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50¢/Free to Deployed Areas

Ukraine rejects Russian demand to surrender port city of Mariupol

By CARA ANNA
Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine — As Mariupol's defenders held out Monday against Russian demands that they surrender, the number of bodies in the rubble of the bombed and encircled Ukrainian city remained shrouded in uncertainty, the full extent of the horror not yet known.

With communications crippled, movement restricted and many residents in hiding, the fate of those inside an art school flattened on Sunday and a theater that was blown apart four days earlier was unclear.

More than 1,300 people were believed to be sheltering in the theater, and 400 were estimated to have been in the art school.

Perched on the Sea of Azov, Mariupol has been a key target that has been relentlessly pounded for more than three weeks and has seen some of the worst suffering of the war. The fall of the southern port city would help Russia establish a land bridge to Crimea, seized from Ukraine in 2014.

But no clear picture emerged how close its capture might be.

"Nobody can tell from the outside if it really is on the verge of being taken," said Keir Giles, a Russia expert at the British think tank Chatham House.

Over the weekend, Moscow had offered safe passage out of Mariupol.

SEE DEMAND ON PAGE 6

INSIDE

Biden plans to stop in Poland on Europe trip for talks with allies

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A convoy with military supplies moves on a Poland highway toward the border with Ukraine on March 16. Inset: Volunteers spray-paint a car for Ukrainian soldiers.

PHOTOS BY ARTURAS MOROZOVAS/The Washington Post

Clandestine delivery

Inside the transfer of foreign military equipment to Ukrainian soldiers

By STEVE HENDRIX
The Washington Post

There were no passport officers on the dirt road, no customs lane, no signs marking this isolated patch of farmland for what it has become: a clandestine gateway for military supplies entering Ukraine.

"No pictures, no pictures," shouted a Polish border guard as a convoy of 17 trucks hissed to a halt on a biting morning this week.

Not far from here was a Ukrainian military base where at least 35 people had been killed a

"You are our Guardian Angel."

"Kruk"

a soldier in Ukraine, in a text message to Zemya Bliumenzonaite, a Blue and Yellow staffer

few days earlier by a Russian missile barrage, and no one wanted to call attention to this ad hoc crossing on the the Poland-Ukraine border. Washington Post journalists were given permission to observe the delivery on the condition that they turn off the geolocation func-

tion on their cameras.

The convoy was carrying 45 vehicles — retrofitted Jeeps, ambulances, an armored bank truck and an army field kitchen — as well as 24 tons of diesel. It had traveled overnight from Lithuania as part of a swelling supply network racing to catch up with the return of war to Europe. More than a dozen volunteer drivers, including one whose relief work was normally limited to helping motorists stranded on the highway, had driven hood-to-taillight almost

SEE TRANSFER ON PAGE 9

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Canadian rail work halt could hit US agriculture

Associated Press

DETROIT — Canadian Teamsters and CP Rail blamed each other for a work stoppage Sunday that brought trains to a halt across Canada and interrupted fertilizer and other shipments to and from the U.S.

More than 3,000 Canadian Pacific Rail conductors, engineers, train and yard workers represented by the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference are off the job after both sides couldn't reach a deal by a midnight deadline.

Both sides say they are still talking with federal mediators.

Canadian Pacific covers much of the U.S. Midwest and is a large shipper of potash and fertilizer for agriculture. It also carries grain from the U.S. to its northern neighbor for domestic use and exports. The railroad serves the Dakotas, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri and other states, according to a map on its investor website. CP also operates in New England and upstate New York, spokesman Patrick Waldron said.

CP says it's the leading carrier of potash, a plant nutrient used in the production of multiple crops. The company says in investor documents it carries 70% of the potash produced in North America, all from mines in Saskatchewan.

A lengthy interruption of fertilizer shipments could hurt U.S. farmers, who are nearing the spring planting season. The work stoppage could also exacerbate existing supply chain bottlenecks in the U.S. and Canada that stem from the COVID-19 pandemic.

EXCHANGE RATES

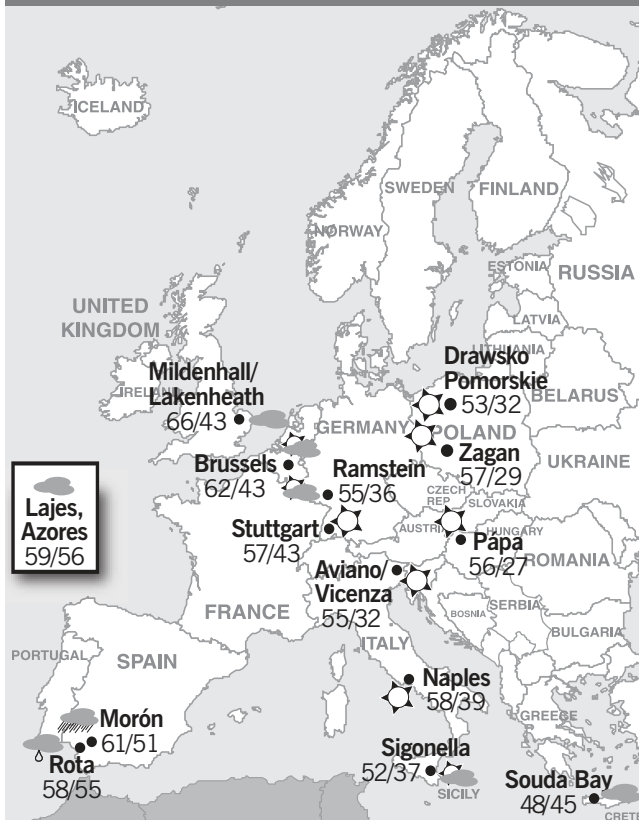
Military rates		South Korea (Won)	1217.29
Euro costs (March 22)	\$1.08	Switzerland (Franc)	0.9309
Dollar buys (March 22)	0.8825	Thailand (Baht)	33.53
British pound (March 22)	\$1.29	Turkey (NewLira)	14.8301
Japanese yen (March 22)	116.00	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	
South Korean won (March 22)	1181.00	INTEREST RATES	
Commercial rates		Prime rate	3.50
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770	Interest Rates Discount rate	1.00
Britain (Pound)	1.3175	Federal funds market rate	0.08
Canada (Dollar)	1.2594	3-month bill	0.42
China (Yuan)	6.3539	30-year bond	2.42
Denmark (Krone)	6.7429		
Egypt (Pound)	18.2197		
Euro	0.9063		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8267		
Hungary (Forint)	338.81		
Israel (Shekel)	3.2283		
Japan (Yen)	119.18		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3039		
Norway (Krone)	8.7405		
Philippines (Peso)	52.38		
Poland (Zloty)	4.25		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7515		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3553		

WEATHER OUTLOOK

TUESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



TUESDAY IN EUROPE



WEDNESDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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MILITARY

Ramstein squadron shows ‘girl solidarity’

Three flights flew its 1st training formation with all-women crew

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Moments after loadmasters Staff Sgt. Devyn Freeze and Senior Airman Marissa Antillonloya greeted Army paratroopers who were supposed to hitch a ride to France on three C-130Js, the mission was called off.

The French had double-booked the drop zone, so the static jump planned Friday, with transportation provided by the 37th Airlift Squadron at Ramstein, would have to be postponed. But the crew and planes still took to the skies on a training run.

The C-130s out of Ramstein are working overtime to support the rapid movement of tens of thousands of troops and help transport thousands of tons of supplies to central and Eastern Europe, as part of a NATO reassurance mission that began in the weeks before Russia’s new invasion of Ukraine.

All three of the planes on Friday’s mission earned an unusual distinction: they flew the first training formation with all-women crew members in the squadron’s history, which goes back to World War II.

Capt. Tiffany Haines, who led the group of 17 women with Capt. Megan Kraynak as her co-pilot, said flying with another female pilot isn’t uncommon.

“But as far as a whole airplane full of women ... especially a full-blown formation full of women, that’s extremely rare and also ve-

ry rewarding,” she said.

The all-female formation was organized in recognition of Women’s History Month.

The crew members voiced excitement about the distinction in the runup to the flight, but the focus turned to the changes in the mission scenario once the paratroopers left.

An A-10 had been shot down, and Haines and her crew had to get supplies to the downed airman.

Haines “had to come up with a drop zone, created in the aircraft computer; be able to communicate that to the rest of the formation, in order to provide that resupply ... before the simulated enemy overtook his position,” said Kraynak, who served as the instructor pilot Friday.

“She did well,” Kraynak said of Haines. “We gave her a very complicated scenario that she had to deal with.”

Haines was waiting to hear whether, as a result of her performance, she would earn the privilege to lead much larger formations.

The switch from paratrooper drop to emergency assistance underscored the diversity of missions a crew for the workhorse C-130 is expected to execute. The C-130A first took flight in 1956; the most recent C-130J variant was introduced in 1999.

“We train to all scenarios for all times so we can be prepared at any moment,” Kraynak said.

While there is always a demand,



PHOTOS BY JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Staff Sgt. Devyn Freeze, left, and Senior Airman Marissa Antillonloya, loadmasters with the 37th Airlift Squadron at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, prepare for a training flight Friday.

squadrons flying C-130s have been much busier fulfilling their tactical airlift mission since Feb. 24, when the new Russian invasion of Ukraine began.

The 37th Airlift Squadron jets have ferried U.S. airmen assigned to the United Kingdom to Lithuania and dropped off equipment in Romania, among other missions in recent weeks.

The training Friday tested their ability to “be creative, to be able to think on the fly,” Kraynak said, in a situation they might encounter downrange, Haines added.

And while several crew members have participated in similar training missions before, they did share a little more satisfaction in working alongside other women on Friday.

Men still vastly outnumber women in the Air Force, though the percentage of women in the service has grown steadily in recent decades to about 20%. The 37th Airlift Squadron is about 14% women, 86th Airlift Wing officials said.

However, only about 1% of Air Force pilots are women.

Freeze, 23, said Friday was her first time flying with all women.

“I’m lucky to fly once every 10 flights with another woman,” said Freeze, who joined the rest of the crew in wearing a pink shirt under their flight suits, among other actions to build camaraderie.

“Just a little ‘women unite’ type of thing, girl solidarity,” she said.



Airmen wore a patch signifying the 37th Airlift Squadrons first all-women training flight.

“As far as a whole airplane full of women ... especially a full-blown formation full of women, that’s extremely rare and also very rewarding.”

Capt. Tiffany Haines
U.S. Air Force



Senior Airman Marissa Antillonloya, left, and Staff Sgt. Devyn Freeze prepare a C-130J to board Army paratroopers for a training mission.

MILITARY

Official: US fortified Saudi Arabia's Patriot missiles

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States has transferred a significant number of Patriot antimissile interceptors to Saudi Arabia in recent weeks as the Biden administration looks to ease what has been a point of tension in the increasingly complicated U.S.-Saudi relationship.

A senior administration official confirmed Sunday night that the interceptors have been sent to Saudi Arabia. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a decision that has not been formally announced, said the decision was in line with President Joe

Biden's promise that "America will have the backs of our friends in the region."

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan on Sunday condemned Houthi forces in Yemen after they unleashed one of their most intense barrages of drone and missile strikes on Saudi Arabia's critical energy facilities, sparking a fire at one site and temporarily cutting oil production at another.

The Associated Press reported in September that the U.S. had moved its own Patriot defense system from Prince Sultan Air Base outside of Riyadh, even as the

kingdom faced continued to face air attacks from Yemen's Houthi rebels.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia said on Monday that it "won't bear any responsibility" for a shortage in global oil supplies after a fierce barrage of attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels affected production in the kingdom, the world's largest oil exporter.

The unusually stark warning marked a departure from the giant oil producer's typically cautious statements, as Saudi officials remain aware that even their smallest comments can swing the price of oil and rattle global markets.



ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AP

A member of the U.S. Air Force stands near a Patriot missile battery at Prince Sultan Air Base in al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia, on Feb. 20, 2020.

Lost megaphone from DOD school reconnects woman with Okinawa past

By FRANK ANDREWS

Stars and Stripes

In the space of six months, Debbie Mills survived two bouts of COVID-19 and a heart attack, she said. And thanks to a stranger's Facebook post, rediscovered a piece of her life lost on Okinawa.

Nearly 40 years ago, Mills, who turns 56 on Wednesday, put aside her cheerleading megaphone from Kubasaki High School at Kadena Air Base. She graduated in 1984 and returned to the United States with her Air Force family, she recently told Stars and Stripes by phone and Instagram.

Mills attended New Mexico State University on a Miss America Pageant scholarship after winning the local Otero County pageant. She then attended Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, Calif. She began a 30-year career as a medical technician and then operated her own in-home hospice care business.

Meanwhile, the friends she made at Kubasaki remained her friends, and eventually served as a support network during her illnesses in late 2020 and early 2021.

"My classmates just rallied around me and prayed for me," Mills said. "It's a family bond that you can't put your finger on; it's rare."

Mills said she first contracted COVID-19 in December 2020 after a shopping trip near her home in Big Bear, Calif. She recovered but fell ill in January 2021 and tested positive again for the coronavirus respiratory disease.

"I got reinfected, and the second time around was worse," she said. "I couldn't walk. I couldn't talk. I had brain swelling. I didn't know if I was going to make it."

On top that, Mills said, she suffered a heart attack on Jan. 20, 2021. Altogether she spent 10 months recovering.

And then, in February, Emily Bishop in Washington, D.C., found a Kubasaki cheerleader's megaphone stenciled with Debbie



DEBBIE MILLS

Debbie Mills cheers on the Kubasaki High School football team at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, in the early 1980s. She graduated in 1984 and returned to the United States with her Air Force family.

Mills' name. Thinking the original owner might like to have it, Bishop took to Kubasaki's alumni group on Facebook and announced the find.

"I just found it last week in the back of my closet at my parents' house," she posted on Feb. 9 in the private group. "The original owner might love to have it as a reminder of their time in Okinawa."

Her post received dozens of comments almost immediately and nearly 100 reactions, many from friends of the white-and-black megaphone's former owner.

"Yes! its Debbie Mills! from our Samurai football team! Awesome times!" wrote Kubasaki alumnus Pat McGale.

"Awww! My Samurai Sister, Deb!!! She will LOVE this! We cheered together in 82-84. I had one of those with my name on it too so if you ever see it let me know!" wrote Leslie Nease, another alum.

Several classmates contacted Mills about the megaphone.

"When I graduated, I came home with a sweater and tambourine, but I left the megaphone behind because we had only so much room on the plane," Mills told Stars and Stripes. "To be honest, I thought I would never see it again. I thought it would be painted over."

A year after Mills left Okinawa, a then-11-year-old Bishop began a new life on the island when her Marine father was stationed at Camp Foster. She attended sixth grade at Zukeran Elementary, then Kubasaki as a seventh grader the following year.

"The details of the how I acquired the megaphone are kind of fuzzy," Bishop told Stars and Stripes via Facebook Messenger on Friday. "But I'm pretty sure it was right at the end of my seventh grade school year."

It may have been given to her

by a teacher who was cleaning out a storage locker. Bishop said she "totally looked up to the upperclassmen" and wanted to be cool like them.

The megaphone traveled with Bishop when she and her family returned to the States in 1987. It sat in the corner of her bedroom in Rhode Island and eventually settled in the back of her parents' closet in Washington, waiting to be rediscovered decades later.

"It's funny, I used to love that megaphone, because it was a physical reminder of my time in Okinawa, but when I saw [Mills'] name and was like — I wasn't even a cheerleader ... and here is her name! So, I took it to the Internet."

Bishop said she plans to mail the megaphone to Mills once she is back at her parents' house, a two-hour drive from her home in Virginia.

Mills, recuperating at home and



EMILY BISHOP

Mills used this megaphone as a cheerleader.

posting inspirational videos on TikTok as @MountainSoulSista323, said the upside of her pandemic ordeal was reconnecting with her past as a student at a Defense Department school.

"Living in Okinawa, Japan, for me was the best time of my entire life," she said. "I'm not kidding. I can't even explain the friendships that I have to this day, 38 years later. They are my family."

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MILITARY/AFGHANISTAN

Marines killed in Norway Osprey crash identified

By PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

EVENES, Norway — Loved ones and leaders on Monday remembered the four Marines who died following an aircraft crash in northern Norway for their commitment to their military service and their families.

Capt. Matthew J. Tomkiewicz, 27; Capt. Ross A. Reynolds; 27, Gunnery Sgt. James W. Speedy; 30; and Cpl. Jacob M. Moore, 24, died when their MV-22B Osprey crashed south of Bodo on Friday, the Marine Corps said in a statement Monday.

All four were assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261, Marine Aircraft Group 26, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., the statement said.

U.S. and Norwegian officials are still investigating what caused the Osprey to crash. There had been severe weather warnings in the region at the time.

“The pilots and crew were committed to accomplishing their mission and serving a cause greater than themselves,” Maj. Gen. Michael Cederholm, commander of the Marine Aircraft Wing, said in a letter to the Marines’ families.

The deceased are expected to be flown back to their families through dignified transfer in the

coming days.

