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STARS AND STRIPES

stripes.com

Volume 83 Edition 1 ©SS 2024 THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024

平成12年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く)
発行所 星条旗新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥50

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GIANNA SULGER/U.S. Army

U.S. soldiers shoot an M249 light machine gun at a target during a combined arms live-fire training exercise during Saber Strike 24 at Bemowo Piskie Training Ground, Poland, on Tuesday.

Permanent presence in Poland?

Army leaders open to possibility of armored brigade in country, but costs would be high

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The Army's top leaders this week left open the possibility of basing more soldiers on a permanent basis in Poland, a move that could provide relief for units burdened with repeated deployments overseas.

"Certainly, that would have some benefits in terms of oper-

ational tempo," Army Secretary Christine Wormuth told the House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday.

Among the challenges associated with moving an armored brigade to Poland would be getting in place overseas military construction projects such as schools and other amenities that families would need, she said.

"There are pros and cons asso-

ciated with permanent basing," Wormuth said.

The comments from the top civilian leader in the Army come after nearly a decade of frequent deployments to Europe, which picked up pace after Russian's 2014 intervention in Ukraine. Those missions have only intensified since Moscow's full-scale invasion two years ago.

Armored, infantry and combat

aviation brigades have been at the center of that effort. But the situation has raised questions about whether the deployment pace is taking a toll on the wellbeing of soldiers.

For example, an Army Times report in March found that armored units, which are among the most deployed, have experienced

SEE POLAND ON PAGE 5

Navy seeks to replenish \$1 billion in munitions

By SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy urgently needs Congress to pass a stalled national security spending plan to replenish the nearly \$1 billion in munitions spent to counter attacks by Iran and its proxies in the Middle East in the past six months, the Navy secretary said Tuesday.

Expenditures on munitions have skyrocketed since October, when the Hamas-Israeli war started in the Gaza Strip. U.S. forces continue to guard Navy and commercial ships in the Red Sea from Houthi rebel attacks, and American service members helped shoot down missiles launched over the weekend by Iran against Israel.

"It's critical for Congress to pass a supplemental [spending bill] this week so that we could actually get the additional resources to be able to supplement those munitions," Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro said during testimony to a subpanel of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The \$95 billion package to provide aid for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan contains \$2.4 billion to cover the cost of replacing munitions used to intercept enemy missiles and drones.

The Senate approved the legis-

SEE MUNITIONS ON PAGE 6

RELATED

Iran vows response to any incursion as Israel plans to act
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BUSINESS/WEATHER

United reports \$124M loss amid Boeing grounding

Associated Press

United Airlines said Tuesday that it lost \$124 million in the first quarter, which it blamed on a three-week grounding of all Boeing 737 Max 9s after a panel blew off an Alaska Airlines Max jetliner in January.

United indicated it would receive far fewer new planes from Boeing this year than it expected, and it has begun leasing Airbus jets to fill out its fleet.

Financial results released by the airline pointed to continued

strength in demand for air travel, especially within the United States and across the Atlantic. United forecast better-than-expected profit in the second quarter.

Shares of United rose 5% in after-hours trading.

The airline had its own difficulties in the first three months of the year. Its CEO reassured travelers that United is safe despite a series of events that included a piece of aluminum skin falling off one plane, a tire drop-

ping off another during takeoff, and an engine fire. The Federal Aviation Administration stepped up its oversight of the carrier.

United was hobbled during most of January by the temporary loss of its 79 Max 9 aircraft. The airline was forced to cancel hundreds of flights and switch planes on many others.

