

## Navy's top officer outlines initiatives

By ALEX WILSON

*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy's new top officer pledged to bring free barracks Wi-Fi, off-ship housing for every sailor and a payroll review as part of a broad effort to improve quality of life across the fleet.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Daryl Caudle outlined the initiatives in his second fleetwide message since assuming the role Aug. 25.

"I am committed to the well-being of our Sailors and their families — providing them with state-of-the-art platforms, world-class facilities and dependable support through our Total Sailor and Family Action Plan," he wrote Wednesday in an administrative message.

The message was the first of

Caudle's "C-Notes," administrative updates intended to maintain transparency, provide guidance and unify efforts across the service.

His initiatives include reviews and reforms of payroll policies, food services, uniforms, communications, and housing.

"Today, I have directed your Navy leadership to take the steps necessary to ensure that No Sailor Will Live Afloat," Caudle wrote.

He said the Navy plans to optimize basic allowance for housing and invest in both unaccompanied and family housing to ensure every sailor resides in clean, safe and comfortable accommodations.

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James Honea, who is set to retire Friday, told Congress last

year that the inability of junior sailors to live off-ship after monthslong deployments was a major concern.

He said about 800 sailors per aircraft carrier, or roughly 8,800 across the fleet, do not have access to barracks other than the vessels on which they serve.

"We can't find a bed for them, we don't have barrack space, and we are not allowed by law to pay them house allowance for them to go find themselves an apartment in town, so they live on board the ship," Honea said during a Jan. 31, 2024, House Armed Services Committee hearing on military quality-of-life issues.

Caudle also pledged to modernize galley facilities to provide healthier, more flexible food options. He said Navy Secretary

John Phelan ordered a review of uniforms and seabags to ensure service clothing is affordable, durable and available.

Other planned improvements include better cellphone coverage on bases, free Wi-Fi in barracks, a revamp of Navy administrative messaging, and a review of payroll policies to ensure sailors are paid correctly and on time.

"You are my priority and I need you focused on the fight," Caudle wrote. "This is the first of many efforts to improve your Quality of Life — so, stand by for what's coming next."

A spokesperson for the Navy Chief of Information did not respond to a request for additional information after hours on Sunday.

## AFRICOM sets a new mark for strikes on Somalia

By JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — U.S. Africa Command has now launched more annual airstrikes in Somalia this year than at any time in the organization's nearly 20-year history.

As of Monday, AFRICOM's airstrike total stood at 72, with a flurry of attacks coming during a recent two-week offensive against al-Shabab militants, the command confirmed Monday.

This year's offensive against al-Shabab and an Islamic State group affiliate in the country pushed the number of strikes in Somalia past the previous high of 63 in 2019. The blitz shows no signs of ebbing.

In a statement Friday, AFRICOM said it had conducted airstrikes against ISIS-Somalia from Aug. 31, through Sept. 2, hit-

ting targets in the northerly Golis Mountains region, which has emerged as a hub for the insurgent group.

Meanwhile, AFRICOM's most recent reported strike against al-Shabab happened on Aug. 30 some 25 miles outside the southern city of Kismayo. That region of Somalia has been a frequent target for AFRICOM.

On Thursday, U.S. troops and their Somali counterparts operating in the vicinity of Kismayo came under indirect fire, AFRICOM said in a separate statement Friday.

"There were no U.S. or partner force injuries or casualties as a result of the attack and no damage to the base or coalition property has been reported," AFRICOM said, offering few details about the encounter.

Still, the incident underscores

how U.S. troops in Somalia at times find themselves in the line of fire.

Besides airstrikes, AFRICOM's ongoing missions in Somalia involve training and advising local ground forces. The uptick in airstrikes also coincides with a January directive by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth that granted more decision-making authority on airstrikes to AFRICOM commanders.

Last week, Gen. Dagvin Anderson, the new leader of the Stuttgart-based command, made his first visit to Somalia as head of American military operations on the continent.

In Mogadishu, Anderson met with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and other officials on threats emanating from the country.

ISIS affiliates are spreading in

Somalia and other parts of Africa, while al-Shabab is coordinating with the Iran-backed Houthi militants based in Yemen, he said.

Al-Shabab, which the U.S. considers the largest terrorist group in Africa, has an estimated 7,000 to 12,000 fighters. For decades, it has been in armed rebellion against Somalia's shaky central government, whose forces are trained by American personnel.

Anderson highlighted operations against ISIS Somalia as an example of U.S. coordination with local partners on the ground to gain intelligence and select targets for strikes.

"(Alongside this) we enabled the partner, who had the will to go up into those mountains, go after the terrorists, and hold territory so they couldn't come back," Anderson said in a statement.

# West Nile virus case confirmed at Naples base

By ALISON BATH  
*Stars and Stripes*

NAPLES, Italy — A Navy hospital here is warning people to take precautions against West Nile virus after a confirmed case of the illness among its military community.

U.S. Naval Hospital Naples officials confirmed a single case of the infection among Navy personnel in a Facebook post last week. The hospital cautioned that while the overall risk for contracting the virus was low, “continued vigilance is important.”

“Prevention is key,” the hospital said in the Aug. 28 post, adding that people should wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and consider wearing a

mosquito repellent, among other precautions, to lessen the risk of infection.