“We will continue to execute the mission while keeping these Marines and their service on the forefront of our minds,” Cederholm said. “We will never allow these Marines’ sacrifice to go unnoticed or unappreciated.”

The four Marines were among some 30,000 NATO and partner nation troops participating in Exercise Cold Response, which includes land, sea and air drills and is scheduled to run until the beginning of April.

Their Osprey was scheduled to arrive in Bodo on Friday, according to a Norwegian armed forces statement. A missing persons report was received at about 6:30 p.m. and rescue aircraft were launched shortly afterward.

The crash site was discovered by air at about 9:15 p.m. the same day, but poor weather meant it couldn’t be reached until 1:30 a.m. Saturday, when police arrived and confirmed the deaths, the Norwegian military said.

Marines assisted with the Norwegian-led recovery effort, while numerous NATO allies and partner nations also offered operational support during and following the incident, the Marine Corps said Monday.

Tomkiewicz, of Fort Wayne, Ind., joined the Marine Corps in 2015 and served as an MV-22B Os-

prey pilot. His decorations include the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

Tomkiewicz is survived by his wife, Lauren, according to the Fort Wayne, Ind. newspaper The Journal Gazette.

He attended Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., where he joined the Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class hoping to go to officer candidate school, with the ultimate goal of flying for the service after graduation, according to his LinkedIn page.

“We ask all Hoosiers to surround the family with love and never-ending appreciation for all Captain Tomkiewicz gave to our state and nation,” Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb said in a statement, according to The Journal Gazette.

Reynolds, of Leominster, Mass., joined the Corps in 2017.

He was remembered Monday as an active community member who was involved in Boy Scouts of America, earning the rank of Eagle Scout, and who participated in veterans’ events “with [Reynolds] usually holding the flag,” according to a Facebook post by Leominster Mayor Dean Mazarrella.

Reynolds and his wife, Lana, were married Feb. 9, according to a post on Lana Reynolds’ Facebook page.



U.S. MARINE CORPS

Clockwise from the top left: Gunnery Sgt. James W. Speedy, Cpl. Jacob M. Moore, Capt. Matthew J. Tomkiewicz and Capt. Ross A. Reynolds died in the crash of a MV-22B Osprey in northern Norway, on Friday.

In a statement sent to the Boston TV station WBTS, Reynolds’ family said they were devastated by the loss and trying to come to terms with his death.

“Ross was so caring, compassionate, and committed, not only to his country, but also to being the best son, brother, husband, son-in-law, nephew, cousin, uncle, brother-in-law, friend and Marine that he could be,” the family said in the statement.

Speedy, of Cambridge, Ohio, had been a Marine since 2009, and served as an administrative specialist. His decorations include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon and the Marine Corps

Drill Instructor Ribbon.

On her Facebook page, Speedy’s wife, Chyanne, posted early Monday a photo of the couple with the note: “I love you so much.” The couple have a daughter.

Moore, of Catlettsburg, Ky., served as an MV-22B Osprey crew chief after joining the Corps in 2018. His decorations include the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

The Cold Response exercise is continuing as scheduled.

Stars and Stripes reporter Alison Bath contributed to this report.
wellman.phillip@stripes.com

Taliban announcement clear sign girls returning to school

By KATHY GANNON
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Schools for all students will open this week, Afghanistan’s Taliban-run Education Ministry announced Monday in the clearest sign yet that girls will be allowed back in school.

Girls have been denied education beyond Grade 6 since the Taliban swept back into power last Au-

gust.

The international community has been relentless in urging Afghanistan’s Taliban rulers to allow girls to return to school. Earlier this year, the new rulers opened up universities for women, although classes are gender segregated. They also promised girls would be allowed to return to classes in all grades following the Afghan new

year, which was being celebrated Monday.

The statement said classes will start Wednesday.

The ministry statement does not refer specifically to girls but it says: “The education ministry assures the nation it is committed to the right to education of all its citizens.”

The statement says the ministry

is also “working hard to eliminate all kinds of discrimination,” without elaborating. It urges all Afghans to send their children to schools or madrassas, which are religious educational facilities.

The Taliban rulers have not imposed restriction on the types of courses that women attending university can take. But music, which had previously been taught, is no

longer available. While the Taliban have not banned music and musicians have occasionally appeared on local TV, music is frowned upon by the hard-line religion-driven rulers.

The World Food Program will be stepping up its school meals program and will offer cash assistance to high school girls to encourage them to stay in school.

Sigonella base unaffected by protest

Stars and Stripes

Protesters opposed to war and NATO gathered at Naval Air Station Sigonella in Sicily over the weekend, but the peaceful demonstration did not disrupt operations or prevent people from reaching the base, a Navy official said Monday.

On Sunday, a crowd estimated at no more than 125 blocked one road providing access to a portion of the base, known as NAS II, that includes an airport and a flight line, but the main gate and other

access roads remained open, Capt. Kevin Pickard Jr., commanding officer of NAS Sigonella, said in a Monday statement.

The base was notified in advance of the protest and coordinated with Italian law enforcement agents, who ensured that the demonstrators remained in a preapproved area, he said.

Spurred in part by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, protesters called for the end of U.S. bases in Italy, which contribute to NATO’s mission. They also criticized mil-

itary spending by the Italian government.

The protest was organized by No Muos, a coalition of Italians who are against NATO, among other things.

The protest started about 10 a.m. and appeared to be over by 1:30 p.m., according to the base’s Facebook posts.

NAS Sigonella is divided into three sites: the Marinai Housing Complex, NAS I and NAS II.



FACEBOOK/No Muos

Demonstrators with the Italian group No Muos protest outside Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily, on Sunday.

EUROPE

Demand: Russia offered safe paths for Mariupol surrender**FROM PAGE 1**

pol — one corridor leading east to Russia, another going west to other parts of Ukraine — in return for the city's surrender before day-break Monday. Ukraine flatly rejected the offer well before the deadline.

Mariupol officials said at least 2,300 people have died in the siege, with some buried in mass graves, but fears grew that the number could be far higher.

For those who remain, conditions have become brutal. The bombardment has cut off Mariupol's electricity, water and food supplies and severed communication with the outside world, plunging residents into a fight for survival.

"What's happening in Mariupol is a massive war crime," European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

Mariupol had a prewar population of about 430,000. Around a quarter were believed to have left in the opening days of the war, and tens of thousands escaped over the past week by way of a humanitarian corridor. Other attempts have been thwarted by the fighting.

Those who have made it out told of a devastated city.

"There are no buildings there anymore," said 77-year-old Maria Fiodorova, who crossed the border to Poland on Monday after five days of travel.

Olga Nikitina, who fled Mariupol for the western Ukrainian city



RODRIGO ABB/AP

A man stands on top of a destroyed car amid the destruction caused after shelling of a shopping center, in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday.

of Lviv, where she arrived Sunday, said gunfire blew out her windows, and her apartment dropped below freezing.

"Battles took place over every street. Every house became a target," she said.

As Russia intensifies its effort to pound Mariupol into submission, its ground offensive in other parts of the country has become bogged down, slowed by lethal hit-and-run attacks by the Ukrainians.

Western officials and analysts say the conflict is turning into a grinding war of attrition, with Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces using air power and artillery to pulverize cities from a distance.

In the capital, Kyiv, a shopping center in the densely populated Podil district near the city center was a smoking ruin after being hit late Sunday by shelling that killed eight people, according to emergency officials.

Russian military spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov charged that Ukrainian forces had been using the shopping mall to store rockets and reload launchers. That claim could not be independently verified.

Britain's defense ministry said Ukrainian resistance has kept the bulk of Moscow's forces more than 15 miles from the center of Kyiv, but the capital "remains Russia's primary military objec-

tive."

Amid the continuing shelling, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko announced a curfew extending from Monday evening through Wednesday morning.

Ukrainian authorities also said Russia shelled a chemical plant outside the eastern city of Sumy, sending toxic ammonia leaking from a 50-ton tank, and hit a military training base in the Rivne region of western Ukraine with cruise missiles.

Konashenkov said 80 foreign and Ukrainian troops were killed in the Rivne attack. There was no immediate word from the Ukrainian side on casualties.

In the Black Sea port city of Odesa, authorities said Russian forces damaged civilian houses in a strike Monday. The city council said no one was killed.

Russia's invasion has driven nearly 3.5 million people from Ukraine, according to the United Nations. The U.N. has confirmed over 900 civilian deaths but said the real toll is probably much higher. Estimates of Russian deaths vary, but even conservative figures are in the low thousands.

Talks between Russia and Ukraine have continued by video but failed to bridge the chasm between the two sides, with the Kremlin demanding Ukraine disarm and declare itself neutral and Ukraine calling for binding security guarantees and a withdrawal of all Russian forces.

EU slams 'war crimes' in Ukraine but new sanctions seem unlikely

By **LORNE COOK**
Associated Press

BRUSSELS — European Union countries on Monday accused Russia's military of committing war crimes in Ukraine, but appeared unlikely to impose new sanctions on Moscow despite a clamor across Europe for those responsible for attacks on civilians to be held to account.

With civilian deaths mounting in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock highlighted the increase in Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and theaters.

The "courts will have to decide, but for me these are clearly war crimes," Baerbock said.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said before he chaired a meeting of the 27-nation bloc's foreign ministers in Brussels that "what's happening in Mariupol is a massive war crime. Destroying everything, bombarding and killing everybody in an indiscrimi-

nate manner. This is something awful."

The encircled southern city on the Sea of Azov has seen some of the worst horrors of the war. City officials said at least 2,300 people have died in the siege, with some buried in mass graves. City authorities say about 10% of the city's population of 430,000 have fled and reported that some residents were forced to go into Russia against their will.

Borrell underlined that "war also has law." The International Criminal Court in the Netherlands is gathering evidence about any possible war crimes in Ukraine, but Russia, like the United States, doesn't recognize the tribunal's jurisdiction.

Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney said his country is "certainly open to other mechanisms for accountability in terms of the atrocities that are taking place in Ukraine right now."

Coveney said Russia's invasion of Ukraine is probably the first "war being played out on social

media, where people see images happening live, and they're outraged by it."

"This is driving a fury across the European Union within the public as to why can't we stop this," he told reporters. "They want people held to account for the decisions taken and the brutality that we have seen."

Still, the imposition of a new round of EU sanctions on Russia — asset freezes and travel bans — appears unlikely for now.

Notorious for their often slow response to fast-moving international events, EU nations have rallied in just over three weeks since the invasion began on Feb. 24 to slap sanctions on hundreds of people. They include Russian President Vladimir Putin, senior ministers and pro-Kremlin oligarchs.

Several "entities" — companies, banks, airlines and ship builders — have also been hit in near record time. But the issue of imposing restrictive measures on Russian energy remains extremely sensitive, given the dependence



OLIVIER MATTHYS/AP

Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio, left, shares a word with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock at a meeting of the EU foreign ministers at the Europa building in Brussels, on Monday.

of many EU countries on Russian natural gas.

A group of countries led by Germany wants a pause on new sanctions for now, amid concerns about high energy prices and fears that Russia might halt gas exports to Europe. Some also want to save sanction ammunition for any new and major war atrocity, like the use of chemical weapons.

"We are doing everything to close loopholes in the sanctions"

that have already been agreed, Baerbock said.

But Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis, whose country borders Russia and Belarus, warned against "sanctions fatigue."

"We cannot get tired imposing sanctions. We cannot get tired, offering assistance and help to Ukraine," he said. Landsbergis said the EU must target oil, which is a huge source of revenue for Russia.

EUROPE

Patriotic tattoos and billboards become popular across Ukraine

Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine — Patriotic messages in the form of tattoos and billboards have become popular in war-torn Ukraine.

The Ukrainian flag and other symbols are favored additions for customers at a tattoo parlor in Lviv.

Olena Barlevych, 18, recently got a tattoo of the Ukrainian coat of arms with a military aircraft, symbolizing the fight to defend her country.

“This tattoo means a lot to us,” Barlevych said. “It is a very important phase for our country,

which must go down in history, which must be passed on to future generations.”

Artist Natalia Tanchynets has seen clients come in from several parts of Ukraine for similar tattoos. She said 70% of the proceeds from her patriotic tattoos are donated to the Ukrainian army.

At her shop, where a red stop sign on a wall had the handwritten word “war” added to it, Tanchynets said she’s had a gamut of emotions about the rush of patriotism.

While the war has been good for her business, “I’m so sad

about this situation in my country.” Tanchynets said one of her clients was killed on the front lines last week.

Lviv print shop manager Yuri Kobryn said he initially thought his business that creates advertising billboards would be useless in the war. He since has found creative ways to support Ukrainian troops.

Instead of advertisements, Kobryn’s company now prints motivational messages to his country — especially the Ukrainian army. Some are religious messages asking for protection of the troops.



BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

Ukrainian Natalia Tanchynets works on a patriotic-themed tattoo at her workshop in Lviv, Ukraine, on Saturday.

“The guys from the army were pleasantly surprised and asked me if I could make smaller versions that they could give them to others,” Kobryn said. “So that we can help them in our victory.”

Tokyo, Hiroshima halt exchanges with Russia

By HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Some Japanese governments are suspending exchanges with their Russian sister cities in the wake of the country’s ongoing invasion of Ukraine.

Sister city and twin town relationships aim to promote culture and commercial ties between two geographically or politically distinct localities.

Tokyo and Moscow have been sister cities since 1991.

“We will halt exchanges with our Russian city to show solidarity with Ukraine,” Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike told reporters March 11. Past exchanges have included the presentation of cherry blossom trees to Moscow.

However, that sister-city relationship won’t be outright eliminated, the Asahi newspaper reported a day later, citing an unnamed metropolitan government official.

Hiroshima has decided not to send a delegation that includes Mayor Kazumi Matsui to Volgograd, Russia, in September to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their sister-city ties, the Mainichi newspaper reported Sunday.

The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki penned a joint protest letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin on Feb. 28 after the leader put his nuclear deterrence forces on high alert, raising fears that the Ukraine invasion could lead to a nuclear conflict.

The United States dropped the world’s first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, killing 140,000 people. It dropped a second bomb three days later on Nagasaki, killing another 70,000.

“Such conduct is a violation of the ardent wishes of the survivors of the atomic bombs, who have been calling for the abolition of

nuclear weapons, to ‘never let anyone in the world go through the same suffering,’ ” the letter said.

Hiroshima, like Tokyo, plans to maintain its sister-city relationship with Volgograd, the Asahi report said. Nagasaki does not have such an agreement with a Russian city.

On March 10, the Ukrainian Embassy in Tokyo took to Twitter and called on Japan’s local governments to end relations with sister cities in Russia, the Asahi reported March 12. It also urged Japanese universities to cut cooperative ties to Russian schools.

However, those tweets were deleted after the embassy received many complaints, the report said.

Other local governments criticized Russia for its armed invasion against Ukraine but have said they will maintain their relationships with Russian cities.

Osaka, Japan’s second largest metro area, has been sister cities with St. Petersburg, Russia, since 1979. Mayor Ichiro Matsui sent a letter to Gov. Alexander Beglov on March 8 urging Russia to withdraw its military from Ukraine.

“It must be profoundly stated that the Russian Federation’s current act of aggression against another country by the use of force is a clear violation of international law,” Matsui wrote.

He said he is sure that the citizens of both Osaka and St. Petersburg stand together for world peace.

“I strongly hope the current situation will be resolved through peaceful means as soon as possible, and that both cities can continue toward the future-oriented path of fostering robust sister city relations,” Matsui wrote.

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EUROPE

Biden adds stop to Poland on Europe trip for this week

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden has added a stop in Poland to his trip this week to Europe for urgent talks with NATO and European allies, as Russian forces concentrate their fire upon cities and trapped civilians in a nearly month-old invasion of Ukraine.

Biden will first travel to Brussels and then to Poland to meet with leaders there, press secretary Jen Psaki said in a statement Sunday night.

Poland is a crucial ally in the Ukraine crisis. It is hosting thousands of American troops and is taking in more people fleeing the war in Ukraine — more than 2 million — than any other nation in the midst of the largest European refugee crisis in decades.

Biden will head to Warsaw for a bilateral meeting with President Andrzej Duda scheduled for Saturday. Biden will discuss how the United States, along with its allies and partners, is responding to “the humanitarian and human rights crisis that Russia’s unjustified and unprovoked war on Ukraine has created,” Psaki said.

On Monday ahead of his trip, Biden will discuss the war with European leaders. President Emmanuel Macron of France, Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany, Prime Minister Mario Draghi of Italy and Prime Minister Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom are expected to take part, the White House said Sunday.

White House officials have said Biden has no plans to travel to Ukraine. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, while in Poland this month, briefly crossed into neighboring Ukraine in a show of solidarity alongside that country’s foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba. Poland has been one of the most vocal countries in asking fellow NATO members to consider getting more involved to rein in the bloodshed.

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine largely has united the U.S. and NATO and European allies, as well as allies in Asia and elsewhere. The U.S. and European governments see Moscow’s military aggression as a threat to their security and strategic interests.