United said the grounding cost it \$200 million — enough to turn a small profit into a loss for the quarter.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates			
Euro costs (April 18)	\$1.04	Switzerland (Franc)	0.9117
British pound (April 18)	\$1.21	Thailand (Baht)	36.80
Japanese yen (April 18)	150.00	Turkey (NewLira)	32.4950
South Korean won (April 18)	1349.00		
Commercial rates		(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.)	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3768		
Britain (Pound)	1.2460		
Canada (Dollar)	1.3787		
China (Yuan)	7.2388		
Denmark (Krone)	7.0099		
Egypt (Pound)	48.5037		
Euro	0.9395		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8315		
Hungary (Forint)	369.00		
Israel (Shekel)	3.7808		
Japan (Yen)	154.67		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3082		
Norway (Krone)	10.9995		
Philippines (Peso)	57.24		
Poland (Zloty)	4.08		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7513		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3615		
South Korea (Won)	1384.08		

INTEREST RATES

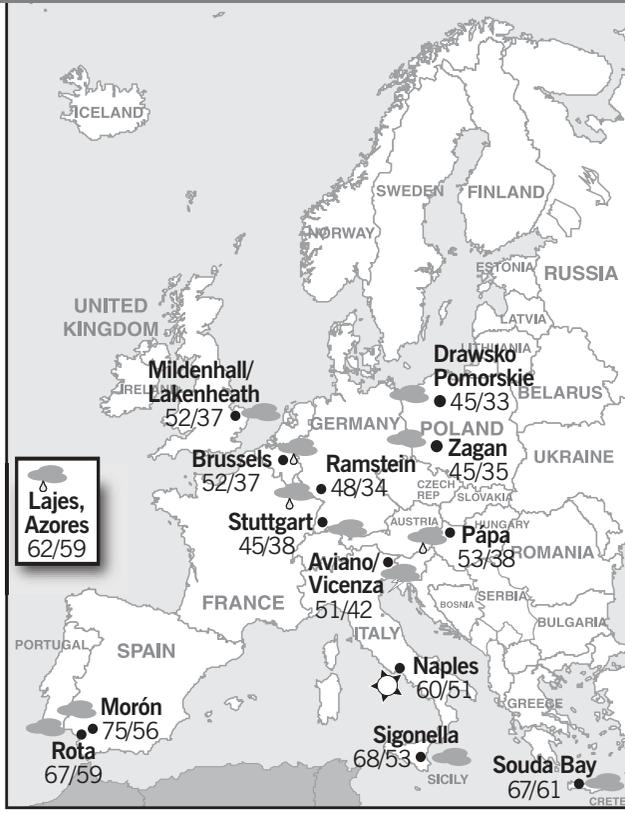
Prime rate	8.50
Interest Rates Discount rate	6.00
Federal funds market rate	5.33
3-month bill	5.39
30-year bond	4.76

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY 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

Austin speaks with Chinese defense minister

By MATTHEW ADAMS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Tuesday morning spoke with China's minister of national defense for the first time since November 2022, marking another step toward restoring military communications between the two major powers, the Pentagon said.

This was also the first time Austin has spoken with Adm. Dong Jun, who was appointed as China's defense minister in December. The two spoke during a video teleconference.

"Secretary Austin underscored the importance of respect for high

seas freedom of navigation guaranteed under international law, especially in the South China Sea. He also discussed Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine and expressed concerns about recent provocations from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," the Pentagon said in a statement.

The conversation comes as the two nations have worked to expand communications and ease growing tensions. Military-to-military conversations stalled in August 2022, af-

ter Beijing suspended such communications after then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., visited Taiwan.

China views Taiwan, the independent island, as its own territory and has threatened to bring Taiwan under its control by force.

China's previous defense minister Wei Fenghe turned down a Pentagon request to speak with Austin last year after the U.S. shot down a Chinese spy balloon that had floated across the United States. Austin had previously met with Wei in 2022 at a defense conference in Cambodia.

President Joe Biden and China's President Xi Jinping met in November for the Asia-Pacific Economic

Cooperation summit in San Francisco. Air Force Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke with his Chinese counterpart in a video call the following month, marking the first senior military-to-military contact since the Pelosi visit.