The hospital also said it was using traps to monitor and reduce the mosquito population on the Naval Support Activity Naples Support Site where service members and their families live, work and shop.

The hospital did not say when the case was diagnosed.

There is no medication to treat West Nile, which primarily is passed to humans by infected mosquitoes, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Most people who acquire West Nile do not feel any signs, but some develop flu-like symptoms including fever, headache

and body aches.

Less than 1% of people in the U.S. who are infected with the virus develop severe symptoms that affect the central nervous system, require hospitalization or result in death, according to the CDC.

Symptoms typically develop two to six days after being bitten by an infected mosquito but can take two weeks or longer to appear, according to the CDC.

The confirmed incident at NSA Naples appears to be the only reported West Nile infection among military personnel in Italy, which is leading Europe in human cases of the virus.

As of Aug. 28, there had been 67 human cases of West Nile in the Campania region where

NSA Naples is located, with 39 of those reported in the city of Naples, the hospital said in its Facebook post.

The first confirmed case of West Nile in Pordenone Province, where Aviano Air Base is located, was reported last week in the commune of Azzano Decimo, according to Italian news media reports.

There have been 10 deaths related to West Nile in Italy, according to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and European Food Safety Authority report, which also indicated that the number of cases this year were slightly above average for the last decade but remained lower than 2024 and 2018.

## Australia prepares for nuclear rotations

By SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Infrastructure work to support rotations of U.S. and British nuclear-powered submarines began last month at a naval base in Western Australia, according to that nation’s defense department.

HMAS Stirling, an Australian navy base near Perth, will host Submarine Rotational Force-West as early as 2027. Plans call for one British submarine and up to four U.S. vessels to be stationed there temporarily.

Upgrades at HMAS Stirling are valued at \$5.2 billion and will meet requirements for conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines for both visiting forces and Australia’s own fleet in the future, the Australian Submarine Agency said in an email Thursday.

The rotational force is part of

the 2021 AUKUS security pact among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The Pentagon is reviewing the agreement amid concerns about whether U.S. industry can supply Australia with submarines beginning in the early 2030s while meeting Navy needs.

Main construction work at HMAS Stirling began in August following environmental approvals, according to the Australian Department of Defence website.

The community near the base could see an influx of 3,000 to 9,000 Americans, said Andrew Hastie, a member of Parliament and the opposition spokesman for home affairs.

AUKUS Pillar I covers nuclear-powered submarines, while Pillar II involves cooperation on other military technologies.

## Longtime STRATCOM deputy nominated to lead

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

The longtime deputy director of U.S. Strategic Command was nominated Friday to head the U.S. military’s top nuclear weapons organization, the Pentagon announced.

Navy Vice Adm. Richard Correll was nominated by President Donald Trump to replace the retiring Air Force Gen. Anthony Cotton as STRATCOM commander, according to a Pentagon news release. Correll, who has served as STRATCOM’s No. 2 officer since 2022, would receive a fourth star if confirmed for the job by the Senate.

STRATCOM is based at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska and is responsible for overseeing about 41,000 service members who operate the nation’s vast nuclear weapons arsenal, including Air Force bomber air-

craft and intercontinental ballistic missiles and the Navy’s nuclear-capable submarines. That command in recent years has been led by Air Force or Navy officers with decades of experience leading nuclear organizations.

Cotton has spent most of his 39-year Air Force career leading missile and space units and has headed STRATCOM since 2022.

It was not clear when the Senate would take up Correll’s nomination.

Correll is a career submariner with a long history of command assignments and experience in the Pentagon, according to his Navy biography.

He also served aboard the USS Henry M. Jackson nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine and the USS Hyman G. Rickover and USS Buffalo fast attack subs.

# Sanctuary cities across US warned

*The Washington Post*

CHICAGO — As Chicagoans braced for a potential activation of the National Guard in their city, President Donald Trump's border czar, Tom Homan, said residents of cities with pro-immigrant policies all over the United States should also expect stepped-up immigration enforcement in their neighborhoods.

"You can expect action in sanctuary cities across the country," Homan told CNN on Sunday.

Trump and members of his administration have long railed against "sanctuary city" policies,

which can encompass a spectrum of practices, such as jails being unable to hold immigrants accused of committing crimes beyond their allotted time or hand them over to ICE custody, or prohibiting police from inquiring about immigration status during arrests.

On Sunday, Homan said the president is prioritizing federal action in cities with these policies because they "knowingly release illegal aliens, public safety threats, to the streets." In recent days, Trump has also threatened to deploy the National Guard to New York, Seattle, Baltimore, San Francisco and Portland, Ore.

Homan declined to say how many National Guard troops will be deployed to Chicago, or where else they might be sent, but said the troops are a "force multiplier" to support immigration enforcement. Homan said the National Guard troops would not be arresting undocumented migrants in these cities but would rather support the work of ICE officers and Border Patrol agents.

The comments come a day after Trump, on Truth Social, threatened Chicago with mass deportations of undocumented immigrants, sharing an edited illustration of himself as Lt. Col.

Bill Kilgore from the Vietnam War film "Apocalypse Now." Alongside the image, Trump wrote, "I love the smell of deportations in the morning."

"Chicago [is] about to find out why it's called the Department of WAR," Trump wrote. On Friday, the president signed an executive order rebranding the Defense Department as the Department of War without congressional approval.