Biden and NATO have said repeatedly that while the U.S. and NATO will provide weapons and other defensive support to non-NATO member Ukraine, they are

determined to avoid any escalation on behalf of Kyiv that risks a broader war with Russia.

The Pentagon on March 9 rejected a Polish proposal for providing Ukraine with MiG fighter jets via a NATO air base, saying allied efforts against the Russian invasion should focus on more useful weaponry and that the MiG transfer with a U.S. and NATO connection would run a “high risk” of escalating the war.

Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has pleaded for the U.S. to provide his military with more aircraft and advanced air-defense systems. NATO and the U.S. have rejected his appeals to establish a “no-fly zone” over Ukraine to suppress Russian air power, saying it would put Western forces in direct conflict with Russian ones.

Determined resistance by Ukrainian fighters when Russian tanks and troops rolled into Ukraine in late February quickly defeated Russian forces’ attempts to storm Ukraine’s capital and unseat the westward-looking government. Denied an easy and early victory, Russia’s military is reverting to the scorched earth tactics of its past offensives in Syria and Chechnya, and pounding population centers with airstrikes and artillery barrages that leave civilians like those in the port city of Mariupol unable to safely venture out for food or water, to bury the dead or to flee.

After Biden rallied European allies to join in sweeping sanctions against Russia over the invasion at the outset, his tasks now include dealing with some NATO members that are pushing for more involvement directly in the fighting. That includes proposals by Poland for peacekeepers.

Biden’s trip includes a summit Thursday of NATO leaders, who will use the meeting to look at strengthening the bloc’s own deterrence and defense, immediately and in the long term, to deal with the now openly confrontational Putin.

That gathering is intended not just to show NATO’s “support to Ukraine, but also our readiness to protect and defend all NATO allies,” NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told CBS’ “Face the Nation” on Sunday.

“And by sending that message, we are preventing an escalation of the conflict to a full-fledged war between NATO and Russia,” Stoltenberg said.



BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

A mother embraces her son who escaped the besieged city of Mariupol and arrived at the train station in Lviv, western Ukraine, on Sunday.

Mariupol survivors take train to safety

Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine — The heat on the train was as thick as the anxiety. Ukrainian survivors of one of the most brutal sieges in modern history were in the final minutes of their ride to relative safety.

Some carried only what they had at hand when they seized the chance to escape the port of Mariupol amid relentless Russian bombardment. Some fled so quickly that relatives who were still in the starving, freezing Ukrainian city on the Sea of Azov aren’t aware that they have gone.

“There is no city anymore,” Marina Galla said. She wept in the doorway of a crowded train compartment that was pulling into the western Ukrainian city of Lviv.

The relief of being free from weeks of threats and deprivation, of seeing bodies in the streets and drinking melted snow because there was no water, was crushed by sadness as she thought of family members left behind.

“I don’t know anything about them,” she said. “My mother, grandmother, grandfather and father. They don’t even know that we have left.”

Seeing her tears, her 13-year-old son kissed her over and over, offering comfort.

Mariupol authorities say nearly 10% of the city’s population of 430,000 have fled over the past week, risking their lives in convoys out.

For Galla, the memories are too fresh.

For three weeks, she and her son lived in the basement of Mariupol’s Palace of Culture to hide from the constant Russian shelling, moving underground after the horizon turned black with smoke.

“We had no water, no light, no

gas, absolutely no communications,” she said. They cooked meals outside with wood in the yard, even while under fire.

Even as they finally fled Mariupol, aiming to reach trains heading west to safety, Russian soldiers at checkpoints made a chilling suggestion: It would be better to go to the Russian-occupied city of Melitopol or the Russian-annexed Crimean Peninsula instead.

It’s a suggestion that residents found ludicrous after the Russians on Wednesday bombed a Mariupol theater where children and others were sheltering, and after authorities on Sunday said an art school holding hundreds of people in Mariupol had been bombed.

For hours on Sunday’s train journey, survivors shared their experiences with fellow passengers. Even residents of other Ukrainian cities that have been battered or occupied by the Russians see Mariupol as a horror apart.

One resident of Melitopol, Yelena Sovchyuk, shared a train compartment with a Mariupol family. She bought them food, she said. They had nothing, only a small bag.

“Everyone from there is in deep shock,” Sovchyuk said.

She recalled seeing convoys from the besieged city on the road. “There’s a way to tell a Mariupol car,” she said. “They have no glass in their windows.”

With deep disdain, Sovchyuk said Russian soldiers amid such devastation were still encouraging Ukrainians to come to Russia, claiming it would be for their safety.

The Mariupol City Council has asserted that several thousand residents were taken into Russia against their will over the past

week. On Sunday, the Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine said 2,973 people had been “evacuated” from Mariupol since March 5, including 541 over the last 24 hours.

The train of survivors Sunday afternoon approached the central station of Lviv, the city near Poland that has absorbed an estimated 200,000 people fleeing other areas of Ukraine. As they climbed off one by one into the arms of family and friends after weeks of fearing for their lives, some Mariupol survivors wept.

Another embraced a red-faced, teary teenage boy at the foot of the steps. An elderly woman in a kerchief, helped off the train, walked away in silence. Another stood motionless among her bags, blinking behind thick glasses. Her neighbor, who fled with her, described cars in their convoy coming under fire.

Her hair askew, clutched by family, Olga Nikitina cried on the platform.

“They began to destroy our city, completely, house after house,” the young woman said. “Battles took place over every street. Every house became a target.”

Gunshots blew out the windows. When the temperatures in her apartment dropped below freezing, Nikitina moved in with her godmother, who has cancer and takes care of her elderly father. Ukrainian soldiers later came and warned them that their house would come under fire.

“Either hide or move out,” the soldiers said.

Nikitina left. The others were too fragile to flee. Now, like so many Mariupol survivors who escaped, she doesn’t know the fate of those left behind.

EUROPE

Transfer: Groups work to help transport goods to Ukraine

FROM PAGE 1

around-the-clock to rendezvous with Ukrainian fighters.

While governments negotiate over fighter jets and high-end weapon systems, soldiers on the ground are struggling to fill more basic needs. With Ukraine's own factories shut down by shelling, its forces rely increasingly on volunteer, pop-up supply chains like this one for vital gear, including body armor, medical supplies and the pickup trucks and SUVs they covet as fighting vehicles.

A second convoy was scheduled to arrive later in the day, packed with generators, radios, surveillance drones, night-vision gear and, most coveted of all, almost 7,000 bulletproof vests and helmets. For the soldiers, they are a lifeline.

"That is what we need the most," said Lt. Andrey Bystryk, one of the many Ukrainian fighters who had traveled across his war-ravaged country to meet the convoys. He teared up when he talked about the aid pouring in from neighboring countries.

"From the army, we get the gun and the ammunition and the uniform," he said. "But under the uniform, what we eat, what keeps us safe, how we move around and fight — that comes from the people, our people and foreign people."

The journey began hundreds of miles to the north in a warehouse in Lithuania, a country not usually thought of as a military supply hub.

But the tiny Baltic nation has seen a huge outpouring of support for Ukraine as citizens imagine what Russian President Vladimir Putin might have in store for them should he prevail in his current invasion. Vilnius, Lithuania's small medieval-era capital, is filled with blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flags.

Receiving much of the donated money and supplies is Blue and Yellow, a nonprofit founded in 2014 to supply Ukrainians fighting the takeover of eastern parts of their country by Russian-backed separatists. Now the group is the focal point of Lithuania's yearning to help.

"It has just exploded," said Jonas Ohman, a Swedish-born filmmaker who started the group.

For years, Ohman said, he took no salary and had no paid staff as he fulfilled direct requests from front-line units on an annual budget of less than \$200,000. Since the invasion last month, more than \$20 million has poured in from within Lithuania, a country of 2.8 million residents. He is dispatching a convoy to the border every four or five days.

With a cellphone held against a days-old beard, Ohman orders military gear by the ton from across Europe, China and Israel.



ARTURAS MOROZOVAS/The Washington Post

Volunteers load a military field kitchen onto a truck.

He argues with customs officials in a half-dozen countries to get the shipments delivered, railing against functionaries who block his way and officers who are slaves to regulation.

"I tell them all the time: 10,000 euros can be more deadly than a million if you know how to spend it," he growled between phone calls.

Ohman has filled one donated warehouse on the outskirts of Poland's capital, Warsaw. Another in Vilnius, provided by a Lithuanian transport company, has become a drop-off site for locals wanting to give.

"These will work," one volunteer declared on a recent afternoon when a truck arrived at the Vilnius warehouse with 800 pairs of new steel-toed boots and 1,000 fleece jackets still in the wrapper, all donated by a hunting goods retailer.

A forklift unloaded the cases, depositing them next to 14 pallets of IV saline solution and boxes filled with 13,000 trauma tourniquets and 200 satellite phones.

A local marketing company has launched a fundraising campaign for the nonprofit, and a group of Rotary Club volunteers makes calls to military suppliers in surrounding countries.

"Everything in Europe is selling out," said Zemyna Blumenzo-naite, a Blue and Yellow staffer. "But we are getting more requests than ever."

She held out her phone to show some of the texts she gets from soldiers in Ukraine. One named "Kruk" asked for 1,000 tourniquets and 40 individual first-aid kits. She told him they will be in the next convoy.

"You are our Guardian Angel," he wrote back.

"I heard they needed bigger vehicles and four-wheel drives," said Dainius Navikas, 43, a Vilnius management consultant who immediately thought of his black 2015 Grand Cherokee. "I had no choice. The Ukrainians are fighting for us."

Navikas and his wife drove the Jeep — along with an extra set of winter tires — to a designated garage on the outskirts of the Lithuanian capital. They found a lot packed with dozens of vehicles ready to be processed and shipped to Ukraine.

Some had been signed over by their owners. Others had been bought by Blue and Yellow.

"When they hear we are buying for Ukraine, a lot of them drop the price immediately," said Lukas Pacevicius, the owner of the garage, who has largely suspended his regular business activities.

Working overnights and weekends, mechanics check the engines; they send the vehicles to transmission or brake shops if needed. Armor plating is welded to some of the pickups, following specifications provided by the soldiers.

On a recent day, dozens of volunteers were scrambling around the vehicles, covering their windows and headlights with paper and masking tape ahead of repainting the bodies. Workers dodged the vehicles as they were shuttled from one part of the line to another.

Two men wearing hazmat suits and respirators, well-practiced in painting and not too fastidious, transformed Navikas' glossy black Grand Cherokee into a dull green patrol vehicle in under 20 minutes. And then a Mercedes Sprinter, and then a Nissan Path-

finder. An olive mist hung over the entire workshop.

"We want to cover every reflective surface, even the bumpers and wheels," said Rolandas Jundo, the owner of a sign company who was applying window tinting to a Land Rover that still reeked of paint.

Three days later, gassed up with donated fuel, most of the vehicles were driven onto car carriers. Two local tow trucks hitched up four more vehicles. Four men wrangled a military mobile kitchen into a panel truck.

With the sun still high, the convoy pulled out, flanked by a pair of Lithuanian police cars.

Just outside Vilnius, a group of people on a pedestrian bridge shouted and pumped their fists when the odd parade rolled under.

"It feels very important," said one of the drivers, who like several volunteers spoke on the condition of anonymity out of a combination of modesty and security concerns. "We still have a lot of crazy fifth-column types around," said another driver, referring to Russian sympathizers.

The convoy moved as fast as its slowest truck, about 50 mph on average. At a gas station just before the Polish border, Lithuanian police handed off to their Polish counterparts. Sometime after 2 a.m., everyone pulled into a rest area north of Warsaw for two hours of sleep.

By dawn, forests had given way to rolling fields.

The police escort kept its lights flashing and sounded its sirens as the trucks rumbled through red lights. Surprised locals stared from village sidewalks.

Nineteen hours and many cans of Red Bull later, the convoy pulled up at the unmarked en-

trance to Ukraine.

Lt. Bystryk, with the Zaporizhzhia Territorial Defense Brigade, had just endured his own all-night drive to reach the rendezvous.

His was one of about 20 Ukrainian units, both regular military and volunteer militia, that had dispatched representatives to meet the convoy.

Bystryk had driven about 11 hours from the area around the besieged city of Dnipro in eastern Ukraine in hopes of getting vehicles and an upgrade on the body armor that most of his men now wear: homemade vests cobbled together by local residents with steel and canvas. "They try to bend it like a body shape, but it doesn't work," he said.

It would take about 3,000 sets of body armor to fully outfit his men, Bystryk said. He had been told he might get as many as 400 when the second convoy arrived. In the meantime, he eagerly eyed the vehicles that were carried by the first one.

"Stingers and Javelins are critical, of course," he said of the anti-aircraft and antitank missiles. "But for us, these vehicles are essential. They are our firepower, our mobility."

Ukrainian soldiers drove them to a spot where border officials would fill out paperwork and then the vehicles would be distributed. One soldier made a beeline for a brand-new CForce quad ATV — to be used in cavalry-like raids by Ukrainian special forces — and rode off with a grin.

Bystryk looked for a truck that his men could mount with a rocket launcher or machine gun, creating one of the "specials" common among fighters in Libya, Syria and other recent hot spots.

There weren't as many pickups as in a delivery a week earlier, but he was glad to see Pathfinders, Freelanders and Pajeros.

Videos posted by Ukrainian fighters on social media show teams in SUVs like these outmaneuvering Russian armored vehicles, popping out from forests or side streets to hit them with rocket-propelled grenades and dashing away.

"Every day the Russians try to enter Zaporizhzhia, and every day we have stopped them," Bystryk said. "We need these cars. And we are thankful the Lithuanians are bringing them."

In the end, Bystryk was satisfied with a beefy Nissan Patrol to drive back to the war. But he learned that the convoy with the vests and helmets would be delayed because of a customs hang-up.

He would be back at this unlikely supply site, he knew. Probably many times.

"We need a lot," he said. "And the need is still growing."

NATION

US: Violence on Myanmar group is genocide

By **BEN FOX**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Violent repression of the largely Muslim Rohingya population in Myanmar amounts to genocide, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday, a declaration intended to both generate international pressure and lay the groundwork for potential legal action.

Authorities made the determination based on confirmed accounts of mass atrocities on civilians by Myanmar's military in a widespread and systematic campaign against the ethnic minority, Blinken said in a speech at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

It is the eighth time since the Holocaust that the U.S. has concluded a genocide has occurred, the secretary of state said, noting the importance of calling attention to inhumanity even as horrific attacks occur elsewhere in the world, including Ukraine.

"Yes, we stand with the people of Ukraine," he said. "And we must also stand with people who are suffering atrocities in other places."

The government of Myanmar, also known as Burma, is already under multiple layers of U.S. sanctions since a military coup ousted the democratically-elected government in February 2021. Thousands of civilians have been

killed and imprisoned as part of an ongoing campaign of repression against anyone opposed to the ruling junta.

More than 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled from Buddhist-majority Myanmar to refugee camps in Bangladesh since August 2017, when the Myanmar military launched a clearance operation in response to attacks by a rebel group.

The determination that a genocide has occurred could lead to additional international pressure on the government, which is already facing accusations of genocide at the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

"As we lay the foundation for future accountability, we're also working to stop the military's ongoing atrocities, and support the people of Burma as they strive to put the country back on the path to democracy," Blinken said.

Human rights groups and lawmakers have been pressing both the then-Trump and Biden administrations to make the designation, and they welcomed the announcement.

"The US determination of the crime of genocide against us is a momentous moment and must lead to concrete action to hold the Burmese military accountable for their crimes," said Tun Khin, President of the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK.

Fauci expects another rise in coronavirus cases

By **IAN FISHER**
Bloomberg

A likely rise in U.S. COVID-19 cases probably won't amount to a full-scale surge or prompt a renewal of widespread restrictions, one of President Joe Biden's top advisers said.

"The bottom line is we likely will see an uptick in cases, as we've seen in the European countries, particularly the U.K.," Anthony Fauci, Biden's chief medical adviser, said on ABC's "This Week" on Sunday. "Hopefully we won't see a surge. I don't think we will."

The BA.2 subvariant of omicron is driving up cases in Europe and Asia, notably in Hong Kong, and now accounts for about 30% of in-

fections in the U.S., where indoor-mask and vaccine requirements have largely been rolled back.

While the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has argued that the U.S. needs to be prepared to resume measures such as requiring masks in indoor public spaces, Fauci said, "right now, at this point, I don't see that."

U.S. cases, hospitalizations and deaths continue to decline. BA.2 is about 50% more transmissible than the original strain of omicron, but it doesn't cause more severe illness or evade immunity from vaccinations or an earlier infection, Fauci said. Fauci and U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy urged Congress to pass a stalled package of new COVID-19 relief.



MANDEL NGAN/AP

Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson listens to opening statements Monday during her confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee in Washington.

Hearing opens for Jackson, the 1st Black female high court pick

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate Judiciary Committee on Monday opened the Supreme Court confirmation hearings for Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first Black woman nominated for the nation's highest court.

Jackson, 51, was to give her opening statement later Monday and answer questions on Tuesday and Wednesday from the panel's 11 Democratic and 11 Republican senators.