Austin's conversation comes less than two weeks after military officials from the U.S. and China met in Hawaii to discuss the safety of forces in the Pacific region.

Defense officials in recent years have been concerned about unsafe and unprofessional incidents involving the U.S. and China militaries in the region, particularly in and around the South China Sea, where

China has built up an increasingly large military force and claims portions of it for itself.

Last October, the Pentagon released footage of more than 180 U.S. planes experiencing encounters with Chinese aircraft in the previous two years. A defense official, who spoke Monday on the condition of anonymity before the call, said the U.S. hasn't seen any unsafe or unprofessional intercepts of U.S. aircraft since November.

"The secretary also reiterated that the United States will continue to fly, sail, and operate — safely and responsibly — wherever international law allows," the Pentagon statement said.



Austin

China scrambles jets after Navy plane flies over Taiwan Strait

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

Chinese fighters tracked a U.S. Navy surveillance plane making a flight over the Taiwan Strait on Wednesday, a day after the U.S. defense chief talked for the first time to his Chinese counterpart.

The P-8A Poseidon flew south through the 110-mile-wide channel that separates mainland China from Taiwan, entering from the East China Sea and exiting over the South China Sea, 7th Fleet spokeswoman Lt. j.g. Sarah Merrill told Stars and Stripes by email Wednesday.

"Routine U.S. transits through the Taiwan Strait demonstrate the U.S. commitment to a stable, free and open Indo-Pacific, and confirm that the U.S. Navy flies, sails and operates anywhere international law allows," she said.

The flight was not tied to any specific event, Merrill added.

Beijing responded by scrambling fighter jets to monitor the Poseidon's transit, China's Eastern Theater Command said

Wednesday in a post on Weibo.

"Troops in the theater remain on high alert at all times and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty and security, as well as regional peace and stability," wrote Chinese navy Col. Li Xi.

The Chinese army hailed the Poseidon but "all communications were consistent with international norms and did not impact the operation," Merrill said.

The flight happened a day after Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with Chinese National Defense Minister Adm. Dong Jun via video conference.

It was Austin's first call with a Chinese defense minister since November 2022. It marked a step toward reestablishing military-to-military communications that Beijing ended after then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., visited Taiwan in August 2022.

The U.S. routinely sends warships and, less frequently, aircraft, through the strait. The Navy typically describes the transits as a routine means of trav-



MIKE DIMESTICO/U.S. Navy

A P-8A Poseidon's primary function is anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare, along with intelligence and surveillance.

eling between the South China Sea and East China Sea.

A Navy Poseidon last flew over the strait on Dec. 7, prompting a similar response from China.

Beijing views Taiwan, a functioning democracy that split from China in 1949, as a breakaway province that must rejoin the mainland, by force if necessary.

Xi, during an April 2 phone call with President Joe Biden, said Taiwan is China's "first red line not to be crossed" and that

Beijing doesn't tolerate advocacy or support for Taiwanese independence, The Associated Press reported the following day.

Biden emphasized that the United States' "One China" policy still stands, but added Washington would oppose any coercive attempts at reunification.

Under the "One China" policy, Washington acknowledges Beijing's view that it has sovereignty over Taiwan but considers the island's status unsettled.

Xi reiterated China's stance on Taiwan during an April 10 meeting with former Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou in Beijing, according to an AP report two days later.

"The people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are all Chinese," he told Ma, according to the report. "There is no dispute that cannot be resolved, there is no problem that cannot be discussed, and no force can separate us."

Tricare touts lower costs for specialty drugs with home-delivery deal

By KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

Tricare beneficiaries may now receive specialty drugs at lower copays through Tricare Home Delivery, according to the military health care provider.

The Defense Health Agency contracted with Accredo, a nationally accredited specialty pharmacy, last month to provide mail order services for specialty drugs and enhanced clinical services, DHA spokesman Peter Graves said by email April 11.