Largely peaceful protests broke out across the city on Saturday, with thousands of marchers taking over Michigan Avenue demanding that Trump keep federal forces out of Chicago.

## Trump's visit to US Open final sparks boos, long lines

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — President Donald Trump was loudly booed at the men's final of the U.S. Open on Sunday, where extra security caused by his visit led to lines long enough that many people missed the start of play, even after organizers delayed it.

Wearing a suit and long, red tie, Trump briefly emerged from his suite about 45 minutes before the match started and heard a mix of boos and cheers from an Arthur Ashe Stadium that was still mostly empty. No announcement preceded his

appearance, and it was brief enough that some in the crowd missed it.

Trump appeared again to more boos before the National Anthem. Standing in salute, the president was shown briefly on the arena's big screens during the anthem and offered a smirk that briefly made the boos louder.

When the anthem was over, the Republican sat on the suite's balcony to watch the match intently. He mostly didn't applaud, even following major points that energized the rest of

the crowd as Spain's Carlos Alcaraz bested Jannik Sinner of Italy.

Trump was shown on the big screen again after the first set ended and elicited a roar of louder boos and some piercing whistles. He raised his left fist in salute as the noise continued in the stadium, which with a capacity of 24,000 is one of the largest in tennis.

Organizers pushed the start of the match back half an hour to give people more time to pass through enhanced screening checkpoints reminiscent of se-

curity at airports. Still, thousands of increasingly frustrated fans remained in line outside as the match got underway. Many seats, especially those in upper rows, stayed empty for nearly an hour.

The Secret Service issued a statement saying that protecting Trump "required a comprehensive effort" and noting that it "may have contributed to delays for attendees."

Trump attended the final as a guest of Rolex, despite imposing steep tariffs on the Swiss watchmaker's home country.

## Florida school vaccine mandates remain for next 90 days

*Associated Press*

Florida's plan to drop school vaccine mandates likely won't take effect for 90 days and would include only chickenpox and a few other illnesses unless lawmakers decide to extend it to other diseases, like polio and measles, the health department said Sunday.

The department responded to a request for details, four days after Florida's surgeon

general, Dr. Joseph Ladapo, said the state would become the first to make vaccinations voluntary and let families decide whether to inoculate their children.

It's a retreat from decades of public policy and research that has shown vaccines to be safe and the most effective way to stop the spread of communicable diseases, especially among children. Despite that evi-

dence, U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has expressed deep skepticism about vaccines.

Florida's plan would lift mandates on school vaccines for hepatitis B, chickenpox, Hib influenza and pneumococcal diseases, such as meningitis, the health department said.

"The Department initiated the rule change on September 3, 2025 and anticipates the rule

change will not be effective for approximately 90 days," the state told The Associated Press. The public school year in Florida started in August.

All other vaccinations required under Florida law to attend school "remain in place, unless updated through legislation," including vaccines for measles, polio, diphtheria, pertussis, mumps and tetanus, the department said.



# US asks court to allow foreign aid freeze

*The Washington Post*

The Trump administration asked the Supreme Court on Monday to allow it to freeze billions of dollars in foreign aid, potentially setting up the biggest test yet of the president's bid to assert sweeping authority over federal spending.

The emergency filing in the rapidly moving case comes after a federal appeals court upheld a preliminary injunction requiring Trump officials to spend the money for food, medicine and development assistance before it begins to expire at the end of the fiscal year Sept. 30.

Since beginning his second term in January, President Donald Trump has claimed broad powers to refuse to spend congressionally allocated money for transportation projects, health research, education, "sanctuary cities" and more, saying the spending was wasteful or not aligned with the administration's values.

One of his first acts, pausing about \$30 billion in foreign aid through the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development, was followed by the dismantling

of USAID. Congressional Democrats estimate a total of \$430 billion in federal spending is now on hold.

Critics argue his moves violate the Constitution, which gives Congress the power of the purse.

Global health and other aid groups sued in March, saying Trump didn't have the authority to freeze the foreign aid and the cuts would bring about a humanitarian disaster.

A recent study in the *Lancet* predicted up to 14 million additional deaths — including 4 million to 5 million children under age 5 — by 2030 as a result. More than 60,000 metric tons of food aid — some rotting — sits undelivered in warehouses. The administration contends the aid cuts have not resulted in any deaths.

The legal battle over foreign aid has been long and complicated, bouncing to the Supreme Court and back over the last six months. In April, a sharply divided high court ruled a federal judge could order the Trump administration to pay back about \$2 billion in aid for work already completed.

Last month, a panel of the federal appeals court in D.C. struck down a federal judge's

preliminary injunction requiring the Trump administration to spend billions in additional funds for future aid work, finding the plaintiffs didn't have standing to sue.

But the full appeals court amended that ruling and returned the case to U.S. District Judge Amir H. Ali, leaving open the possibility the plaintiffs could renew a request for a preliminary injunction on different legal grounds.

The plaintiffs did that and Ali granted a new preliminary injunction on Wednesday, finding the Trump administration had violated the 2024 Appropriations Act by holding up the foreign aid.

About \$11.5 billion will expire at the end of next month, but Ali has indicated he could order that deadline extended.

The Trump administration quickly sought a review and the appeals court upheld that order in a divided opinion.