Barring a significant misstep by the 51-year-old Jackson, a federal judge for the past nine years, Democrats who control the Senate by

the slimmest of margins intend to wrap up her confirmation before Easter. She would be the third Black justice, after Thurgood Marshall and Clarence Thomas, as well as the first Black woman on the high court.

"It's not easy being the first. Often, you have to be the best, in some ways the bravest," Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin, of Illinois, the committee chairman, said shortly after the proceedings began.

The committee's senior Republican, Sen. Chuck Grassley, of Iowa, promised Republicans would "ask tough questions about Judge Jackson's judicial philosophy,"

without turning the hearings into a "spectacle."

Jackson's testimony will give most Americans, as well as the Senate, their most extensive look yet at the Harvard-trained lawyer with a résumé that includes two years as a federal public defender. That makes her the first nominee with significant criminal defense experience since Marshall.

Jackson is married to Patrick Johnson, a surgeon in Washington. They have two daughters, one in college and the other in high school. She is related by marriage to former House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis.



MORGAN LEE/AP

Otero County Commissioner Couy Griffin, the founder of Cowboys for Trump, faces a trial Monday with a judge to decide if Griffin illegally entered the U.S. Capitol grounds on Jan. 6, 2021.

Capitol protest trial opens for New Mexico official

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An elected official from New Mexico heads to trial Monday with a judge — not a jury — set to decide if he is guilty of charges that he illegally entered the U.S. Capitol grounds on the day a pro-Trump mob disrupted the certification of Joe Biden's presidential election victory.

That's not the only unusual feature of the case against Otero County Commissioner Couy Griffin, 48, whose trial in Washington, D.C., will be the second among the hundreds of people charged with federal crimes related to the Jan. 6, 2021, siege.

Griffin is one of the few riot defendants who isn't accused of entering the Capitol or engaging in any violent or destructive behavior. He is charged with two misdemeanors: entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds and disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds. He claims he has been selectively prosecuted for his political views.

Griffin, one of three members of the Otero County Commission in southern New Mexico, is among a handful of riot defendants who either held public office or ran for a government leadership post in the 2 1/2 years before the attack.

He is among only three riot defendants who have asked for a bench trial. U.S. District Court Judge Trevor McFadden is scheduled to hear one day of testimony.

Griffin, a former rodeo rider and former pastor, helped found a political committee called Cowboys for Trump. In a court filing, prosecutors called him "an inflammatory provocateur and fabulist who engages in racist invective and propounds baseless conspiracy theories, including that Communist China stole the 2020 Presidential Election."

Griffin's attorneys, David Smith and Nicholas Smith, say hundreds if not thousands of other people did exactly what Griffin did on Jan. 6 and haven't been charged with any crimes.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman charged with trashing Target store

MN ST. PAUL — Prosecutors have accused a West St. Paul woman of trashing a Target store during an angry outburst.

Gaylynn Atlene Bailey, 23, was charged Thursday in Dakota County with felony first-degree criminal damage to property, the Pioneer Press reported.

According to the criminal complaint, Bailey entered the West St. Paul Target store on March 15 and smashed display cases with a golf club, knocked over display stands and threw merchandise on the floor, forcing an evacuation. When police arrived, they found her in the electronics section throwing televisions to the ground. She was ordered to stop but kept throwing items to the floor.

She allegedly caused at least \$7,000 in damage. The complaint doesn't offer any explanation for Bailey's alleged actions. Police Chief Brian Sturgeon said investigators believe she was upset over a purchase at the store several days earlier.



JOSE CARLOS FAJARDO, BAY AREA NEWS GROUP/AP

One-time escapee found guilty in stabbing murder

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — A South Florida defendant who once made national news when he escaped by dashing out of a courtroom during a pre-trial hearing on murder charges has been convicted of that killing.

Dayonte Resiles, 27, was convicted Friday of first-degree murder for the 2014 stabbing death Jill Halliburton Su at her suburban Fort Lauderdale home. Su was bound at her hands and feet, forced into a bathtub and stabbed about 25 times during a burglary. Prosecutors said DNA found in the home tied Resiles to the scene.

The jury will now decide whether Resiles should be sentenced to death or life in prison without parole.

During a 2016 hearing, Resiles unlocked his shackles and fled from a hearing, running down the courthouse stairs to an awaiting car. He was recaptured after a six-day manhunt.

2 suspects convicted in drug ring run from prison

KS WICHITA — The last two of 23 defendants charged in a drug trafficking ring in Kansas that was run from the Oklahoma State Penitentiary have been convicted, federal prosecutors said.

A federal jury convicted two Wichita men, Kevin Lewis, 58, and Travis Vontress, 45, on several conspiracy and drug-related charges, the U.S. Attorney's Office announced Friday. Both men will be sentenced June 22.

Travis Knighten, 49, an inmate at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, used a cellphone at the prison to coordinate the drug distribution

Stop and smell the wildflowers

Hannah Weiner, 9, of Walnut Creek, and her brother Morgan Weiner, 6, smell wildflowers while hiking with their parents at Shell Ridge Open Space in Walnut Creek, Calif., on Saturday. Sunday was the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere.

in Kansas, federal prosecutors said. He is serving a 90-year sentence for killing a prison guard in 1993.

One other Oklahoma State Penitentiary inmate was involved. The other defendants were all from Wichita, prosecutors said.

No charges in shooting of man saved from lake

SC WALHALLA — South Carolina officials said they won't file charges against a boater who fatally shot a man he helped rescue from the water.

A statement from the Oconee County Sheriff's Office said 10th Judicial Circuit Solicitor David Wagner ruled that the March 15 shooting of 29-year-old Nathan Drew Morgan by an unnamed 74-year-old man was in self-defense. Morgan, a Walhalla resident, was shot aboard a pontoon boat on Lake Keowee.

Morgan and a woman were in distress, having fallen off their Jet Ski into the lake, Oconee County sheriff's officials said earlier. The two had no life jackets and the Jet Ski was circling.

The 74-year-old man and his wife on a pontoon boat drove over to help fish the pair out of the lake, the sheriff's office said. The couple on the boat told authorities Morgan became agitated once he got on board and started assaulting them.

Investigators were told he may have wanted to get back on the Jet Ski. They also believe there may have been an argument between Morgan and the woman he was

THE CENSUS

23 The number of years a Kansas man served in prison for a double murder he did not commit, for which he is seeking \$93 million in damages from the county where he was convicted and a former detective he says framed him. Lamonte McIntyre, 45, and his mother allege in a lawsuit filed in 2018 that the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kan., is responsible for the actions of former Kansas City, Kan., police detective Roger Golubski and other officers involved in his prosecution. A federal judge on Thursday set a Nov. 7 trial for the civil case. McIntyre's mom is also seeking \$30 million. She and her son allege that Golubski coerced her into sex and then framed McIntyre for a double homicide in 1994 because she rejected the detective's later sexual advances. They also allege Golubski abused Black women for years and many officers were aware of his conduct. The pretrial orders includes initials of 73 women. Golubski denies the allegations and has asked that they not be allowed as evidence in the case.

with before they fell into the water. Sheriff Mike Crenshaw told The Journal of Seneca that Morgan may have been intoxicated.

85K birds euthanized amid avian flu outbreak

SD VERMILLION — State officials have euthanized 85,000 birds in hopes of containing an avian flu outbreak at two factory farms.

South Dakota Public Broadcasting reported Saturday that the outbreaks occurred at farms in Charles Mix County in the southeastern portion of the state. The disease was found in turkeys at the facilities, although other poultry in close contact with the turkeys were euthanized as well.

Assistant State Veterinarian Mendell Miller said the state doesn't release the names of facilities experiencing outbreaks. Miller said two other sites are under investigation for possible avian flu. Those counties will be

identified if tests come back positive.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has been reporting avian flu in wild birds, commercial facilities and backyard coops in multiple states since January. The first case was reported in South Dakota on March 6.

Japanese internment camp named historic site

CO DENVER — President Joe Biden signed a bipartisan bill into law Friday designating a former World War II Japanese American internment camp in rural Colorado as a federal historic site managed by the National Park Service.

Camp Amache is owned by the town of Granada and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its current designation already qualifies it for preservation funds, but designating the remote southeastern Colorado landmark as a National Historic Site makes

it eligible for additional federal money.

About 120,000 Japanese Americans were held in 10 camps in California, Arizona, Wyoming, Utah, Arkansas and Colorado after they were expelled from their homes near the West Coast under an executive order by President Franklin Roosevelt issued Feb. 19, 1942. More than 7,000 people were interned at Amache — the camp's unofficial name, after a Cheyenne chief's daughter — between 1942 and 1945.

The Amache site is less than one square mile and features remnants of barracks, latrines, mess halls, military police structures and a cemetery, as well as trees planted by internees. It is currently managed by the nonprofit Amache Preservation Society.

Man is shot twice fending off car part thieves

MN ST. PAUL — A man was shot Sunday trying to fend off a band of catalytic converter thieves in St. Paul, according to police.

WCCO-TV reported the incident occurred about 2:40 a.m. when a man in his 20s confronted multiple people who were allegedly trying to steal a catalytic converter. The man was shot in the arm and in the chest.

Police said he was taken to a hospital in a private vehicle and is expected to survive.

No one has been arrested in connection with the shooting.

WORLD

Chinese airliner crashes with 132 aboard in country's south

Associated Press

BEIJING — A China Eastern Boeing 737-800 with 132 people on board crashed in southern China on Monday, officials said, in the country's worst air disaster in nearly a decade.

There was no immediate word on survivors.

The Civil Aviation Administration of China said in a statement that the crash occurred near the city of Wuzhou in the Guangxi region. The flight was traveling from Kunming in the southwestern province of Yunnan to the indus-

trial center of Guangzhou along the east coast, it added.

Villagers were first to arrive at the forested area where the plane went down, sparking a blaze big enough to be seen on NASA satellite images. Hundreds of rescue workers were swiftly dispatched from Guangxi and neighboring Guangdong province.

The plane was carrying 123 passengers and nine crew members, the CAAC said, correcting earlier reports that 133 people had been on board.

Chinese President Xi Jinping

called for an "all-out effort" by the rescue operation, as well as for an investigation into the crash and to ensure complete civil aviation safety.

State media reported all 737-800s in China Eastern's fleet were ordered grounded, while broadcaster CCTV said the airliner had set up nine teams to deal with aircraft disposal, accident investigation, family assistance and other pressing matters.

The CAAC and China Eastern both said they had sent officials to the crash site in accordance with



XINHUA NEWS AGENCY/AP

A piece of wreckage of China Eastern's flight MU5735 is seen after the airplane crashed on a mountain in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on Monday, with 132 people on board.

emergency measures.

State media said local police first received calls from villagers alerting the crash around 2:30 p.m. Guangxi provincial emergency management department

said contact with the plane was lost at 2:15 p.m.

Chicago-based Boeing Co. said it was aware of the initial reports of the crash and was "working to gather more information."

UK-US dual citizen returned to prison in Iran after furlough

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — A dual British-U.S. national released from prison last week as part of a deal between Iran and the United Kingdom was returned to custody and on Sunday was transferred to a hotel, the British government said.

Iranian prison officials let the

long-held 66-year-old environmentalist, Morad Tahbaz, leave jail on a furlough last Wednesday, the same day two high-profile British citizens who had been detained in Iran for more than five years were freed and flown home to Britain.

The U.K. said it secured Tahbaz's furlough, along with the

release and return of charity worker Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and retired civil engineer Anoosheh Ashoori, after settling a debt to Iran that had fueled tensions between the countries for decades.

But barely two days after Tahbaz left jail and headed to his family's home in Tehran, Ira-

nian security forces forced him to return to Evin Prison, his Tehran-based lawyer said.

"Unfortunately, we have no idea if or when he is going to be released," Hojjat Kermani told The Associated Press. "He is back in Evin for the time being."

Iranian officials and state-run media did not acknowledge his

return to prison.

The State Department said it was aware of reports that Tahbaz had been returned to prison allegedly to be fitted with an ankle tag. Kermani, however, said he "was not informed about any ankle tag" and two days later remained behind bars without any update.



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WORLD

German prosecutors: Train attacker had extremist motive

Associated Press

BERLIN — German prosecutors said Monday that they now believe the suspect in a knife attack on a train in November which left four people wounded had an Islamic extremist motive.

The attack took place on an ICE high-speed train traveling from Passau, on the Austrian border, to Hamburg on Nov. 6. Authorities said the man attacked his victims apparently at random and showed signs of mental illness, but initially

said there was no immediate indication of a terror motive.

Munich prosecutors said a few weeks later they were no longer ruling out an Islamic extremist motive.

On Monday, they said investigations have produced “weighty indi-

cations” that the suspect’s actions were based on support for Islamic State’s ideology, though there was no evidence so far that he was involved with or “steered” by the group.

An expert has concluded that the

man could be held criminally responsible for his actions, and he was sent to jail in January. Federal prosecutors, who handle terrorism and national security cases in Germany, have now taken over the investigation.

Apparent world’s largest potato in New Zealand turns out to be gourd

By SYDNEY PAGE
The Washington Post

When Colin Craig-Brown received a long-awaited email from Guinness World Records last week, his heart sank.

For the past seven months, the New Zealand man and his wife believed that they had discovered the world’s largest potato, weighing more than 17 pounds. The email, however, informed them that their purported potato — which they named Dug — was actually no spud.

“Sadly the specimen is not a potato and is, in fact, the tuber of a type of gourd,” the email from a Guinness spokesperson read. “For this reason we do unfortunately have to

disqualify the application.”

Colin, 62, and his wife, Donna, 60, were baffled.

Since the couple stumbled upon the 17.2-pound mass in their garden last August, located on a small farm in the Waikato region of the country’s North Island, the presumed potato — which Colin took a slice of and sampled, raw — has emerged as an Internet celebrity of sorts.

As people near and far marveled at the mammoth mound, the couple decided to submit an application to Guinness World Records for “the world’s heaviest potato” — a title currently held by Peter Glazebrook of Britain. His 11-pound potato broke the record in 2011.

The couple believed that Dug

was, without a doubt, a potato, and that the record belonged to their spud, which is still being stored in their freezer.

“It looked like a tater, it tasted like a tater, it grew like a tater,” Colin explained. “So I figured it’s a tater.”

Plus, the underground discovery was verified several times by gardening experts, including an agronomist whose job it is to study soil and crop production.

Yet DNA testing conducted by scientists at the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research, as well as analysts at Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture, disproved Dug’s purported identity. Rather than a spud, the results

stipulated that the sample was a tuber — the underground stem of a plant.

“We tried running multiple tests on samples of [Dug], but he just wasn’t behaving like a potato should,” said Samantha Baldwin, a researcher at the institute. “We then sent samples to Scotland for more in-depth analysis.”

Some clarity came a couple days later when, “after a few sleepless nights,” Colin and Donna realized a possible explanation: At one point, they did grow some hybrid cucumbers, which are made from crossing two standard varieties of cucumbers. Crossbred cucumbers can sometimes produce unpredictable plants. Hence: Dug.



COLIN CRAIG-BROWN/AP

Donna Craig-Brown holds “Dug,” which was thought to be the world’s largest potato, near Hamilton, New Zealand, last year.

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FACES



‘Young Rock’ growing up

Hit show’s 2nd season sees Dwayne Johnson-based character find his way into the world of pro wrestling

By **RODNEY HO**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

If it seems like actor Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson is ubiquitous and might run for president one day, well, there’s an NBC sitcom for that called “Young Rock.”

The comedy, in which three actors play younger versions of Johnson while Johnson plays a future version of himself in 10 years running for president, is back for its second season.

The concept is audacious, but the result feels like ABC’s flashback coming-of-age show “Fresh Off the Boat” in general tone. That may be because two of the executive producers, Nahatchka Khan and Jeff Chiang, oversaw “Fresh Off the Boat.”

“We want it to be accessible and warmhearted, but not to the point of syrupy or sappy,” said Brian Gerwitz, a show producer and senior vice president of development for Johnson’s Seven Bucks Productions with Dany Garcia. “There is a little edge and naughtiness, but it’s fun.”

The show’s flashback scenes were shot in Australia, which was meant to replicate multiple places in the United States like Nashville and Memphis, Tenn.; Miami; Bethlehem, Penn.; and Honolulu. The “future” scenes where the Rock is running for president, which include Randall Park (“Fresh Off the Boat”) as a journalist, were largely shot in metro Atlanta.

If anything, the casting is impres-

sive because all three younger actors are convincing facsimiles of Johnson as a preteen (Adrian Groulx), a teenager (Bradley Constant) and a young man (Uli Latukefu).

“They chose people who are quite similar,” Latukefu said. “As long as we stay true to what we prepare and what Dwayne is at any given time, the rest kind of takes care of itself.”

Latukefu, this season playing Johnson in his early 20s, will enter the Canadian Football League, then find his way into professional wrestling. “He’s always keen to learn and grow,” Latukefu said. “I think wrestling fans will be really excited. I brought my best to the table. We worked hard in the ring. I had a lot of fun.”