Tricare Home Delivery was previously administered by Express Scripts Pharmacy. Some patients with a combination of non-specialty and specialty prescriptions will receive their drugs mail order from both Accredo and Express Scripts.

Beneficiaries will save money with home delivery compared to purchasing their prescriptions from a retail network pharmacy, according to Tricare's website. Copays through home delivery are \$2 to \$4 less than those at

retail pharmacies.

Tricare lists 1,326 specialty drugs, which typically treat chronic conditions such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and hepatitis, in its collection. They are high-cost self-administered, injectable or oral medications that may require clinical training for the administrator, the website states.

"Specialty drugs are essential for a lot of our beneficiaries," Cmdr. Teisha Robertson, who heads up the U.S. Public Health

Service, said in a Tricare news release Feb. 6. "These updates to Tricare's pharmacy network will give military families with complex and chronic health conditions more support in managing their drugs."

Those who obtain their specialty drugs from Accredo also receive personalized clinical services for complex and chronic conditions through Therapeutic Resource Centers, managed by the pharmacy, Graves said.

Approximately 45,500 benefi-

ciaries transitioned to home delivery once Accredo became part of Tricare Home Delivery on March 1, he said. Patients with active refills for a specialty medication were automatically transferred from Express Scripts to Accredo for those drugs.

"This automatic and seamless transition to Accredo minimized the risk of missed therapy for beneficiaries taking specialty medications to manage chronic and complex conditions," he said.

MILITARY

Navy leaders try to boost frigate program support

BY GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

Top Navy officials rallied around the service's delay-plagued new frigate program last week by focusing on the symbolic welding of the first plate of the keel on the first of the Constellation-class, guided-missile ships.

Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro and Adm. Lisa Franchetti, the chief of naval operations, attended the April 12 event at the Fincantieri shipyard in Marinette, Wis.

"The USS Constellation and Constellation-class frigates are a critical next step in the modernization of our surface ship inventory, increasing the number of 'players on the field' available globally," Del Toro said.

The ceremony came near the end of a week in which congressional critics, angry over its delays and cost overruns, excoriated the USS Constellation.

"In a time of constrained budgets, this reflects the gross inefficiencies and problems in our shipbuilding program," Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee's subpanel on defense, said during an April 10 hearing on the Navy budget.

A Pentagon report obtained by Bloomberg News showed the shipbuilder's labor needs were worse than officially reported earlier this year. The shipyard requires 1,600 skilled workers in

2025 and has only 900 today, Bloomberg reported.

The American unit of Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri S.p.A. won a 2020 competition to build new frigates for the Navy. The ships were to be built by Fincantieri's shipyard in Green Bay in northeast Wisconsin, about 170 miles north of Milwaukee. The original contract calls for the French shipbuilder Naval Group to build some later ships.

The frigate will be a modified version of the "European multi-purpose frigate" now in service with France and Italy. The ships are projected to have a top speed of 26 knots and carry a crew of 200 sailors and officers. It can fire anti-aircraft, anti-ship, and ship-to-shore missiles.

The contract called for the first frigate to be delivered to the Navy by April 2026. However, the Navy has recently pushed the first ship delivery date to 2027, with some internal Pentagon estimates putting the latest date in early 2029.

The recently released Navy shipbuilding budget for 2025 is smaller than previous budgets. Del Toro, Franchetti and budget planners want to slow purchases of the frigates and Virginia-class attack submarines to use the savings for an across-the-board infusion of funds into improving the sprawling subcontractor supply chain and beefing up the recruiting and retention of skilled work-



PHOTOS BY U.S. NAVY

Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro, far right, admirals and guests watch the symbolic welding of the first plate of the keel of the frigate USS Constellation on Friday, at the Fincantieri shipyard in Wisconsin.



An artist's rendering of the USS Constellation, the first of the Navy's new frigate program.

ers at defense industry plants.