It's unclear when the high court will decide whether to take the foreign aid case or how it might rule, but the justices have allowed Trump to temporarily block funding in some past cases.

## Supreme Court lifts restrictions on federal immigration stops in LA

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday cleared the way for federal agents to conduct sweeping immigration operations in Los Angeles, the latest victory for President Donald Trump's administration at the high court.

The justices lifted a restraining order from a judge who found that "roving patrols" were conducting indiscriminate arrests in LA. The order had barred agents from stopping people solely based on their race, language, job or location.

Trump's administration argued the order wrongly restricted agents carrying out its crackdown on immigration.

U.S. District Judge Maame E. Frimpong in Los Angeles had found a "mountain of evidence" that enforcement tactics were violating the Constitution. The plaintiffs included U.S. citizens swept up in immigration stops. An appeals court had left Frimpong's ruling in place.

The Supreme Court's 6-3 decision comes as Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents also step up enforcement in Washington amid Trump's federal takeover of

the capital city's law enforcement and deployment of the National Guard.

The lawsuit will now continue to unfold in California. It was filed by immigrant advocacy groups that accused Trump's administration of systematically targeting brown-skinned people during his administration's crackdown on illegal immigration in the LA area. Department of Homeland Security attorneys have said immigration officers target people based on illegal presence in the U.S., not skin color, race or ethnicity. The Justice Department argued that the order wrongly restricted factors ICE agents can use when deciding who to stop.

The Los Angeles region has been a battleground for the Trump administration after its hard-line immigration strategy spurred protests and the deployment of the National Guard and the Marines. The number of immigration raids in the LA area appeared to slow shortly after Frimpong's order came down in July, but recently they have become more frequent again, including an operation in which agents jumped out of the back of a rented box truck and made arrests at an LA Home Depot store.

## Court upholds Carroll judgment against Trump

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — A federal appeals court has upheld a civil jury's finding that President Donald Trump must pay \$83.3 million to E. Jean Carroll for his repeated social media attacks against the longtime advice columnist after she accused him of sexual assault.

In a ruling issued Monday, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected Trump's appeal of the defamation award, finding that the "jury's damages awards are fair and reasonable."

Trump had argued that he should not have to pay the sum as a result of a Supreme Court decision expanding presidential immunity. His lawyers had asked for a new trial.

A civil jury in Manhattan issued the \$88.3 million award last year following a trial that centered on Trump's social media attacks against Carroll over her claims that he sexually assaulted her in a Manhattan department store in 1996.

That award followed a separate trial, in which Trump was found liable for sexually abusing Carroll and ordered to pay \$5 million. That award was upheld last December.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Zizians member to be arraigned for murder

**VT** BURLINGTON — A member of the cult-like Zizians group accused of killing a U.S. Border Patrol agent is set to make her first court appearance since prosecutors said they will seek the death penalty against her.

Teresa Youngblut, 21, of Seattle, is among a group of radical computer scientists focused on veganism, gender identity and artificial intelligence who have been linked to six killings in three states. She's accused of fatally shooting agent David Madland in Vermont on Jan. 20.

Youngblut initially was charged with using a deadly weapon against law enforcement and discharging a firearm during an assault with a deadly weapon, crimes that were not punishable by the death penalty. But administration changes led to more serious charges, and a new indictment released last month charged her with murder of a federal law enforcement agent, assaulting other agents with a deadly weapon and related firearms offenses.

### Northwestern president to resign amid tensions

**IL** EVANSTON — Northwestern University President Michael Schill said Thursday that he will resign, ending a three-year tenure marked by the freeze of hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding by the Trump administration and heated criticism from House Republicans over the university's response to campus protests.

The funding freeze and uncertainty over its finances contributed to Northwestern's decision to lay off around 200 people over the summer.

Schill will continue as president until an interim leader is chosen and will return from a sabbatical as a faculty member at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, the school said. He will work with the Board of Trustees on efforts to restore the university's frozen federal funding, Northwestern said.

### Space-bound robot dog goes for test run at park

**NM** WHITE SANDS NATIONAL PARK — Before a "robot dog" can fetch data on the moon or Mars, it must learn to do so on Earth. And right now, that's exactly what's happening in New Mexico's White Sands National Park with a contraption called LASSIE.

LASSIE (short for Legged Autonomous Surface Science in Analogue Environments) is a quadrupedal robot built by engineers at Temple University, Georgia Tech, Texas A&M, the University of Pennsylvania and Oregon State University, where roboticist Cristina Wilson is an assistant professor.

With funding from USC and NASA's Johnson Space Center, Wilson and her colleagues designed LASSIE to test just how useful so-called robot dogs could be in scientific contexts, like environmental research or space exploration.

"Legs can step over things. Wheels have to roll over them," Wilson told SFGATE.

Before a robot like LASSIE can make it to space, however, it

has to prove itself here on Earth.

With its sparkling sand dunes composed primarily of ultra-fine gypsum, White Sands offers a fairly accessible testing ground for a robot. The sand there also varies in depth, giving LASSIE the opportunity to test both its locomotive capabilities and its scientific instruments, which help LASSIE learn about its environment by testing the ground beneath its feet.