He said there will be some bad hairstyles, too, long before Johnson opts to go bald.

Constant said his time frame will feature more of Johnson in Nashville, where he spent some of his teen years. “A lot of fun shenanigans,” he said. “I’m a little more involved with wrestling with Rocky” Johnson, Johnson’s father, also a professional wrestler.

His teen years were still filled with Johnson’s petty thieving ways, which was featured season one. “There will be lessons learned,” Gerwitz said, “not just a gratuitous sense of mischief and fun.”

Gerwitz said the 2032 storyline will expand out beyond the Rock just talking with Park’s character, adding

more twists and turns regarding his presidential campaign including a man attempting to sabotage Johnson starting in the season two debut.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and quarantine rules, it didn’t make sense for Johnson to meet the cast face to face in Australia. He had to make do with frequent Zoom calls, providing notes on every script and consulting with the cast and writers on small details of his life.

He would often respond quickly no matter how busy he was with other projects.

“I’m not sure when he sleeps,” Gerwitz said, noting the time difference between Australia and Atlanta.

“Young Rock” is not a documentary. “Even if the events didn’t happen, even if Captain Lou and Randy Savage and Andre the Giant and the Iron Sheik weren’t hanging out at the same time in Lia’s kitchen, there’s the spirit of that,” Gerwitz said, referencing Johnson’s grandmother Lia Maivia, a wrestling promoter in the 1980s in Hawaii. “We take creative license for the entertainment value.”

This season will feature even more wrestling scenes in all three eras, Gerwitz said. “We worked with a lot of local Australian professional wrestlers who know how to take the bumps and make our performers look great.”

“Young Rock” airs Tuesdays stateside on NBC and streams the next day on Peacock.

Uli Latukefu plays Dwayne Johnson as a young man, first in college and then in his early 20s, on TV’s ‘Young Rock.’

MARK TAYLOR/NBC

‘CODA’ gains Oscar momentum with top prize at PGA Awards

From wire reports

“CODA” won the top prize March 19 at the Producers Guild Awards, giving momentum to the possibility that the small film could have a big night at Sunday’s Oscars.

The story of three adult family members who are deaf and a fourth who is not and seeks a singing career beat out bigger contenders including “The Power of the Dog,” “Dune” and “West Side Story” to take an award that — more often than not — goes on to win the Academy Award for best picture.

“CODA,” an acronym for “children of deaf adults,” is nominated for three Oscars at the March 27 ceremony, including best adapted screenplay for writer-director Sian Heder and best supporting actor for Troy Kotsur, who is expected by most to become the first actor who is deaf since fellow “CODA” actor Marlee Matlin in 1987 to win an Oscar.

The top PGA award winner has gone on to win the top Oscar in three of the past four years and 10 of the past 13.

The PGA Awards, an untelevised show from the Fairmont Century Plaza in Los Angeles honoring producers of film and televi-

sion, is as much like a company awards banquet as a typical awards show, with no speeches cut short for time or curses bleeped out.

“Summer of Soul” won the PGA’s documentary film category and “Encanto” won the award for animated movies. Both are also nominated for Oscars.

In the PGA’s television categories, awards went to the producers of “Succession,” “Mare of Easttown” and “Ted Lasso.”

‘The Batman’ crosses \$300M in 3rd weekend at box office

“The Batman” is still going strong three weeks into its theatrical run, with a tight grip on the top spot at the box office.

Robert Pattinson’s debut as the Dark Knight earned an additional \$36.8 million over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday. It also slid past the \$300 million mark.

The Warner Bros. film is the highest-grossing movie of 2022 and the second highest since the beginning of the pandemic (after “Spider-Man: No Way Home”).

“The Batman,” directed by Matt Reeves,

also picked up \$49.1 million internationally over the weekend, bringing its global total to \$598.1 million.

The Japanese anime film “Jujutsu Kaisen 0,” which was released by Crunchyroll and Funimation, came in second, taking in an estimated \$17.7 million in its first weekend in North America, where it was playing on 2,748 screens.

The horror film “X” also debuted and is projected to gross around \$4.4 million. Directed by Ti West and distributed by A24, “X” is about a group of people who are terrorized while shooting a pornographic film.

Game show ‘The Price Is Right’ planning a US road trip

The game show “The Price Is Right” is hitting the road, putting the game show on wheels and making 50 stops on a coast-to-coast stateside tour for anyone who can’t make the trip to the Los Angeles studio.

The “Come On Down Tour” — separate from the TV show or live stage shows — will kick off Friday and will make stops in such cities as Denver, Dallas, New Orleans, Nashville and St. Louis.

Fans will be able to win prizes by guessing the correct retail price for various items in such games as Plinko and compete in a Showcase Showdown. There’s also a chance to win a grand prize of \$50,000.

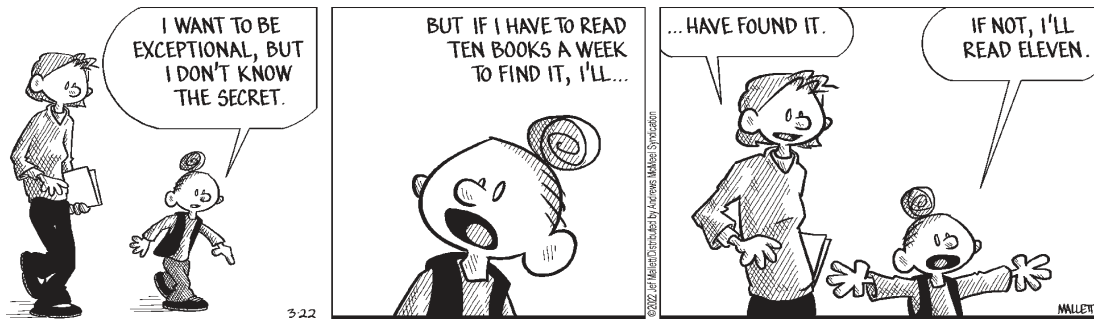
It’s part of plans for the longest-running game show in television history to celebrate its 50th season.

Other news

■ Ye will not be performing at the Grammys this year. A report published in The Blast said that the musician was told March 18 that his act had been pulled from the show, set to take place on April 3. A representative for Ye, who changed his name from Kanye West, confirmed the information. According to reports, the decision was made in response to his “concerning online behavior.” Ye had not been confirmed yet as someone set to perform at the show.

■ The new, splashy Broadway musical about Michael Jackson is going to moonwalk across America next year. “MJ,” packed with dozens of songs by the King of Pop and others, plans to hit 17 major cities over two years starting in 2023.

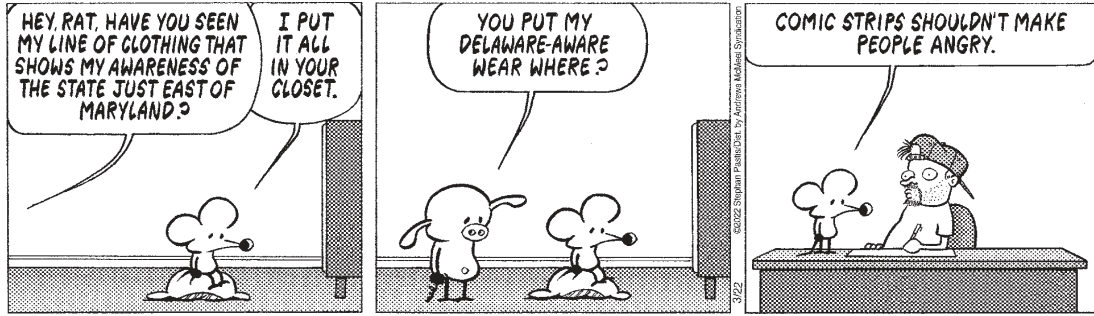
Frazz



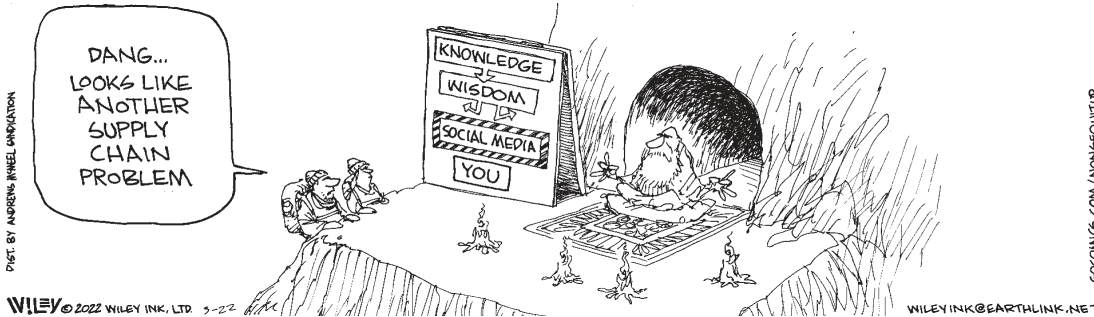
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



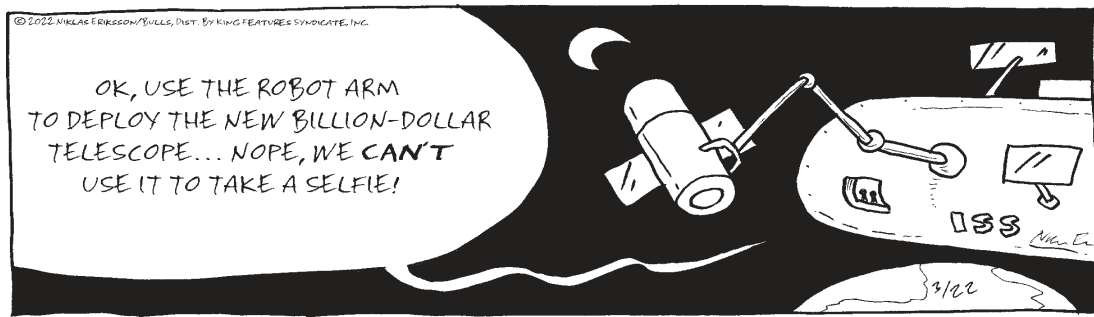
Non Sequitur



Candorville



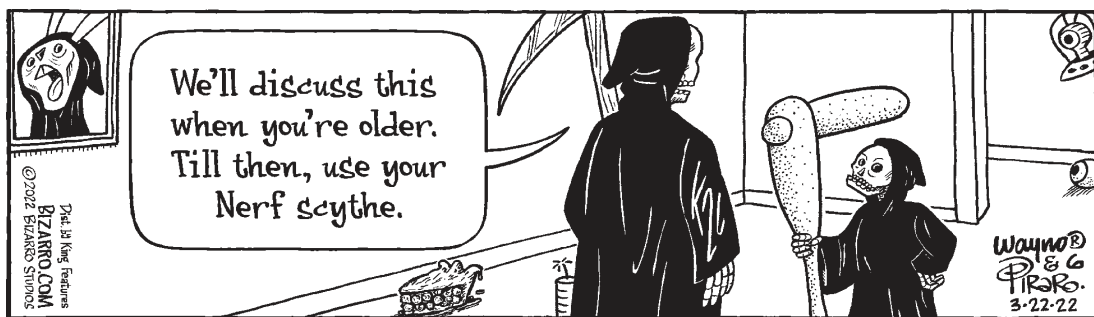
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18					19				20			
			21				22					
23	24	25				26				27	28	29
30						31				32		
33			34	35					36	37		
			38					39				
40	41	42				43				44	45	46
47						48				49		
50						51				52		
53						54				55		

ACROSS

- 1 Classic Monopoly token
- 5 601, to Nero
- 8 Gospel writer
- 12 Squad
- 13 Tic-tac-toe win
- 14 Writer James
- 15 K thru 12
- 16 Snake handlers?
- 18 Advertised
- 20 Critic Roger
- 21 "Crying" singer Orbison
- 22 Hydrocarbon ending
- 23 Trifled (with)
- 26 Guys and dolls, e.g.
- 30 — Jima
- 31 Tourist's chart
- 32 Reuben bread
- 33 More zaftig
- 36 Spoken for
- 38 Sound of delight
- 39 Samovar
- 40 Caulerizes
- 43 Dove deep
- 47 Most luxurious
- 49 Shoppe description
- 50 Staffer
- 51 Blemish
- 52 Meditative practice
- 53 Banister

- 54 Acting coach Hagen
- 55 Raced

DOWN

- 1 Dance move
- 2 Underworld
- 3 Pearl Harbor site
- 4 Asylum seeker, perhaps
- 5 Inane nickname
- 6 Frigid
- 7 Debtor's letters
- 8 Talk rapidly
- 9 Curved molding
- 10 Frankfurt fellow
- 11 Egg container
- 17 Carte
- 19 Deity
- 22 Jungfrau, e.g.
- 23 Bit of advice
- 24 Hooter
- 25 Thee
- 26 Standard
- 27 Genesis vessel
- 28 Caustic cleaner
- 29 D.C. bigwig
- 31 "Not impressed ..."
- 34 Wee bite
- 35 Ritzy
- 36 Capote nickname
- 37 Irks
- 39 Prefix with violet
- 40 Mast
- 41 Lamb alias
- 42 German car name
- 43 Jrs.' exam
- 44 Lcky stuff
- 45 Perimeter
- 46 Conked out
- 48 Big bird of Australia

Answer to Previous Puzzle

O	A	K	S		C	O	B		G	O	A	D
M	C	I	I		U	R	I		L	U	R	E
A	H	E	M		L	O	O	S	E	T	E	A
R	E	V	O	L	T		S	I	N	B	A	D
					N	O	U	N		E	D	U
L	I	M	E	T	R	E	E		A	R	K	S
I	C	U		T	A	P	A	S		S	E	A
T	E	S	S		L	A	S	E	R	T	A	G
					K	L	M		L	I	R	E
S	E	R	I	E	S		N	A	C	H	O	S
L	E	A	D	T	I	M	E		O	A	R	S
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3-22

CRYPTOQUIP

OV QAP NWJTHI XADH LJLQ-
T J W D O K F O S H D X O K S A
T J S H F A E O H X, Q A P T A P W I L H J
N J T O V O H E T W J X X O V O H E.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: PAST HOLLYWOOD HEARTTHROB WHO WOULD ALWAYS DELIGHT IN DOING PROHIBITED THINGS: TABOO HUNTER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals I

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Ernie Gates

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The will to fight in the age of social media

By WILLIAM MARCELLINO
AND MICHAEL MCNERNEY
Special to Stars and Stripes

Russia's invasion of Ukraine hasn't gone as expected — instead of rolling across the country in a few days, unexpectedly stiff resistance from Ukraine's military — and civilians — has confounded Russian military leaders. It appears that the Kremlin, and many Western analysts, underestimated Ukrainian military capacity, but even more importantly, their will to fight.

Rand research on will to fight at the tactical and operational level of battle, as well as at the geopolitical level of nation-states, has argued for the importance of understanding will to fight: the most important factor in war, but also the least understood.

Many people equate will to fight with morale, but it's much more than that. Other factors like leadership, training, ideology, cohesion, control, competence and support all contribute. Right now, we are watching the decisive role these human factors play in war, street by street as Ukraine's military, people, and political leaders have committed to staying in the fight against what appeared to be insurmountable odds. This willingness to stay in the fight has flipped the script, helping galvanize world opinion and putting pressure on Russia's will to fight, both in the field and on the homefront.

Information — stories and images — has always played a powerful role in shaping and sustaining the will to fight. But in an age of social media, the sheer volume of that informa-

tion and its ubiquity and speed of transmission can both amplify its power and create challenges for government leaders: quantity has a quality all its own.

Social media messaging has played a decisive role in bolstering Ukraine's will to fight. Hall of Fame boxer and Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko took to Instagram to broadcast his intention to join the fight to defend his city, and images of him in uniform manning a crew-served weapon are making the rounds of social media. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's quip "The fight is here. I need ammunition, not a ride," became an instant internet sensation, spawning meme after meme.

Tales like the Ghost of Kyiv pilot may or may not be an urban legend—but that doesn't matter. Ukrainian soldiers on Snake Island saying, "Russian Warship: go f*** yourself," instantly went viral as the "NUTS!" moment of the 21st century. What matters is words, images and actions that send a message: "We're not folding up. We're going to fight them and win."

Additionally, Russian President Vladimir Putin clearly underestimated several factors that have influenced Ukraine's national will to fight. First, the national identity of Ukrainians has proven far stronger than he apparently expected. Second, the stakes can't be higher for Ukrainians — this is an existential threat — whereas Russians are fighting for ... what exactly? Third, allies matter, and although countries are not sending their own troops to Ukraine, the world is clearly in Ukraine's corner, except for ... well ... Belarus. Finally, the free world may have even surprised itself with

its willingness to use its economic levers of power to influence this fight. And social media has been there every day, every hour, every minute to document the power of these factors and sometimes amplify their effects.

This all has implications for the U.S. and the Department of Defense. Rand research and the events in Ukraine show how critical will to fight is to combat outcomes. Further, in a connected world of social media, images and messages can quickly tell a story that powerfully supports or degrades will to fight.

