders were staring at the sideline. Defensive lineman Brendan Bett was flagged and ejected on the final drive for spitting at an opponent, one play after Dijon Johnson was called for pass interference.

Throw in Napier's offense finishing with 355 yards and settling for three field goals early, and it's no surprise Florida's faithful were calling for his job afterward.

"We created it. We deserve it," Napier said. "If you play football like that, you're going to be criticized. It comes with the territory, right? Only thing you can do is go get it fixed, and that's what we'll start working on (Sunday)."

Gramatica missed a 58-yarder with 2:52 remaining, but got

a chance to redeem himself after the Gators failed to pick up a first down and took roughly 20 seconds off the clock. South Florida responded with an 87-yard drive that was aided by the two penalties.

Napier dropped to 20-20, including 14-7 at home. He is 1-1 for the fourth consecutive season.

"These guys I've bled with, cried with," Florida cornerback Devin Moore said. "There have been a lot of long nights, so I'm very motivated — me and other people on the team. Everyone can hold everyone accountable. ... I'm ready to get back to work, clean this film up, and just improve."

The Bulls, meanwhile, took another huge step forward in coach Alex Golesh's third season.

"A bunch of guys that bought

into a vision when it wasn't super cool," Golesh said.

South Florida will break into the next AP Top 25. It upset then-No. 25 Boise State last week. The Gators will surely drop.

The Bulls became only the third unranked team since 2000 to start 2-0 by beating two ranked teams, joining 2012 Oregon State and 2008 East Carolina.

Florida has bigger issues than quarterback DJ Lagway's rust. Its offensive line allowed too much pressure and failed to create enough holes against USF.

The Bulls play next at No. 5 Miami next Saturday, their third consecutive game against a ranked team. The Gators' next game is at No. 3 LSU next Saturday. Florida last won in Baton Rouge in 2016.

Horvath, defense help Midshipmen pull away from UAB

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Blake Horvath accounted for three touchdowns and Navy forced three turnovers to shut out UAB in the second half for a 38-24 victory on Saturday in the American Conference opener for both teams.

Horvath's 4-yard touchdown

run late in the third quarter gave the Midshipmen a 31-24 lead.

Alex Tecza bullied into the end zone from the 1 to cap an 82-yard drive to open the fourth for Navy.

Horvath completed 6 of 8 passes for 168 yards and threw a 63-yard touchdown pass to Luke Hutchison in the second quar-

ter. Horvath also had a 1-yard TD run to cap the Midshipmen's opening drive. Horvath finished with 72 yards rushing and Tecza had 111 on the ground to lead Navy (2-0, 1-0).

UAB (1-1, 0-1) closed the first half with a missed field goal and then opened the second with a fumble, a punt after three plays

and two Jalen Kitna interceptions.

Kitna was 22-for-32 passing for 304 yards that included a 51-yard touchdown pass to Iverson Hooks and a 25-yarder to Corri Milliner.

There were two weather delays in the first half, each lasting about an hour.

Mateer, Venables lead No. 18 Oklahoma over No. 15 Michigan

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Oklahoma coach Brent Venables didn't want to be the center of attention after one of his biggest victories, but his players put him directly in the spotlight.

John Mateer ran for two touchdowns and passed for one, and the No. 18 Sooners beat No. 15 Michigan 24-13 on Saturday night. Afterward, as the late Toby Keith's "How Do You Like Me Now?!" played, some players lifted up Venables.

"I'm embarrassed," Venables said. "This is a players' game, and a lot of other people were responsible for getting to that moment. And again, I don't want to take away — celebrate, man. What we do is too hard. You only get 12

opportunities guaranteed at the beginning of the year."

But much of it was about Venables, who got a much-needed signature victory. Oklahoma (2-0) is trying to bounce back from a 6-7 season, and Venables openly embraced the game's significance as it approached.

The players came through and delivered on his confidence. The defense, with Venables calling the plays, held the Wolverines to 288 yards.

Mateer, a transfer from Washington State playing in his first marquee game for the Sooners, passed for 270 yards and ran for 74. Deion Burks caught seven passes for 101 yards and Janen Kanak added five catches for 69 yards.

Justice Haynes ran for 125 yards on 19 carries for Michigan (1-1). Bryce Underwood, the Wolverines' highly touted freshman quarterback, played in a hostile environment for the first time and struggled. He completed 9 of 24 passes for 142 yards.