### Old-time baseball comes to play for local festival

**PA** LANCASTER — If you build it, they will come.

And in a nod to sports history, complete with uniforms, cigars and old equipment, the Athletic Base Ball Club of Philadelphia and Keystone Base Ball Club of Harrisburg revived 1860s-style baseball Saturday with an old-time matchup at Coleman Memorial Chapel in Lititz.

The chapel's Community Day Baseball Games festivities began with a nod to Iowa's Field of Dreams, as players emerged from an iconic backdrop, cornfields adjacent to center field.

Pierre LaRocco, a member of the Athletic club, said the organizations are about much more than just live games. "It's about remembering the history of the game of baseball and how it happened," LaRocco said.

### Driver who crashed into bicyclists sentenced

**AZ** PHOENIX — A driver who crashed into a group of bicyclists in suburban Phoenix, killing two of them and injuring several others, was sentenced Thursday to one year in jail.

Pedro Quintana-Lujan pleaded guilty to two counts of causing death by moving vehicle and 10 counts of causing serious injury by moving vehicle — all misdemeanors — stemming from the Feb. 25, 2023, crash.

Quintana-Lujan was driving a pickup hauling a trailer on a busy highway when the vehicle crashed into a group of bicyclists on the Cotton Lane Bridge in Goodyear about 19 miles west of Phoenix. Killed in the crash were Karen Malisa, 61, of Goodyear; and David Kero, 65, who was visiting from Michigan.

Quintana-Lujan's jail sentence will be followed by three years of probation. His driver's license also will be suspended for 180 days, and he was ordered to complete 60 hours of community service and pay a \$2,500 fine.

### Trump hosts 1st meeting of 'Rose Garden Club'

**DC** WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump hosted a dinner Friday night for members of Congress in the newly paved White House Rose Garden, telling them they were the first gathering of what he dubbed the "Rose Garden Club."

The president held a microphone as he addressed about 100 people, mostly House Republicans along with some GOP senators, thanking them for their support of his legislation.

"We call it the Rose Garden Club. And it's a club for senators, for congresspeople and for people in Washington, and frankly, people that can bring peace and success to our country," Trump said.

— From wire reports

STARS  AND STRIPES.

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Alcaraz beats Sinner for 6th Slam title

Associated Press

NEW YORK — So maybe the first U.S. Open final between young, elite rivals Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner wasn't as long, riveting and dramatic as their matchup to decide the championship at the French Open. Perhaps it wasn't as seemingly meaningful and plot-driven as their showdown for the Wimbledon trophy.

Still, what the No. 2-seeded Alcaraz's 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over No. 1 Sinner on Sunday did do was significant. Alcaraz reasserted his superiority over the defending champion, wrested away the top spot in the ATP rankings and left tennis fans eager for whenever their next clash will come.

They are the first two men in the sport's history to face each other in three consecutive Grand Slam finals within a single season.

"I'm seeing you more than my family," Alcaraz joked during the trophy ceremony, eliciting a grin from Sinner. "It's great to share the court, to share the locker rooms, everything."

This 2-hour, 42-minute win gave Alcaraz, a 22-year-old from Spain, leads over Sinner, a 24-year-old from Italy, of 10-5 in their head-to-head series, 6-4 in total Grand Slam trophies, and 2-1 in U.S. Open championships.

"I give lots of credit to him, because he handled the situation better than I did," said Sinner, who lamented that his own play was too predictable. "He raised his level when he had to."

Under a closed roof because of rain earlier in the day, Alcaraz was stronger, faster, more well-equipped for the occasion.

"You were better than me," Sinner said. "I tried my best today. I couldn't do more."

Alcaraz finished with twice as many winners, 42-21, and his coach, 2003 French Open champ Juan Carlos Ferrero, called the performance "perfect." Alcaraz's view of that assessment? "He's right. I think I played perfect. ... If I want to beat Jannik, I have to play perfect."

This hard-court matchup followed Alcaraz's victory over Sinner across 5½ hours after erasing a trio of match points on the red clay at Roland-Garros in June, and Sinner's victory over two-time reigning champ Alcaraz on the grass at the All England Club in July.

"The things ... I did well in London," Sinner said, "he did better today."

Alcaraz took a week off after Wimbledon and then immediately got to work, spending 15 days with Ferrero focusing on one

thing and one thing only: beating Sinner.

"I studied that match," Alcaraz said.

During his defeat at Wimbledon, Alcaraz was caught by a camera telling his team in Spanish: "From the back of the court, he's much better than me."

Perhaps that's why Alcaraz was so aggressive Sunday with his sledgehammer of a forehand. Whenever the smallest opening presented itself, Alcaraz barged through with that shot.

Sinner had dropped a total of one service game in his preceding three matches, but Alcaraz broke right away Sunday and five times in all.

These guys have combined to collect the past eight Slam trophies — four each — and 10 of 13. Novak Djokovic, the 24-time major champ eliminated by Alcaraz on Friday, took the other three.

Both Sinner, who had won his past 27 hard-court matches at majors, and Alcaraz offered glimpses Sunday of why they are so good, although it was rare that both were at a peak simultaneously.

An hour and 20 minutes in, it was a set apiece, after Alcaraz ceded one for the first time all tournament.

As Sinner worked his way into

things, he would celebrate points by pumping a fist toward his guest box, which included Olympic champion ski racer Lindsey Vonn.

But it was Alcaraz who appeared to have more ticket-buyers on his side.