Will to fight is hard to assess (it's a lot easier to count tanks), and with rare exceptions early assessments of Russia's prospects in Ukraine largely ignored will to fight and focused on materiel. But the United States and its allies may need to understand and account for it.

NATO has made important improvements in its capabilities and is working on improving readiness, but how will its units react on the battlefield? How will its leaders react to various invasion scenarios involving member states? How well is the will to fight of military units and political leaders in China and Taiwan understood? DOD may need a doctrinal definition of will to fight to incorporate into planning, modeling and simulations, wargaming, and analysis. Failing to do so could degrade U.S. military preparedness, and that could make conflict more likely, not less likely.

William Marcellino is a senior behavioral scientist at the nonprofit, nonpartisan Rand Corp. and Michael McNerney is acting director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center and a senior researcher. Both are faculty members at the Pardee RAND Graduate School.

Ukraine's resistance offers a useful lesson to Taiwan

By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON
Russia's war in Ukraine has taught the world's autocrats some useful lessons: Invasions may be harder than they look. It's unwise to go to war with an army that hasn't had much practice against serious opponents. The U.S. and its allies may appear divided, but they can still pull together in a crisis. And when ordinary people decide to defend their homes, they can put up a surprisingly good fight.

Those lessons could have practical impact half a world away from Ukraine in the standoff between China and Taiwan.

Regaining Taiwan has been a major goal of China's ruling Communist Party since it took power in 1949. China's president, Xi Jinping, regularly reconfirms that he intends to return Taiwan to the motherland — by peaceful means if possible, by unpeaceful means if not. So it's reasonable to assume Xi and his aides have been paying attention to the problems their quasi-ally Vladimir Putin has encountered in his brutal campaign to restore Russia's control over its neighbor, Ukraine.

In some ways, Taiwan looks like an easier target than Ukraine. It is smaller — 24 million people, not 44 million. Its military is one-tenth the size of China's, and it hasn't built the kind of territorial defense force Ukraine is using to great effect right now. Meanwhile, China's navy and marine corps have spent decades working on the ability to mount amphibious landings against an island like Taiwan.

But Taiwan has advantages Ukraine didn't have. The Taiwan Strait is more than 100 miles wide, which would make an amphibious invasion daunting. Taiwan has a security commit-

ment from the United States — not as strong as the treaty that pledges the United States to defend NATO allies, but more than Ukraine had. (President Joe Biden made a point of mentioning it in his conversation with Xi on Friday.)

Finally, the U.S. has a more direct economic interest in Taiwan than in Ukraine; Taipei is a major trading partner, the source of more than half of the world's high-end microchips.

"What we've seen in Ukraine raises serious questions for China about the risks of military activity against Taiwan," Evan Medeiros of Georgetown University, a former National Security Council official, told me last week.

"China's theory has been that if we have to use force, it will be quick and successful and that economically the West needs China more than it needs Taiwan. All those assumptions are now open to question."

But there have been important lessons for Taiwan too.

The biggest surprise in Ukraine beyond the poor performance of Russia's army has been the success of Ukraine's Territorial Defense Forces, its army of reservists and unevenly trained civilians.

"That's the real lesson of Ukraine for Taiwan: You need civilians who know how to use a rifle," said Bonnie Glaser, a China expert at the German Marshall Fund. "Taiwan could easily do something like that, but they haven't."

U.S. defense planners have long been urging Taiwan to adopt a strategy they call "asymmetric defense" — recognizing China's vast advantages in manpower and equipment, and aiming to raise the cost of an invasion. The goal, retired Adm. James Stavridis wrote recently, should be to make the island a "porcupine — a spiny and indigestible entity that

could deter China from using force."

But over much of the last decade, Taiwan moved in the opposite direction: It cut the size of its regular army and reduced the training of its reserves. It invested in high-end weapons beloved by military brass, like F-16s and Abrams tanks, instead of more mundane tools that might deter a shipborne invader: anti-aircraft weapons, anti-ship missiles and advanced mines.

Taiwan's president, Tsai Ing-wen, has embraced the U.S. argument, at least rhetorically.

"The recent situation in Ukraine proves that, in addition to international support and assistance, it boils down to the unity of our people to safeguard our country," she said recently.

But progress has been slow. Tsai has promised to increase defense spending to 3% of gross domestic product from the current 2.1% (the U.S. spends about 3.5%). But even after Taiwan's legislature approved more defense spending, it will take more than five years to get there. So U.S. officials have privately been pressing another lesson from Ukraine: The United States and other countries can help Taiwan defend itself, but only if the Taiwanese show that they are ready and willing to fight.

The longer Ukraine shows that a determined population can make an invasion costly, it is giving small countries like Taiwan a model of how to defend themselves — and with luck, deter the next invasion before it begins. If so, the terrible toll of Ukraine's war might yield at least one positive side effect: It's just possible that this conflict may have reduced the chances of a conflict in Asia.

Doyle McManus is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

AUTO RACING



HAKIM WRIGHT SR./AP

Joey Logano (22), Tyler Reddick (8), Denny Hamlin (11), Daniel Suarez (99) and Austin Cindric (2) crash late in a NASCAR Cup Series race at Atlanta Motor Speedway in Hampton, Ga., Sunday.

Byron wins wild NASCAR race at remodeled Atlanta

Driver earns third NASCAR Cup victory in race with 9 crashes, 46 lead changes

By PAUL NEWBERRY
Associated Press

HAMPTON, Ga. — William Byron had a freight train in his rearview mirror. A sitting duck, it seemed. Fortunately for him, all those challengers started jostling against each other rather than working together to take down the leader.

While Byron cruised to the checkered flag for the third victory of his NASCAR Cup career, one last crash unfolded behind him Sunday in an appropriate finish to a chaotic, thrilling race at remodeled Atlanta Motor Speedway.

“Pretty wild,” the 24-year-old Byron said. “I’m out of breath. It was crazy.”

The track makeover — with new

pavement and steeper banking — lived up to predictions of frenzied pack racing at blistering speeds approaching those seen at Talladega and Daytona.

It was like a short-track race at a superspeedway.

There were 46 lead changes among an Atlanta-record 20 drivers, a traffic jam of tightly bunched cars that never got too far away from each other in a more than four-hour race, nine wrecks that took out several top contenders, and a bunch of smashed-up race cars to lug home.

“It’s difficult, it’s stressful, it’s a different type of racing,” said Rudy Fugle, the winner’s crew chief.

Byron was leading off the final restart with 13 laps to go. Bubba Wallace briefly grabbed the top

spot, only to have the No. 24 Rick Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet pass him right back.

Going for his second career victory, Wallace still seemed to be in the most enviable position, especially if he could get a helpful push for a slingshot on the final lap. But everyone behind Byron started dueling for position, all of them wanting to put themselves in position to make the winning move.

That worked out perfectly for Byron, who pulled away to win by 0.145 seconds over Ross Chastain while the final wreck of the day sent four cars — including Wallace — spinning across the line.

“It’s tough to be the leader,” Fugle said. “We just had a lot of things go right for us.”

Newgarden passes McLaughlin in final turn for a Texas win

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Roger Penske met Josef Newgarden in victory lane with six crisp hundred dollar bills to gift the race winner. He’s got another \$300,000 in bonuses for the 300 employees back at Team Penske.

The Captain knows how to celebrate a monumental victory.

Newgarden used the nonexistent high line to pass Scott McLaughlin in the final turn Sunday at Texas Motor Speedway and steal the IndyCar race his teammate had dominated. It was the 600th overall victory for Roger Penske across all of his platforms.

He’d promised the bonuses following McLaughlin’s win — No. 599 for Penske — last month in the IndyCar season-opening race.

“Roger is true to his word. He gave me cold hard cash in victory lane!” Newgarden said. “What a guy! He didn’t even make me wait.”

The remaining cash will be doled out in \$1,000 increments to each of the Team Penske employees as a reward from the 85-year-old team owner. Penske opened the year with Austin Cindric’s victory in the Daytona 500 and now has back-to-back wins from McLaughlin and Newgarden to open the IndyCar season.

Better yet, the duel decided Sunday in the top line at Texas closed out a surprisingly competitive race that just might have saved IndyCar’s future with its longtime track partner. Newgarden won IndyCar’s 35th race at Texas, which has hosted the series since the track opened in 1997.

The existing contract expired with this race and if Sunday had been another snoozer, it could have been the curtain call for IndyCar in Texas. A traction compound used in the turns of the 1.5-mile track is meant to enhance



JENNA FRYER/AP

Josef Newgarden shows the \$600 bonus that Roger Penske paid him after Newgarden won the 600th race in Team Penske history, Sunday.

NASCAR’s visit, but the PJI is a horrible mismatch with IndyCar.

Drivers bold enough to test the high line often find an icy surface that sends them straight into the outside wall.

“I thought the race was pretty good and I thought the track opened up,” Penske said. “Even talking to the promoter, he said it was a good race. I was really thrilled with the whole show, and obviously winning is important, but a good race is the most important thing for the series and for Texas and for the fans.”

So will a contract extension be next?

“The promoter was excited about the race and he said he was going to call me,” Penske said. “That’s a good sign.”

McLaughlin started second but snatched the lead from pole-sitter Felix Rosenqvist on the opening lap. The New Zealander led 186 of the 248 laps and wasn’t challenged until Newgarden’s last-ditch charge.

The margin of victory was 0.669 seconds — the eighth-closest finish in 35 races at Texas.

Nightmare for Verstappen as Leclerc wins F1 opener

By JEROME PUGMIRE
Associated Press

SAKHIR, Bahrain — After winning last year’s Formula One title on the last lap of the last race, Max Verstappen’s title defense began with a different sort of drama — his critics might say karma — as his Red Bull car retired just laps from the end of the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix on Sunday.

Ferrari clinched a 1-2 finish with Charles Leclerc winning the race, almost six seconds ahead of teammate Carlos Sainz Jr. Lewis Hamilton, who lost the title so painfully to Verstappen in 2021, enjoyed better luck this time with an unexpected third place.

Verstappen was second behind Leclerc with a handful of laps left in the 57-lap race

under floodlights. Then, after the race had restarted with a safety car, Verstappen became increasingly panicky on race radio as he struggled with steering. Moments later he was in the team garage, soon followed by his teammate Sergio Perez, as Red Bull’s race dramatically collapsed.

“The faster I was going, I could barely steer (and) then suddenly I had to retire, everything just switched off,” Verstappen said. “It looked like a fuel pump issue, there was no fuel coming to the engine. It’s very painful for the team (and) we need to look into everything.”

The race finished under a yellow flag as Leclerc sent Ferrari’s red garage wild with joy.

Hamilton had been lagging way behind in

fifth when late drama on Lap 46 changed the whole race. Deja vu, perhaps, since late drama ended his 2021 title bid.

This time, Leclerc was leading comfortably from Verstappen when the back of Pierre Gasly’s AlphaTauri car caught fire as he parked it on the side of the track. It was quickly put out and the Frenchman walked away unharmed.

From the safety car restart, Leclerc got away but Verstappen started complaining.

“What is going on with the battery?” he asked.

His team told him it was fine, to which Verstappen barked back: “No, it is not.”

With the Red Bulls out, George Russell moved up into fourth to give Mercedes another bonus.



HASSAN AMMAR/AP

First place driver Charles Leclerc of Monaco, right, and second place driver Carlos Sainz of Spain celebrate Ferrari’s 1-2 finish in the Bahrain Grand Prix.

NHL

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference							
Atlantic Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Florida	62	42	14	6	90	254	180
Tampa Bay	61	39	16	6	84	205	174
Toronto	62	39	18	5	83	229	189
Boston	62	38	19	5	81	188	167
Detroit	62	25	30	7	57	178	232
Buffalo	63	22	33	8	52	167	220
Ottawa	62	22	35	5	49	162	204
Montreal	62	17	36	9	43	158	235
Metropolitan Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	62	41	15	6	88	203	148
N.Y. Rangers	63	40	18	5	85	189	160
Pittsburgh	63	38	16	9	85	205	167
Washington	64	35	19	10	80	214	180
Columbus	63	32	28	3	67	210	234
N.Y. Islanders	60	26	25	9	61	162	166
Philadelphia	62	20	31	11	51	156	214
New Jersey	62	22	35	5	49	188	226
Western Conference							
Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	62	44	13	5	93	241	173
St. Louis	61	34	18	9	77	217	173
Minnesota	60	36	20	4	76	225	196
Nashville	62	36	22	4	76	204	175
Dallas	61	34	24	3	71	179	182
Winnipeg	63	29	24	10	68	197	198
Chicago	63	22	32	9	53	167	219
Arizona	62	20	38	4	44	162	224
Pacific Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Calgary	62	38	16	8	84	215	149
Los Angeles	64	34	22	8	76	182	181
Edmonton	62	35	23	4	74	212	196
Vegas	64	34	26	4	72	205	194
Vancouver	64	30	26	8	68	183	186
Anaheim	64	27	26	11	65	183	204
San Jose	62	27	27	8	62	163	195
Seattle	63	19	38	6	44	164	226
Sunday's games							
Philadelphia 2, N.Y. Islanders 1							
Dallas 3, Washington 2							
N.Y. Rangers 2, Carolina 0							
San Jose 4, Arizona 2							
Winnipeg 6, Chicago 4							
Buffalo 3, Vancouver 2, OT							
Monday's games							
Boston at Montreal							
Vegas at Minnesota							
Edmonton at Colorado							
Nashville at Anaheim							
Tuesday's games							
Columbus at Pittsburgh							
N.Y. Rangers at New Jersey							
St. Louis at Washington							
Tampa Bay at Carolina							
Ottawa at N.Y. Islanders							
Philadelphia at Detroit							
Vegas at Winnipeg							
Edmonton at Dallas							
San Jose at Calgary							
Seattle at Arizona							
Nashville at Los Angeles							

Eyeing 3-peat, Lightning add Paul

Wild land 2021 Vezina winner Fleury; Leafs get D Giordano

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

The two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning made another trade on the eve of the deadline aimed at becoming the NHL's first team to win three Cups in a row since the 1980s.

Tampa Bay acquired forward Nick Paul from the Ottawa Senators on Sunday night for Mathieu Joseph and a 2024 fourth-round pick. The cap-strapped Lightning upgraded again up front, thanks to Ottawa retaining 44.5% of Paul's salary for the remainder of the season.

Tampa Bay got Paul two days after acquiring forward Brandon Hagel from Chicago for multiple first-round picks and players and in the aftermath of major movement around the Eastern Conference.

Traded on his 27th birthday, Paul brings more size to the Lightning at 6-foot-3 and 224 pounds. He has 11 goals and eight assists this season with Ottawa.

Making an unexpected move for Paul was Tampa Bay's latest salvo in what became an arms race in the Atlantic Division. The rival Florida Panthers added blue-line depth by getting Robert Hagg from Buffalo after already adding top-six forward Claude Giroux and top-four defenseman Ben Chiarot.

On Monday, the Minnesota Wild addressed their inconsistent goaltending situation by acquiring Marc-Andre Fleury in a trade with the Chicago Blackhawks. The deal was confirmed by a person with direct knowledge of the deal who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the deal, made hours before the NHL's trade deadline, had not yet been announced.

The Wild are in the midst of a tightly contested Western Conference playoff race, and began the day third in the Central Division standings. In Fleury, they add a three-time Stanley Cup-winner who, at 36, won his first Vezina Trophy as the NHL's top goalie last year while playing for the Vegas Golden Knights. He was traded to Chicago last offseason.

Also on Monday, Pittsburgh shored up its



JUSTIN TANG, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Senators left wing Nick Paul, right, takes a shot past Blackhawks defenseman Caleb Jones on March 12. Two-time defending champ Tampa Bay traded for Paul on Sunday.

depth at defense by acquiring Nathan Beaulieu from the Winnipeg Jets, and Marcus Johansson is heading back to the team that drafted him. The Washington Capitals acquired Johansson from the expansion Seattle Kraken, according to a second person with knowledge of the situation who also spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal had not been announced.

On Sunday, the Toronto Maple Leafs shored up their defense by dealing for Seattle captain Mark Giordano.

The Maple Leafs sent second-round picks in 2022 and 2023 and a third-rounder in 2024 to Seattle for Giordano and forward Colin Blackwell in the hopes of winning their first playoff series since 2004. Giordano, a 38-year-old from Toronto brings additional leadership to a core that has had nothing but postseason failures so far.

Seattle also sent defenseman Jeremy Lauzon to Nashville for a 2022 second-round pick and forward Mason Appleton to Winnipeg for a 2023 fourth-round pick. The Predators and

Jets are fighting with the Dallas Stars and others for the final playoff spots in the West.

Unsure about Braden Holtby's injury status, Dallas acquired goaltender Scott Wedgewood from Arizona for a conditional pick in the 2024 draft.

While he recently played his 1,000th NHL game, Giordano has dressed in only 23 playoff games in 16 NHL seasons. His 24th could be part of one of the most scrutinized series in recent history with the pressure again on the Maple Leafs to advance.

It could come against the back-to-back defending champion Lightning or the Panthers, who sent a sixth-round pick in the draft this summer to the Sabres for Hagg. Florida general manager Bill Zito called Hagg "a tireless competitor" who adds a physical element to the blue line.