It was the second meeting between the blue-blood programs. Michigan is the Football Bowl Subdivision leader in wins; Oklahoma has the most victories since World War II.

Mateer's 2-yard touchdown run with 22 seconds left in the first half put the Sooners up 14-0. Haynes broke loose for a 75-yard touchdown on the first play of the second half to cut Oklahoma's lead to 14-7, but the Wolverines got no closer.

Hellums provides 3 TDs in win for Army

Associated Press

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Cale Hellums accounted for three touchdowns that included a 14-yard touchdown run with 2:52 left to help Army beat Kansas State 24-21 on Saturday night.

"I couldn't have done it by myself," Hellums said after his first career start in which he carried the ball 41 times. "Having the O-line there, the slots, the receivers, everyone blocking their tails off. It was a great victory on both sides, on offense and defense."

The Wildcats' (1-2) final drive ended when Avery Johnson threw an interception just past midfield. It was just the 10th home nonconference loss for K-State since 1990.

The Black Knights (1-1) kept the ball on the ground, running

the ball 70 times out of their 82 offensive plays. Army had four scoring drives of at least 13 plays, including three which took at least seven minutes, and outgained the Wildcats 332-247 in total yards.

The key for the Black Knights was going 6 of 7 on fourth down.

"A lot of people think you only get three downs to get 10 yards," Army coach Jeff Monken said. "They give you four. So we try to operate so that we get ourselves in a position where we can go forward on fourth down. Some of the fourth downs were a little bit longer than we'd like. We'd like to be 4th-and-1."

Hellums completed 7 of 11 passes and ran 41 times for 124 yards. He tossed a 2-yard touchdown pass to Brady Anderson to end the first half.

"I was not tempted at all. We were going for it," Monken said after the game when asked if he was tempted to attempt a field goal with 2 seconds left in the half. "Three points weren't going to help us. That one changed the game. If we don't score that touchdown right there, we may not win the game."

Hellums later added a 1-yard TD run late in the third quarter that gave the Black Knights a 14-13 lead, but Bryce Noernberg returned the ensuing kickoff 99 yards into the end zone and Kansas State regained the lead, 21-14.

Army cut the lead to 21-17 with 10:46 left, and then attempted a squib kick on the ensuing kickoff, hoping to avoid another long return. It caromed off a Wildcats player and the Black Knights re-

covered on its own 44.

"We weren't running an on-side kick," Monken said. "We decided we were going to go with a squib kick and it just hit one of their guys, ricocheted off. And it worked out."

Army held a 40:44 to 19:16 advantage in time of possession and was the first K-State opponent to rush for more than 200 yards since late in the 2023 season.

"We didn't finish drives," Wildcats coach Chris Klieman said. "That's why it was 13-7 at the half and not 21-7. You can't settle for field goals."

Johnson finished 15-for-25 passing for 172 yards and threw one touchdown pass to Jaron Tibbs for Kansas State. Tibbs finished with five catches for 61 yards.

Sabalenka tops Anisimova for repeat, 4th major title

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aryna Sabalenka was two points away from what would eventually be a second consecutive U.S. Open title when she had what should have been a routine — easy, even — overhead smash. Instead, while backpedaling, she dumped the ball into the net, giving her opponent, Amanda Anisimova, a break chance.

After that excruciating miss Saturday, Sabalenka dropped her racket on the blue court and smiled a rueful smile. She began to feel the sort of emotions that got the better of her during losses in the finals at the Australian Open in January and French Open in June bubble up. She tried to compose herself.

"I just let the doubt get into my head," Sabalenka explained. "But then I turned around and I took a deep breath in, and I was like, 'OK. It happens. It's in the past. Let's focus on the next one.'"

So everything was fine from

there? Well, no. "She broke me," Sabalenka said with a loud laugh. "I was like, 'OK. ... Reset.'"

It took another 15 minutes to complete the job, but the No. 1-seeded Sabalenka did reset, unlike at those earlier title matches in 2025, and was able to kneel on Arthur Ashe Stadium's court while covering her face with her hands after beating Anisimova 6-3, 7-6 (3). That made Sabalenka the first woman to earn the trophy at Flushing Meadows in consecutive years since Serena Williams in 2012-14.