They regaled him with standing ovations. For one particularly magical volley at a hard-to-believe angle struck just before the ball hit the court — even Alcaraz himself liked that one, saying "Wow!" and breaking into a wide grin. For one special overhead smash to a corner with the tailing movement of a firefly.

Sinner certainly wasn't as pleased by those sorts of strokes.

He bounced his racket off the ground and caught it after one lost point. He exhaled and shook his head after another.

Sinner simply doesn't see that sort of stuff from anyone else.

And these numbers say as much about Alcaraz as they do Sinner: Over the last two seasons, Sinner is 1-7 against Alcaraz — and 109-4 against everyone else.

That one win for Sinner over Alcaraz came at Wimbledon.

Less than two months later, Alcaraz reversed the result to cap what he called "the best tournament so far that I have ever played."

## Hamlin earns 59th win to advance in NASCAR playoffs

Associated Press

MADISON, Ill. — Nothing seems to distract Denny Hamlin, and the NASCAR star proved it again with a laser-focused victory at World Wide Technology Raceway on Sunday to advance in the Cup Series playoffs.

After a week in which his father was ailing and his 23XI Racing team lost a decision in its court battle with NASCAR, Hamlin compartmentalized his concerns and stayed on task for a virtually flawless weekend — starting from the pole position

and leading a race-high 75 of 240 laps. With his 59th career win, Hamlin advanced to the second round of the playoffs and joined Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Chase Briscoe, who finished second after winning last week's opener at Darlington Raceway. Chase Elliott finished third, followed by Ryan Blaney and Joey Logano as playoff drivers swept the top five spots at the 1.25-mile oval.

The No. 11 Toyota team called Hamlin to the pits for his final stop with 44 laps remaining, and he cycled to the front on a cau-

tion 15 laps later. The Virginia native seized the lead from Brad Keselowski on the restart, delivering the 200th win in NASCAR's premier series for Toyota.

He celebrated with a long burnout down the front stretch of the track outside St. Louis that is commonly referred to as Gateway, bringing boos raining down from a sellout crowd to Hamlin's delight. Relishing life as a NASCAR villain is one of many roles being filled by the multitasking Hamlin, who also co-hosts a podcast while running 23XI Racing,

the three-car team he co-owns with NBA legend Michael Jordan. It's had little impact on the on-track performance for Hamlin, who is in his 20th Cup season driving for team owner Joe Gibbs. At Gateway, he became the seventh driver in NASCAR history with multiple victories after his 700th start.

The ultimate prize would be a first Cup championship, and Hamlin took another step toward that goal by locking into the next round ahead of the Sept. 13 race at Bristol Motor Speedway.



# Bills' 16 points in last 4 minutes stun Ravens

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Josh Allen led Buffalo to three scores in the final four minutes, the last a 32-yard field goal by Matt Prater as time expired, and the Bills rallied from 15 points down to stun the Baltimore Ravens 41-40 in a season-opening Sunday night thriller.

Buffalo scored 16 points in the last 3:56, with Prater's kick capping a nine-play, 66-yard drive over the final 1:26.

Allen went 33 of 46 for 394 yards with two touchdowns and scored two more rushing in a matchup of the NFL's past two MVPs.

"Our team didn't quit," Allen said, his voice almost hoarse after the game. "I think there's people who left the stadium. That's OK. We'll be fine. But have some faith next time."

He spoiled a strong performance by Lamar Jackson, the 2023 MVP who went 14 of 19 for 210 yards and two scores while adding 70 yards rushing and another TD. Derrick Henry rushed for 169 yards and two touchdowns for Baltimore, but also contributed to the loss by fumbling with 3:06 left.

**Packers 27, Lions 13:** Jordan Love threw a pair of touchdown passes and Micah Parsons had a sack in his Green Bay debut as the Packers delivered an exceptional defensive performance in a victory over Detroit.

Opening a season at home for the first time since 2018, Green Bay beat the two-time defending NFC North champions after going 1-5 in divisional games last year.

The Packers won their 13th consecutive home opener, the longest such streak since the Miami Dolphins also won 13 straight from 1976-88.

**Buccaneers 23, Falcons 20:** Rookie Emeka Egbuka caught two touchdown passes, including a go-ahead 25-yarder with 59 seconds remaining, and visiting Tampa Bay recovered after losing the lead on a marathon drive

by Atlanta to beat the Falcons in a dramatic opening game.

Following Baker Mayfield's 25-yard pass to Egbuka, Chase McLaughlin's missed extra point gave the Falcons an opening to force overtime with a field goal.

Michael Penix Jr., who capped an 18-play drive by scoring on a 4-yard run for a 20-17 lead with 2:17 remaining, moved the Falcons into field goal position in the final minute. Young-hoe Koo was wide right on the 44-yarder.

**Steelers 34, Jets 32:** Aaron Rodgers threw four touchdown passes in his Steelers debut, including two in a 50-second span in the second half, and Chris Boswell kicked a go-ahead 60-yard field goal with 1:03 remaining to lead visiting Pittsburgh over New York.

With the Steelers trailing the season opener 32-31, Rodgers got the ball against his former team with just over three minutes left and led the offense into Jets territory. On fourth-and-11 from the 42, Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin opted for a field goal try and Boswell easily made the kick.