With Aaron Ekblad injured and expected to miss at least two weeks, the Panthers could put their top defenseman on long-term injured reserve for the rest of the season and use the salary cap space to accumulate more talent.

ROUNDUP

Georgiev shuts out Hurricanes in Rangers' victory

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Alexandar Georgiev made a season-high 44 saves for his seventh career shutout, Chris Krieder broke a scoreless tie late in the second period and the New York Rangers beat the Carolina Hurricanes 2-0 on Sunday night.

It was the first shutout for Georgiev since beating Philadelphia 9-0 on March 17, 2021. Georgiev, who played for just the second time in New York's last five games, picked up his first road victory since Jan. 8 at Anaheim.

Frank Vatrano added an empty-net goal with 41.3 seconds to play to seal it for the Rangers.

The loss sent Carolina to its first four-game losing streak of the season (0-3-1). It also marked the end to a 14-game home-ice points streak, one shy of a franchise record. Frederik Andersen stopped 16 shots for the Hurricanes, who were blanked for the third time this season.

Flyers 2, Islanders 1: Kevin Hayes scored

both goals for host Philadelphia and the Flyers beat the New York in their first game since trading longtime captain Claude Giroux.

Giroux was dealt to Florida on Saturday. Stuck in last place in the Metropolitan Division, Giroux waived his no-trade clause in the final year of his contract for a chance to win his first Stanley Cup with the Eastern Conference-leading Panthers.

Stars 3, Capitals 2: Roope Hintz scored twice on the power play to compensate for Alex Ovechkin's 40th goal of the season, leading visiting Dallas past Washington.

The Stars won for just the second time in six games and moved one point back of the final playoff spot in the Western Conference. They have 21 games left, three more than the closest team they're chasing: the Vegas Golden Knights.

Jake Oettinger, who was playing on back-to-back days with Braden Holtby injured, made 36 saves.

Ovechkin tied Wayne Gretzky as the only players to score 40 goals in a season 12 times and made Oettinger the 156th goalie the Capitals captain has scored on. With an assist on Ovechkin's 770th career goal, Evgeny Kuznetsov extended his point streak to a career-high nine games.

The Capitals had their point streak snapped at eight, losing in regulation for the first time since Feb. 28 after a 7-0-1 run.

Jets 6, Blackhawks 4: Jansen Harkins scored twice, Kyle Connor got his 39th goal of the season and visiting Winnipeg beat Chicago.

Nikolaj Ehlers, Josh Morrissey and Blake Wheeler also scored, and Connor added two assists for the Jets, who won for the third time in four games to get within five points of the Western Conference's final wild-card spot.

Jonathan Toews, Dylan Strome, Taylor Raddysh and Philipp Kurashev each scored for the Blackhawks.

Sharks 4, Coyotes 2: Noah Gregor had the go-ahead goal in the third period and added an assist to help host San Jose rally past Arizona and snap a three-game losing streak.

Timo Meier, Nick Bonino and Rudolfs Balcers also scored for the Sharks, who trailed 2-1 in the third period with just under five minutes to play after Arizona's Lawson Crouse scored. But Meier tied it 22 seconds later when he beat Karel Vejmelka to the upper corner. Gregor gave the team its second goal in a 44-second span to put San Jose ahead 3-2.

Balcers added an empty-net goal in the final minute for the Sharks to seal it.

Phil Kessel also had a goal for the Coyotes. **Sabres 3, Canucks 2:** Rasmus Dahlin scored 48 seconds into overtime, leading visiting Buffalo over Vancouver.

Casey Mittelstadt had a goal and an assist for the Sabres, who have won four of their last five games. Craig Anderson made 30 saves for his 20th win.

NBA

Raptors top 76ers for 6th straight road win

BY DAN GELSTON
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Philadelphia 76ers acquired James Harden to score big baskets when the game is on the line.

He had the ball and tried, tried and tried again over the final 2:25 — and a Toronto Raptors team fighting for an Eastern Conference playoff spot kept Harden in check.

“He’s got all the options,” Toronto coach Nick Nurse said. “He went to the float game and we made some plays on it. That’s really the defense.”

Pascal Siakam had 26 points and 10 rebounds, and Precious Achiuwa scored 21 points to lead the Raptors to a 93-88 win over Philadelphia on Sunday night.

Chris Boucher had 12 points and 14 rebounds to help Toronto extend its road winning streak to six.

Harden missed two free throws with the Sixers down 87-86 and missed a driving lay-up with 59 seconds left and the Sixers down 89-86. Philadelphia had the ball with 37.3 seconds left and Joel Embiid lost the ball for a costly turnover.

Scottie Barnes missed two free throws that kept the Raptors’ lead at 90-88 with 7.1 seconds left.

Harden, though, missed again when he was whistled for an offensive foul against Boucher on a drive down the lane that crushed the Sixers’ comeback bid.

“We were trying to make it hard for him in the paint,” Boucher said.

Yes, Philadelphia had its chances. But Toronto was clearly the aggressor against a stagnant Sixers team that played at half-speed compared to their division rival. The Raptors had a whopping 20 offensive rebounds and held an overall 56-40 edge on the glass. Philadelphia made only four baskets and had seven turnovers in the fourth quarter.

“We just got our butt kicked. That’s all I have,” coach Doc Rivers said.

Embiid had 21 points and 13 rebounds for Philadelphia. He shot only 6-for-20 overall from the floor and missed all three three-pointers.



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Philadelphia center Joel Embiid, left, drives on Toronto's Precious Achiuwa during the Raptors' 93-88 win Sunday.



JOSÉ LUIS VILLEGAS/AP

Phoenix Suns center JaVale McGee, right, and Sacramento Kings center Damian Jones battle for position during the Suns' 127-124 overtime win Sunday in Sacramento, Calif.

ROUNDUP

Short-handed Suns rally, shoot past Kings in OT

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Landry Shamet made a three-pointer with 31 seconds left in overtime moments after missing an open look beyond the arc and the NBA-leading Phoenix Suns beat the Sacramento Kings 127-124 on Sunday.

Damian Jones gave the Kings a 121-120 lead with a putback dunk not long after the Suns star Devin Booker fouled out. Shamet’s 25-foot try missed, but Phoenix grabbed the rebound. Following a timeout, Shamet hit his fifth three-pointer of the game to put the Suns ahead by two.

“Shot a million of those,” Shamet said. “At that point it is what it is. Live with the result — it went in. We just find ways to win games. It’s been our MO this year and it’s going to be incredibly valuable moving forward.”

After Mikal Bridges — who had 27 points for short-handed Phoenix — made the second of two free throws, Jones made one from the stripe, but missed the second. Aaron Holiday grabbed the rebound and Torrey Craig dunked.

Booker scored 19 of his 31 points in the third quarter as the Suns won their fifth straight to improve to 58-14 — nine games ahead of second-place Memphis for the best record in the league.

Davion Mitchell, starting in place of injured point guard De’Aaron Fox, had 28 points and nine assists for the Kings. Domantas Sabonis had 18 points, 12 rebounds and six assists before leaving with an apparent left knee injury in the fourth quarter. Sacramento has lost 10 of 13.

Spurs 110, Warriors 108: Keldon Johnson scored off a rebound of a missed free throw with three-tenths of a second left to give the San Antonio a win at Golden State.

Jakob Poeltl made the first of two free throws to it at 108 with 2.4 seconds left. He missed the second off the back iron, but Johnson grabbed the rebound and converted the winner. Klay Thompson missed a three-pointer from the right corner as time expired.

Grizzlies 122, Rockets 98: Desmond Bane had 24 points and Memphis overcame the absence of star Ja Morant with balanced scoring in a victory at NBA-worst Houston.

Bane was one of six Grizzlies players to score at least 13 points on a day Morant sat out with a sore knee. Dillon Brooks added 20 points, and De’Anthony Melton had 16 points and seven rebounds.

Jazz 108, Knicks 93: Donovan Mitchell scored 36 points and Utah won at New York, Jordan Clarkson came off the bench to score 18 of his 23 points in the first half for the Jazz, who opened a six-game road trip with the first of two games in two nights in New York. Rudy Gobert and Royce O’Neale each had 14 points.

Celtics 124, Nuggets 104: Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum each scored 30 points and Boston won at Denver,

The Celtics shot 57.3% from the floor and finished 19 of 40 from three-point range. They also hit all 11 of their free throws.

Pelicans 117, Hawks 112: Jonas Valanciunas had 26 points and 12 rebounds, CJ McCollum added 25 points and New Orleans won at Atlanta.

The Pelicans moved into ninth place in the Western Conference. They have won their last two and three of four and were without leading scorer Brandon Ingram and fourth-leading scorer Devonte’ Graham.

Pacers 129, Trail Blazers 98: Oshae Brissett scored 24 points, Justin Anderson had 18 and host Indiana cruised past Portland.

Brissett was 8 of 10 from the field and made six free throws without a miss. He also led the Pacers with nine rebounds.

Magic 90, Thunder 85: Wendell Carter Jr. scored 10 of his 30 points in the fourth quarter and host Orlando handed Oklahoma City its ninth straight loss.

Carter also had 16 rebounds to help the Magic end a three-game losing streak.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	43	27	.614	—
Boston	44	28	.611	—
Toronto	40	31	.563	3½
Brooklyn	37	34	.521	6½
New York	30	41	.423	13½
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Miami	47	24	.662	—
Charlotte	36	35	.507	11
Atlanta	35	36	.493	12
Washington	30	40	.429	16½
Orlando	19	53	.264	28½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	44	27	.620	—
Chicago	41	29	.586	2½
Cleveland	41	30	.577	3
Indiana	25	47	.347	19½
Detroit	19	52	.268	25

Western Conference

Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	49	23	.681	—
Dallas	43	28	.606	5½
New Orleans	30	41	.423	18½
San Antonio	28	44	.389	21
Houston	17	54	.239	31½
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	45	26	.634	—
Minnesota	42	30	.583	3½
Denver	42	30	.583	3½
Portland	26	44	.371	18½
Oklahoma City	20	51	.282	25
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Phoenix	58	14	.806	—
Golden State	47	24	.662	10½
L.A. Clippers	36	37	.493	22½
L.A. Lakers	30	41	.423	27½
Sacramento	25	48	.342	33½

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division title

Sunday's games

Indiana 129, Portland 98
Memphis 122, Houston 98
New Orleans 117, Atlanta 112
Orlando 90, Oklahoma City 85
Phoenix 127, Sacramento 124, OT
Utah 108, New York 93
San Antonio 110, Golden State 108
Toronto 93, Philadelphia 88
Boston 124, Denver 104

Monday's games

L.A. Lakers at Cleveland
New Orleans at Charlotte
Portland at Detroit
Miami at Philadelphia
Utah at Brooklyn
Boston at Oklahoma City
Toronto at Chicago
Washington at Houston
Minnesota at Dallas

Tuesday's games

Golden State at Orlando
Atlanta at New York
Chicago at Milwaukee
L.A. Clippers at Denver

Wednesday's games

Atlanta at Detroit
New York at Charlotte
Sacramento at Indiana
Brooklyn at Memphis
Golden State at Miami
Utah at Boston
Orlando at Oklahoma City
Phoenix at Minnesota
Houston at Dallas
Philadelphia at L.A. Lakers
San Antonio at Portland

Leaders

Through Sunday Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Embiid, PHI	58	544	564	1730	29.8
James, LAL	53	596	237	1580	29.8
Anttknmppo, MIL	59	600	492	1758	29.8
Doncic, DAL	55	543	298	1548	28.1

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Gobert, UTA	56	208	617	825	14.7
Jokic, DEN	65	182	703	885	13.6

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Paul, PHO	58	619	10.7
Harden, PHI	55	562	10.2

SPORTS BRIEFS/MLB/TENNIS



CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Sam Burns hits his tee shot on the 18th hole during the final round of the Valspar Championship on Sunday in Palm Harbor, Fla.

BRIEFLY

Burns top Riley for repeat at Innisbrook

Associated Press

PALM HARBOR, Fla.— Sam Burns celebrated another victory Sunday at the Valspar Championship, and it was nothing like he experienced a year ago.

Not even close.

He lowered his arms and forcefully shook his fists as raw emotion poured out of him on the 16th green, a reaction worthy under the circumstances. Burns capped off his back-to-back wins at Innisbrook with a birdie putt from just outside 30 feet to beat PGA Tour rookie and longtime friend Davis Riley on the second playoff hole.

"It felt like it looked," Burns said with a wide smile, the trophy at his side from his third PGA Tour victory in the last year, a run that began with his first win a year ago at the Valspar Championship when he won by three shots.

"All through today, just trying to make sure that I never got too high or too low and just tried to stay even-keeled," he said. "And to see that go in, I mean, that's just what I felt."

There was plenty to cause stress during a four-man chase along the back nine on the Copperhead course at Innisbrook.

Burns, who closed with a 2-under 69, had control until he had to make a 9-foot putt for bogey just to keep the lead. Riley, who steadied himself after a triple bogey on the par-5 fifth hole, hit 5-iron to 6 feet for birdie on the 17th to catch him.

Riley, who started the final round with a two-shot lead and closed with a 72, had a 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th for a win. Burns was watching from a distance, hopeful only of a chance to play golf. The putt missed to the right, and two holes later Burns was a winner again.

The victory moves Burns to No. 10 in the world for the first time, knocking Dustin Johnson out of the top 10 for the first time in seven years.

"Man, it's crazy," Burns said. "Davis played well today, espe-

cially the way he finished. I tried to stay steady. I didn't make a lot of mistakes. A lot of time on Sunday if you plot your way around, make a bunch of pars, throw in a few birdies, a lot of times it works well. So happy."

Both made pars on the 18th in the playoff, with Riley saving par from a front bunker. Neither looked to be in great birdie position on the 16th until Burns' putt caught the left edge and went 180 degrees around the cup before falling in the back side.

Riley hit a strong pitch needing to hole it to extend the playoff and missed long.

Maryland hires Seton Hall's Willard

Kevin Willard is taking over as Maryland's basketball coach after a dozen seasons at Seton Hall.

The Terrapins announced the hire Monday, three days after Seton Hall's season ended with a loss to TCU in the NCAA Tournament. Willard took the Pirates to five of the past six NCAA Tournaments.

Maryland has been in the market for a new coach since Mark Turgeon's departure in early December. Assistant Danny Manning took over as interim coach, and the Terrapins went 15-17 for their first losing season since 1993, early in Gary Williams' tenure.

Penny returning to Seahawks on 1-year deal

SEATTLE — Running back Rashaad Penny is returning to the Seattle Seahawks after agreeing to terms on a one-year deal, a person with knowledge of the agreement told The Associated Press. The new contract will keep Penny with the team he's played for for four seasons.

Penny can earn up to \$6.5 million for the one-year contract, according to the person who spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity Sunday because the team had not announced the deal.

Reports: Red Sox sign Rockies' Story to play 2B

Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. — The Red Sox have reportedly agreed to terms with Rockies All-Star shortstop Trevor Story on a six-year, \$140 million contract that would bring him to Boston to play second base.

The deal, which was first reported by USA Today and confirmed by multiple outlets, gives the Red Sox a long-term answer at second, which has been in flux since former AL MVP Dustin Pedroia was first injured in 2017, and leaves Xander Bogaerts in place at shortstop. The team also has a backup plan on the left side of the infield if Bogaerts opts out of his contract at the end of this season.

Story, 29, batted .251 with 24 homers and 75 RBIs for the Rockies last season, an off-year that followed three straight years in which he received NL MVP votes. In five major league seasons, he has never played any defensive position other than shortstop.

"He's a big bat. We know what he does defensively already. I think that bat would play really well at Fenway just with that short porch over there," Bogaerts told MLB.com last week when the deal was first rumored.

"It would be nice if we could get an addition like that after some of the big names that we lost to free agency or traded away," Bogaerts said. "That's a big boy. That's a big bat right there. That's an impact player."

Story is the last to sign of a free agent shortstop class that sent Corey Seager to Texas (10 years, \$325 million); Javier Báez to Detroit (six, \$140 million); and, just this weekend, Carlos Correa to Minnesota (three, \$105 million). Marcus Semien, a longtime shortstop who played second base for Toronto last season, signed a seven-year, \$175 million contract with the Rangers.

Story is a lifetime .272 hitter with 158 homers and 450 RBIs in 745 career games. He has benefited from the thin air in Denver, hitting .303 with 95 homers and 279 RBIs at Coors Field and .241 with 63 homers and 171 RBIs on the road.

With Story at second, Kiké Hernández could settle into center field and Christian Arroyo becomes a utility bat off the bench.

Red Sox manager Alex Cora declined to comment on the reports after Sunday's spring training game against Baltimore, saying



NICK WASS/AP

All-Star shortstop Trevor Story on a six-year, \$140 million contract that would bring him to Boston to play second base.

they were rumors. Even before the deal was announced, the news was welcomed inside the Red Sox clubhouse.

"It sparks the team," pitcher Nate Eovaldi told MLB.com. "We know that they (the front office) want to win but then to add another big piece to the organization like that would be huge."