"I truly really admire her," said No. 8 seed Anisimova, a 24-year-old American who heard raucous support from the 24,000 or so spectators. "She puts in a lot of work, and that's why she's where she is."

Sabalenka, a 27-year-old from Belarus, earned her fourth Grand Slam trophy — all on hard courts — and avoided becoming the first woman to lose three major finals in a sea-

son since Justine Henin in 2006.

Sabalenka was the runner-up to Madison Keys at Melbourne Park and to Coco Gauff at Roland-Garros.

Those defeats helped Saturday.

"After the Australian Open, I thought that the right way would be just to forget it and move on. But then the same thing happened at the French Open," said Sabalenka, who showed up at her post-match news conference with a bottle of Champagne and a pair of dark goggles atop her head. "So after French Open, I figured that, OK, maybe it's time for me to sit back and to look at those finals and to maybe learn something, because I didn't want it to happen again and again and again."

As Anisimova kept making things close again, and the crowd kept getting loud, Sabalenka reminded herself to focus on herself.

It worked.

When Anisimova trailed Sabalenka 2-0, 30-love as Saturday's match began, some fans might have wondered: There's no way there's going to be a repeat of the Wimbledon, right? That's because Anisimova's first major final, in July at the All England Club, ended with a 6-0, 6-0 shutout against Iga Swiatek.

But Anisimova grabbed the next four points to break back, capping the game with a backhand winner and a forehand winner. That got folks on their feet, shouting, and Anisimova exhaled as she walked to the sideline. Soon, she led 3-2.

That was another moment that could have thrown Sabalenka. Nope. She took the next four games and that set.

It began pouring before the match, so Ashe's roof was shut and its artificial lights were on. That was a problem from Anisimova, who said she had a hard time seeing the ball during serve tosses.

Orioles walk off, avoid Dodgers' no-hitter

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Jackson Holliday homered with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning to deny Yoshinobu Yamamoto a no-hitter, and the Baltimore Orioles weren't satisfied with that, rallying for four runs in the inning to defeat the Los Angeles Dodgers 4-3 in a delirious comeback Saturday night.

Emmanuel Rivera's two-run single off Tanner Scott won it. Scott also allowed a walk-off homer to Baltimore rookie Samuel Basallo the previous night. But the real culprit was Blake Treinen (1-3), who relieved Yamamoto after Holliday's homer. He gave up a double to Jeremiah Jackson, hit Gunnar Henderson and walked Ryan Mountcastle and Colton Cowser to make it 3-2 before Scott came on.

It was unquestionably the win of the year for the last-place Orioles, who have been a disappointment pretty much all season. They were celebrating the 30th anniversary of Cal Ripken Jr.'s 2,131st consecutive game, which broke Lou Gehrig's record on Sept. 6, 1995.

"I was like, 'Oh man, it's going to come down to me,'" Holliday said. "I was definitely thinking about it, and kind of nervous because it's kind of a big thing. It was fun to be able to break it up. He (Yamamoto) threw the ball really great."

Los Angeles has lost five straight, wasting a chance to pull away in the NL West from second-place San Diego, which is also slumping.

"It's hard to recount a game like this where there's so many things you feel like you can get a little bit of momentum, build off a great outing by Yoshinobu and take that into tomorrow," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "And obviously it completely flipped."

Yankees 3, Blue Jays 1: Cody Bellinger made a 95.3 mph throw from right field to get Bo Bichette at the plate for the final

out of the sixth inning and host New York beat Toronto in a game interrupted by rain for nearly two hours.

As heavy rain began pelting the field, Nathan Lukes lined a single to right field and Bellinger cleanly fielded the ball on the wet grass. In one motion, he made a strong one-hop throw to the plate and Austin Wells moved to his left to tag Bichette on the left leg.

Yankees starter Luis Gil (3-1) allowed one run and two hits in a season-high six innings. Gil struck out one and walked four.

Phillies 4, Marlins 2: Bryce Harper homered, Brandon Marsh doubled twice and visiting Philadelphia beat Miami.

Jesús Luzardo struck out eight over six innings of two-run ball for the NL East-leading Phillies. Luzardo (13-6) allowed five hits and walked four.

Tigers 6, White Sox 0: Tarik Skubal (13-4) allowed two singles and struck out six in seven innings as host Detroit ended Chicago's six-game winning streak.