New York, which lost in coach Aaron Glenn's debut, had a chance to drive for a potential winning field goal when they got the ball back with 56 seconds remaining. On fourth-and-3, Justin Fields connected with Garrett Wilson for what could've been a first down — but Jalen Ramsey smacked into the Jets receiver, who couldn't hold onto the ball.

**Rams 14, Texans 9:** Matthew Stafford threw for 245 yards and a touchdown while becoming the 10th quarterback in NFL history with 60,000 yards in the air, and Braden Fiske recovered a fumble forced by Nate Landman with 1:43 to play in host Los Angeles' victory over Houston.

Puka Nacua had 10 catches for 130 yards for the Rams, who went ahead on Davis Allen's TD catch on the opening drive of the third quarter. Neither team

scored again in a choppy season opener.

**Colts 33, Dolphins 8:** Daniel Jones ran for two touchdowns and threw for one, and host Indianapolis snapped the NFL's longest active opening-day winless drought at 11 with a rout of Miami.

Jones went 22-for-29 for 272 yards, including a career-high 197 yards in the first half, as the Colts scored on all seven possessions.

**Commanders 21, Giants 6:** Jayden Daniels threw for 233 yards and a touchdown, Deebo Samuel scored in his Washington debut and the host Commanders kept New York out of the end zone in a win.

Daron Payne had a sack and batted down a third-down pass, and Washington never let Russell Wilson look all that comfortable in his first start with the Giants.

**Cardinals 20, Saints 13:** Kyler Murray threw two touchdown passes and visiting Arizona narrowly held on for a victory over penalty-prone New Orleans in the Saints' first game under rookie coach Kellen Moore.

Murray passed for 163 yards, hitting Marvin Harrison Jr. five times for 71 yards and a TD. Murray also rushed for 38 yards and his other TD toss came on a 4-yard shovel pass to running back James Conner.

**Raiders 20, Patriots 13:** Geno Smith opened his stint with Las Vegas by throwing for 362 yards and a touchdown, rookie Ashton Jeanty rushed for his first career touchdown and the visiting Raiders rallied to beat New England.

Tight end Brock Bowers had five catches for 103 yards before leaving in the fourth quarter with a knee injury. Jakobi Meyers added eight catches for 97 yards. Maxx Crosby and Malcolm Koonce also added sacks to help give Pete Carroll his first victory as Las Vegas' coach.

**Bengals 17, Browns 16:** Cincinnati's defense came up with

two second-half turnovers, including DJ Turner's interception with 1:24 remaining, and the visiting Bengals held on for a victory over Cleveland.

Cincinnati, which won an opener for the first time since 2021, also benefited from new Browns kicker Andre Szmyt missing a pair of second-half kicks.

**Jaguars 26, Panthers 10:** Trevor Lawrence threw a touchdown pass, Travis Etienne ran for 143 yards and host Jacksonville beat Carolina to give its new regime a debut victory.

The Jaguars' revamped defense contributed as much as Lawrence and the offense. Newcomers Jourdan Lewis and Eric Murray made several big plays, with Lewis' pass breakup leading to a first-half interception for Foye Oluokun.

**49ers 17, Seahawks 13:** Third-string tight end Jake Tonges caught a deflected pass for a touchdown with 1:34 remaining, and visiting San Francisco rallied for a season-opening win over Seattle.

Tonges entered the game having never caught an NFL pass. He finished with three receptions in relief of injured All-Pro tight end George Kittle and came down with a 50-50 ball from a scrambling Brock Purdy for a 4-yard TD. Seahawks cornerback Riq Woolen got a hand on the ball, but it bounced off him and Tonges grabbed it.

**Broncos 20, Titans 12:** Bo Nix overcame three turnovers and host Denver spoiled top overall draft pick Cam Ward's debut with a victory over Tennessee, winning despite a sloppy offensive performance and two key special-teams blunders.

Nix threw a touchdown pass to Courtland Sutton to go with his two interceptions and lost fumble, and rookie running back R.J. Harvey's 50-yard scamper set up J.K. Dobbins' 19-yard TD burst up the middle that made it 20-12 midway through the fourth quarter.

# Raleigh and Mariners pummel Braves

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Cal Raleigh hit his major league-leading 53rd home run and the Seattle Mariners had 20 hits as they scored their most runs since 2012 in an 18-2 rout of the Atlanta Braves on Sunday.

Eugenio Suárez homered twice, raising his season total to 45, and Jorge Polanco and Josh Naylor also went deep as the Mariners hit five homers in consecutive games for the second time in team history, the first since May 20-21, 1994.

Polanco and Naylor homered in an eight-run third inning and Raleigh hit a three-run drive in a seven-run ninth, giving him 113 RBIs. Suárez hit a solo homer in the sixth and a two-run shot in the ninth.

Seattle had its most runs since beating Texas 21-8 on May 30, 2012, and its most hits since getting 20 in that game against the Rangers. The Mariners won consecutive games for the first time since Aug. 24 against the Athletics and the following day vs. San Diego.

Seattle (75-68) has a 1½-game lead over Texas (74-70) for the third and last AL wild card. The Rangers lost for the third time in four games following a six-game winning streak.

Luis Castillo (9-8) allowed one run and four hits in six innings.

Atlanta scratched scheduled starter Spencer Strider on Sunday morning and pushed him back to Tuesday against the Chicago Cubs.