Fritz halts Nadal's winning streak

BY BETH HARRIS

Associated Press

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. — Hours from playing in the biggest final of his young career, Taylor Fritz was in severe pain. The prospect of having to withdraw against Rafael Nadal nearly had him in tears.

His coach urged him not to potentially risk damaging his sore ankle further. Fritz stubbornly refused to bow out.

His faith in himself paid off. Fritz upset Nadal 6-3, 7-6 (5) Sunday to win the BNP Paribas Open and snap the 21-time major champion's 20-match winning streak this year.

"It was a complete non-issue, didn't feel it at all, didn't hinder me at all," said Fritz, who tweaked his ankle late in his semifinal win over No. 7 seed Andrey Rublev. Blue medical tape could be seen above his high sock and he had it numbed before the final.

Nadal had his own health issue. He came into the match bothered by painful breathing that he first experienced in a three-set semifinal win. He took two medical timeouts during the final. The first one came after he lost the first set. Nadal went inside with a trainer after tapping his upper left chest. He got treatment on court after falling behind 5-4 in the second set.



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Taylor Fritz reacts after winning a game against Rafael Nadal during the singles finals at the BNP Paribas Open on Sunday.

"When I try to breathe, it's painful and it's very uncomfortable. It's like a needle all the time inside. I get dizzy a little bit because it's painful. It's a kind of pain that limit me a lot," said Nadal, who turns 36 in June.

"The thing that worries me now, it's about what's going on there, what I have to do now to recover and how long going to take."

Nadal's 20-0 start to the year included the Australian Open, his 21st major championship that broke a tie with Novak Djokovic

and Roger Federer. He also won titles in Melbourne and Acapulco.

"Of course, the last two months have been amazing, unforgettable, very emotional," Nadal said. "I enjoy things that I never thought I could live again a few months ago."

In an error-filled women's final, Iga Swiatek defeated Maria Sakkari 6-4, 6-1. The 20-year-old Polish player and Fritz earned \$1.2 million each for their victories.

Fritz didn't waste any time in attacking Nadal, racing to a 5-1 lead in the first set with two breaks. Nadal got a break back in closing to 5-3, but his backhand error gave Fritz another break and the set.

"It's an honor to even be on the same court as this guy," Fritz told the crowd. "I grew up watching this guy win everything."

Nadal fought off a match point on his serve with a forehand winner to tie the second set 5-all. He had two break points on Fritz's serve in the next game, but the American held for a 6-5 lead. Nadal held to force the tiebreaker.

Nadal sent two straight forehands well wide to set up Fritz's second match point. Another Nadal error sent Fritz to the biggest victory of his career not far from where he grew up near San Diego.

NCAA TOURNAMENT

Double-digit seeds continue winning in women's bracket

By DOUG FEINBERG
Associated Press

Double-digit seeds are leaving their mark on the first weekend of the women's NCAA Tournament and bouncing some of the top players and teams in the country, including Iowa's Caitlin Clark and Baylor's NaLyssa Smith.

Creighton and South Dakota continued the run of upsets as the two No. 10 seeds advanced to the Sweet 16 for the first time ever.

The Bluejays got the second round started, shocking Clark and Iowa with a two-point win that silenced the sellout crowd in Iowa City. Hours later, South Dakota knocked off No. 2 Baylor, ending Smith's college career on her home court.

If you're counting, that's eight wins by double-digit seeds in this tournament — tying the most ever in NCAA women's basketball history through two rounds, a mark set in 2018.

Two double-digit seeds in the Sweet 16 already matches the record that's been accomplished a few times. And there's a chance for a few more to win Monday to break the mark when the regional semifinals field is completed.

Creighton was able to pull off its win thanks in part to sophomore Lauren Jensen, who transferred from Iowa after her freshman year. She scored 19 points, including a three-pointer with 12 seconds left that gave the Bluejays the lead for good.

"I've gotten the question a lot," Creighton coach Jim Flanery said. "How is Lauren going to feel today, what's Lauren going to play like, da da da da?" Those last few minutes had to be magical and special, and we're super proud of her and we're super proud that she's part of our program."

While Creighton needed last-minute heroics from Jensen, South Dakota took it right at Baylor and never let up. The Coyotes' 14-point road win was the largest by a 10-seed over a No. 2, according to STATS.

South Dakota was led by a trio of super-seniors, who were hoping to have a special season. They certainly are.

"We had a very special team in 2020 that didn't have a chance to play in the NCAA tournament until — I think all — and that's young ladies were on that team at that point in time," coach Dawn Plitzweit said. "So for them to have the opportunity, it has been something that they've wanted and they've relished and they've certainly taken advantage of being in the moment for two games."

Here are a few other tidbits from Sunday's games:

Showing up: An average of 6,449 fans came to first-round games this year, including a sellout crowd of 14,382 at Carver Arena in Iowa. The Hawkeyes also sold out their second-round game against Creighton.

"A wonderful opportunity for a women's basketball game today on ABC in front of a sold-out crowd," Clark said. "I just feel bad for the fans because they've given us so much over these past two weeks, really willed us to a regular season title here at home versus Michigan, and I hope they come out and support us the exact same way next year. I know they will."

With crowds expected to be high in the remaining second-round games, the attendance is on pace for the most in the opening two rounds since the 2004 season when the average was nearly 6,700 a game.

Holding form: It wasn't all about the upsets Sunday, with No. 1 seeds South Carolina, Stanford and Louisville advancing to the Sweet 16. The Gamecocks continued playing stellar defense, holding Miami to just 33 points in a 16-point win. The 54 points allowed by South Carolina in the first two rounds of the women's NCAAs is 17 fewer than any other team has allowed in its first two games.

"There's a nastiness to us on that side of the basketball," Gamecocks coach Dawn Staley said. "It wins basketball games for us."

Louisville and Stanford needed strong second halves to pull away from Gonzaga and Kansas, respectively. Tara VanDerveer's team used a 32-15 third quarter to turn a two-point halftime lead into a blowout.



PHOTOS BY CHRIS CARLSON/AP

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski celebrates Sunday's win over Michigan State with forward Wendell Moore Jr., left, in Greenville, S.C.

Ride: Duke in Sweet 16 for 26th time with Coach K

FROM PAGE 24

"You guys were terrific, man," Krzyzewski told the players sitting alongside him, his voice quivering with emotion. "I'm so — I'm really proud to be your coach."

"It had nothing to do with coaching in those last four or five minutes. It all had to do with heart and togetherness. They followed their hearts and God bless them — we're in the Sweet 16."

Star freshman Paolo Banchemo scored 19 points and muscled in the go-ahead drive through contact with 2:05 left, putting the Blue Devils ahead to stay in the record-extending 1,200th win of Krzyzewski's career. Duke reached the Sweet 16 for the 26th time under Coach K, who announced last summer that his 42nd season with the Blue Devils would be his last.

Those coaching milestones came against his longtime friend and frequent rival. The 75-year-old Krzyzewski — who has five NCAA titles and a record-tying 12 Final Four appearances — improved to 13-3 against the 67-year-old Izzo, who won the 2000 national championship and has reached eight Final Fours.

Krzyzewski will continue his push for a career-capping championship when second-seeded Duke heads to San Francisco to face third-seeded Texas Tech on Thursday in the West Region semifinals.

The Blue Devils shot 61% after halftime and 57% for the game, and they needed every bit of that production to survive against the seventh-seeded Spartans (23-13) in a riveting fight to the final minute.

"It's the NCAA Tournament, our season's on the line every single game," Banchemo said. "That's



Duke forward Theo John blocks Michigan State guard Tyson Walker during Sunday's game in the second round of the NCAA tournament, in Greenville, S.C.

really all that needs to be said. ... We were like, 'We've got four minutes: we can either lay down or turn it up.'"

The 6-foot-10 Banchemo had the biggest basket, putting the ball on the floor and scoring in a mauling drive against the smaller Joey Hauser for the 75-74 lead. Then Jeremy Roach hit a three-pointer to beat the shot clock for a four-point lead with 1:16 left, sending an already-charged crowd into a full roar.

"I think they showed their truest colors," Izzo said.

"An average team without a lot of heart might've just drifted into the sunset. And I thought they reached down in Mike Krzyzewski fashion, and did an unbelievable job of kind of taking it at us. We just didn't have enough left."

Even more impressive, Duke did it all with freshman starter A.J. Griffin sidelined the last 8:24 with an apparent left ankle injury. The Blue Devils closed out the game by outscoring Michigan State 20-6.

Gabe Brown scored 18 points to lead the Spartans, while Tyson Walker scored all 13 of his points after halftime. Michigan State shot 42% for the game and had only one field goal over the final 2 1/2 minutes in possession-by-possession fight as Duke made its move.



LM OTERO/AP

The South Dakota bench cheers during the second half of Sunday's game against Baylor in the second round of the NCAA tournament in Waco, Texas.

NCAA TOURNAMENT

MEN'S ROUNDUP

Kalscheur, Cyclones advance past Badgers

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Gabe Kalscheur scored 22 points and 11th-seeded Iowa State surprised Wisconsin 54-49 in the Badgers' backyard to advance to the Sweet 16 in a Midwest Region game.

Izaiah Brockington added 10 points as the gritty Cyclones used their tough defense to hold off Johnny Davis and company in front of a raucous pro-Wisconsin crowd about 80 miles away from the school's Madison campus.

After winning just two games last season, Iowa State (22-12) advanced to the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2016 and the sixth time in school history. It will play Miami on Friday in Chicago, a surprising 11-vs.-10-seed matchup.

Kalscheur went 10-for-19 from the field. The rest of the Cyclones combined for 10 field goals.

For Kalscheur, a 6-foot-4 transfer from Minnesota who knows Badgers senior Brad Davison from their days growing up in the Minneapolis area, it was a particularly satisfying moment.

"Really never liked Wisconsin, to be honest," Kalscheur said. "I mean I have family from there, but I'm a Minnesota-raised man."

Davis, the Big Ten Player of the Year, led the third-seeded Badgers (25-8) with 17 points, but they shot a season-low 29.8% from the field and turned it over a season-high 17 times.

Midwest Region

Miami 79, Auburn 61: Isaiah Wong scored 21 points, Kameron McGusty had 20 and the No. 10-seeded Hurricanes neutralized the second-seeded Tigers' Jabari Smith and Walker Kessler in Greenville, S.C., to reach its first Sweet 16 in six years.

Charlie Moore added 15 points and eight assists as Miami (25-10) advanced to the round of 16 for the fourth time overall and third time in coach Jim Larranaga's 10 seasons. And the Hurricanes did it against Auburn's frontcourt of future NBA big men.

West Region

Texas Tech 59, Notre Dame 53: Kevin McCullar made an emphatic dunk with 15 seconds left to cap a 10-1 closing run for the No. 3 seeded Red Raiders, which beat the Fighting Irish in San Diego to advance to the Sweet 16.

Kevin Obanor had 15 points and 15 rebounds, and McCullar and Bryson Williams each scored 14 for Texas Tech (27-9), which made its third round of 16 in the past four tournaments and fifth in school history.

South Region

Houston 68, Illinois 53: Taze Moore scored 21 points, Jamal Shead added 18 and the Cougars, a Final Four team last season, advanced to the Sweet 16 by beating the Illinois in Pittsburgh.

Fifth-seeded Houston (31-5), which lost its two best players to season-ending injuries, is headed home to Texas for the South Region semifinals, which will be in San Antonio, three hours from home, where they will face Arizona.

Villanova 71, Ohio State 61: Collin Gillespie scored 20 points, Eric Dixon hit a big three-pointer late and the second-seeded Wildcats fended off the seventh-seeded Buckeyes in Pittsburgh.

Villanova (28-7) earned its eighth trip to the Sweet 16 under Jay Wright after surviving a second-half push from Ohio State (20-12), which trimmed a 15-point deficit to two before the Wildcats regained their footing.

East Region

Purdue 81, Texas 71: Jaden Ivey made a critical three-pointer with 1:01 left and finished with 18 points, and the Boilermakers won in Milwaukee to finally get past Longhorns coach Chris Beard in March.

Trevion Williams scored 22 points to lead Purdue, which capitalized on a major disparity at the free-throw line to reach the Sweet 16. The Boilermakers had 46 attempts, making 33, while Texas went 7 of 12 on free throws.



DENIS POROY/AP

Arizona guard Benedict Mathurin, left, drives around TCU guard Micah Peavy, right. Mathurin hit a three-pointer to force overtime and had six points in the extra period in an 85-80 win Sunday in San Diego.

Mathurin, Arizona outlast TCU in OT

BY JOE REEDY
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Benedict Mathurin has come through plenty in clutch situations for Arizona. It's no surprise he made his biggest plays of the season when the Wildcats needed him the most.

The sophomore shooting guard made a three-pointer to force overtime and then scored six more points in the extra session as the top-seeded Arizona outlasted ninth-seeded TCU 85-80 on Sunday night in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

Mathurin, the Pac-12 Player of the Year and a second-team AP All-American selection, finished with 30 points. After Kerr Kriisa missed a three, Mathurin was able to wrestle the ball away from the Horned Frogs' Emanuel Miller in the paint and put it in to give the Wildcats an 83-80 lead with 1:11 remaining.

After getting the rebound and making the basket, Mathurin did a couple fist pumps near the baseline.

"My coaches were getting on me for not getting enough rebounds. I was pretty happy about getting the offensive rebound," said Mathurin, who is the sixth Arizona player to score at least 30 points in an NCAA Tournament game. "So I just went out there and got the rebound, made it. And I was emotional."

Christian Koloko added 28 points and 12 rebounds, including a putback dunk that slammed the door on TCU with 9 seconds left in OT.

Koloko was 12-for-13 from the field, including five dunks, but the rest of the Wildcats were 19 of 55, including 5 of 27 on three-pointers.

Mathurin even got off to a slow start. He was 2-for-9 before making six of his last 10.

"Ben's not afraid of the moment. He's a special player who has an ability to rise up another level when needed. He has that clutch gene," Arizona coach Tommy Lloyd said. "I honestly felt really good when he had the ball in hands there. I knew he was going to shoot a three. Right when he snapped that three off to tie it, it was pretty impressive."

Mathurin and Koloko did enough though for the Wildcats (33-3) to avoid becoming the second No. 1 seed to fall during the second round. They advanced to Thursday's South Region semifinals in San Antonio, Texas, where they will face fifth-seeded Houston.

"I mean, it was simple, it was win or go home," Koloko said. "That's not the first time we were down. We knew we had to keep playing our game. Coach trusted us and told us, you've got to hang in there. That's what we did. We didn't panic. We played our game and we came back."

Chuck O'Bannon Jr. had a career-high 23 points for the Horned Frogs (21-13) while Mike Miles Jr. and Eddie Lampkin Jr. had 20 apiece. TCU was looking to get to the Sweet 16 for the first time.

"This season was everything for us because we weren't even expected to be here. And for us to win our first game and be that close with the No. 1 seed just shows that we have a bunch of guys with a lot of grit," O'Bannon said.

The Horned Frogs still had a chance to win in regulation after Mathurin's big shot, but Miles lost the ball near midcourt. Dalen Terry tried for a game-ending dunk but he didn't get the shot off before time expired.



MORRY GASH/AP

Iowa State's Gabe Kalscheur drives past Wisconsin's Johnny Davis during the Cyclones' 54-49 win Sunday in Milwaukee.

SPORTS



Red Sox sign Story

All-Star shortstop leaves Rockies, will play 2nd base in Boston » **MLB, Page 21**

NCAA TOURNAMENT



Coach K's last ride continues

Duke rallies to close out Spartans and advance to Sweet 16

BY AARON BEARD
Associated Press

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Mike Krzyzewski's emotions began to flow with a few seconds left on the clock, when it was finally certain Duke would extend his last NCAA Tournament run.

He whirled around to face the section where his family was sitting behind him and extended both arms to point their way in celebration. He traded high-fives and hugs with his players, then shared a long postgame hug at midcourt with Michigan State's Tom Izzo after beating his friend in the Hall of Fame coaches' bittersweet final tussle.

INSIDE
Arizona tops TCU
Page 23

Iowa St. surprises Wisconsin
Page 23

Krzyzewski's retirement will be on hold for several more days at least. The Blue Devils survived a tense finish to beat the Spartans 85-76 on Sunday, earning another trip to the Sweet 16 and giving their coach his latest milestones.

Trailing by five near the 5-minute mark and with their season in peril, Duke (30-6) responded with one big shot after another, a resilient performance amid uncommon pressure.

It was almost too much for Krzyzewski, who struggled to find the right words to start his postgame news conference.

SEE RIDE ON PAGE 22



Top: Duke forward Wendell Moore Jr. celebrates after the Blue Devils' 85-76 win over the Spartans as Michigan State forward Joey Hauser looks away. Right: Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski, right, hugs Michigan State head coach Tom Izzo following Sunday's second-round NCAA tournament game in Greenville, S.C.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CARLSON/AP

Wild win for Byron at remodeled Atlanta » Auto racing, Page 18