The AL Central-leading Tigers scored five of their six runs in the fourth inning, capped off by Gleyber Torres' three-run home run.

Reds 6, Mets 3: Sal Stewart hit his first major league home run, Brady Singer extended his winning streak to four and host Cincinnati defeated New York.

Matt McLain and Austin Hays also went deep for the Reds, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Even with the win, Cincinnati (71-71) is five games back for the final NL wild-card spot.

Brewers 4, Pirates 1: Jake Bauers and Jackson Chourio hit two-run home runs, and Brandon Woodruff (6-2) pitched six scoreless innings as visiting Milwaukee beat Pittsburgh.

Bauers connected with two outs in the fourth inning off Mitch Keller (6-14) to break a scoreless tie immediately after William Contreras singled.

Chourio later hit his 19th homer in the eighth off Evan Sisk to double the NL Central-leading Brewers' advantage.

Guardians 3, Rays 2: Steven Kwan beat out a grounder to shortstop in the ninth inning to drive in the go-ahead run and visiting Cleveland beat Tampa Bay.

The Guardians won their second straight and clinched the season series against the Rays. Cleveland also moved a game ahead of Tampa Bay in the AL wild-card race and pulled 1½ games behind Seattle, which holds the final playoff spot.

Cardinals 3, Giants 2: Jordan Walker's two-run double highlighted a three-run ninth inning and rallied host St. Louis to a win over San Francisco.

The Cardinals' win spoiled a solid start by the Giants' Justin Verlander, who threw six scoreless innings and passed Hall of Famer and San Francisco legend Gaylord Perry on the all-time strikeout list, moving into eighth place with 3,536.

Nationals 2, Cubs 1: Daylen Lile hit a tiebreaking home run in the fourth inning and rookie Brad Lord struck out a season-best seven to help visiting Washington beat Chicago.

Lord (5-8) struck out the side in the third and fourth and allowed two hits, an earned run and four walks in the first 5⅓ innings as the Nationals won for the fourth time in five tries. Cole Henry, the fourth Washington reliever, worked the ninth and earned his second save.

Astros 11, Rangers 0: Hunter Brown threw six shutout innings to outpitch Jacob deGrom while Christian Walker and Yordan Alvarez each had solo home runs and two RBI as visiting Houston beat Texas.

The Astros (78-65) lead the AL West by 3½ games over Seattle. The Rangers (73-70) are 1½ games behind the Mariners for the league's final wild card.

Mariners 10, Braves 2: Julio Rodríguez hit two of visiting

Seattle's five home runs, Cal Raleigh hit his major league-leading 52nd homer of the year and the Mariners beat Atlanta.

Rodríguez and Eugenio Suárez hit home runs off Daysbel Hernández (4-3) in the seventh inning to propel the Mariners to just their second win in their last nine games as they hold on to the final AL wild-card spot.

Diamondbacks 5, Red Sox 1: Brandon Pfaadt pitched six strong innings and host Arizona scored three runs in the second beat Boston.

With the loss, the Red Sox fell 1½ games behind the Yankees for the top AL wild-card spot. They trail Toronto by 4½ games for the AL East lead with 19 games remaining.

Padres 10, Rockies 8: Fernando Tatis Jr. hit a three-run homer to cap visiting San Diego's six-run second inning, and the Padres held on to beat Colorado to end a five-game skid.

San Diego moved a game back of the Dodgers in the NL West. Los Angeles holds the division tiebreaker by virtue of winning the season series over the Padres.

Athletics 17, Angels 4: Nick Kurtz, Colby Thomas, Carlos Cortes and J.J. Bleday all homered to lead the visiting Athletics to a win over Los Angeles.

Kurtz, the 22-year-old rookie sensation, hit a 447-foot shot to left-center field in the fourth inning off reliever Chase Silseth for his 29th home run this season. Kurtz scored three runs and drew walks in his first two at-bats against Yusei Kikuchi.

Royals 11, Twins 2: Salvador Pérez's three-run homer highlighted a five-run first inning as host Kansas City routed Minnesota.

Vinnie Pasquantino doubled sharply off the right-field fence, producing one run before Salvador Pérez's 25th home run added three more. Nick Loftin's double to left-center made it 5-0 as the Royals batted around in the first.