Joey Wentz (5-6) gave up eight runs, matching his career high, and eight hits in 2½ innings.

**Guardians 2, Rays 1:** José Ramírez passed Jim Thome to move into sole possession of second place on Cleveland's career RBIs list, helping the Guardians to a road win over Tampa Bay in a game with wild-card race implications.

Ramírez hit a tying triple in

the two-run sixth off Garrett Cleavinger (1-5) for his 938th RBI and trails only Earl Averill's 1,084.

**Dodgers 5, Orioles 2:** Shohei Ohtani hit two home runs and Mookie Betts added a solo shot to back an effective pitching performance by Clayton Kershaw, and visiting Los Angeles beat Baltimore to end a five-game losing streak.

Kershaw (10-2) won his sixth straight decision to help the NL West leaders salvage the finale of a three-game series against the last-place Orioles. The left-hander struck out eight and allowed two runs and four hits over 5½ innings.

**Yankees 4, Blue Jays 3:** Aaron Judge saved a run with a diving catch and scored the go-ahead run on Cody Bellinger's double as host New York beat Toronto and closed within two games of the AL East leader.

Judge took a few steps and sprawled to catch George Springer's 106.4 mph liner to strand Nathan Lukes at second and protect a one-run lead.

**Brewers 10, Pirates 2:** Andrew Vaughn had four hits and Jacob Misorowski cruised through seven innings as visiting Milwaukee scored nine runs off top prospect Bubba Chandler to complete a three-game sweep of Pittsburgh.

Vaughn's three singles and a double in his first four at bats made up his four-hit game, while with the White Sox. Misorowski (5-2) allowed one run and three hits, striking out eight while going more than six innings.

**Reds 3, Mets 2:** Hunter Greene tied a season high with 12 strikeouts and host Cincinnati beat the Mets to take two of three from New York and move back above .500.

New York's Brandon Sproat (0-1) held the Reds hitless through 5½ innings in his major league debut before allowing three consecutive hits.

New York (76-67) leads Cincinnati and San Francisco (both 72-71) for the last NL wild card.

**White Sox 6, Tigers 4:** Lenyn Sosa homered and drove in three runs as visiting Chicago beat Detroit. Sosa walked and scored in the first inning, hit a solo homer in the third and hit a tiebreaking two-run single in the eighth as the White Sox won for the seventh time in eight games.

Detroit is a half-game behind Toronto for the best record in the American League.

**Marlins 5, Phillies 4:** Otto López homered twice and host Miami beat Philadelphia, avoiding a three-game sweep by the NL East leaders.

Troy Johnston had two hits for the Marlins, who snapped a five-game skid. Ronny Henriquez (7-1) pitched 1½ innings of scoreless relief, and Lake Bachar escaped a jam in the ninth for his third save.

**Twins 5, Royals 1:** Byron Buxton and Kody Clemens homered and visiting Minnesota beat Kansas City to drop the Royals two games back for the last AL wild card.

Buxton led off the game against Michael Lorenzen (5-10) with his 30th homer, extending his career high. Clemens hit his 16th homer in the fourth, a 451-foot drive that gave Minnesota a 3-0 lead.

**Cardinals 4, Giants 3:** Sonny Gray took a no-hit bid into the sixth inning and host St. Louis beat San Francisco to leave the Giants four games back for the last NL wild card.

San Francisco (72-71) is four games behind the New York Mets for the third and final NL wild card.

**Nationals 6, Cubs 3:** Pinch-hitter Josh Bell hit a three-run homer and visiting Washington rallied with five runs in the ninth inning off Cubs closer Daniel Palencia to stun Chicago.

The Cubs entered the ninth leading 3-1, but Palencia (1-6)

failed to retire any of the five National hitters he faced before leaving with right shoulder tightness.

**Rangers 4, Astros 2:** Jake Burger followed Josh Jung's tie-breaking double with a two-run homer off Framber Valdez in the sixth inning, and host Texas beat Houston to keep pace in the American League wild-card race.

The Rangers (74-70) remained 1½ games behind Seattle (75-58), which won at Atlanta, for the final AL wild-card spot. Texas is four games behind the AL West-leading Astros (78-66) with 18 games remaining.

**Padres 8, Rockies 1:** Manny Machado hit his 23rd home run and drove in three runs to help San Diego roll to a road win over Colorado.

With the win, the Padres remained one game behind the Los Angeles Dodgers for first place in the NL West.

The loss was the Rockies' 13th in their past 16 games and dropped them to an MLB-worst 40-103.

**Angels 4, Athletics 3:** Jo Adell hit his 35th homer, Travis d'Arnaud hit a tiebreaking RBI double in the eighth inning, and Los Angeles avoided a three-game sweep with a home victory over the Athletics.

Chris Taylor sparked the winning rally with a one-out walk off A's reliever Osvaldo Bido (2-5) in the eighth.

**Red Sox 7, Diamondbacks 4:** Pinch-hitter Nick Sogard lined a late tiebreaking, two-run double and Aroldis Chapman extended his hitless streak to 17 appearances by striking out four in the ninth inning as the visiting Red Sox rallied to beat Arizona.

Boston put two on in the ninth against Taylor Rashi (0-1) and Sogard followed with a double off Andrew Saalfrank. Carlos Narváez added a run-scoring single.