"I am committed to restoring the shipbuilding might our nation once had — both commercial and naval — and to ensuring that we get our major shipbuilding programs back on track — on-time and on-budget," Del Toro said Friday.

The first four frigates will be sent to Naval Station Everett in

Washington state, which will eventually serve as homeport to as many as 12 of the ships.

Fincantieri Marine Repair, a subsidiary of the Wisconsin shipyard, signed a lease March 12 with the Port of Everett Commission to eventually establish a repair shop for the frigates adjacent to the naval station, according to local officials. They emphasized the Navy

plan calls for unspecified spending on "post-delivery support and crew training," some of which would be done at NS Everett.

The port panel said the move was a tangible sign of the Navy's planned expansion at Everett.

"We value the strong partnership we have with Naval Station Everett and strive to be a good neighbor and fierce advocate of the U.S. Navy," said Lisa Lefebvre, CEO and executive director of the Port of Everett. "Naval Station Everett is one of the largest job creators in Snohomish County, so the port has been investing heavily to further support trade, jobs and national defense."

NS Everett is about 50 miles north of Naval Base Kitsap. The Navy operates a destroyer squadron out of the Everett station. While Naval Air Station Whidbey Island is nearby, most of the Navy presence in the Seattle area is at Bremerton and Bangor along the Kitsap Peninsula.

Revived Air Force program sends plastic surgeon to Japan

BY JEREMY STILLWAGNER
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Nearly three dozen patients were treated through a program that brought a plastic surgeon to this airlift hub in western Tokyo for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Athena program sends volunteer Air Force plastic surgeons to overseas bases on a more-or-less regular schedule, sometimes twice a year.

After being screened, patients from bases across Japan began arriving at Yokota the first week of April for appointments with Dr. Bryan Curtis, an Air Force colonel and chief of plastic and reconstructive surgery for the 60th Surgical Operations Squadron at Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

"To allow these services to occur here, in a home location for a patient, relieves a lot of burden and a lot of stress," he told Stars and Stripes at the 374th Medical Group on Friday. "Surgery in and of itself is a stressful time for patients, so anything we can do to



JEREMY STILLWAGNER/Stars and Stripes

Dr. Bryan Curtis, second from left, poses with his Athena team at Yokota Air Base, Japan, on Friday.

alleviate that stress is beneficial."

One patient, Erika Mulhall, an Air Force spouse, traveled from Misawa Air Base in northeastern Japan for an umbilicoplasty, a procedure that changes a belly button's appearance.

Coincidentally, Mulhall had consulted

with Curtis at Travis more than a year ago but held off at the time because of her family's pending move to Japan.

Her primary care provider at Misawa referred her to Athena's upcoming visit to Yokota; Mulhall applied and learned three months later she'd been accepted.

"I felt really relieved, but it also felt very unreal, because it had been such a long time and it had been such a long process to get my surgery," she said.

Any Tricare beneficiary in Japan can apply for an Athena appointment. The military health care plan for service members, retirees and their families will cover plastic surgeries that address an issue caused by birth defects or physical trauma.

Cosmetic surgeries such as breast augmentations, rhinoplasties and liposuction are not covered by Tricare and must be paid for out of pocket.

For example, breast reconstruction for a service member who had a mastectomy due to cancer is covered. Rhinoplasty for some-

one unhappy with their nose shape is not.

Curtis was Yokota's general surgeon when the first Athena mission visited the base in the 2000s.

Yokota has not participated in the program in many years due to COVID-19 and general lack of interest, Maj. Christopher Ng, the medical group's current general surgeon, said in an email April 10.

The response to Athena's return this month indicated something of a backlog.

"We've seen patients from five different bases and completed 33 procedures so far," Ng said Friday, the final day of the two-week program.

Ng said he would like to bring a plastic surgeon to Yokota through the Athena program as often "as the mission allows."

"We have to support our local community," he said. "We have to arrange things with our command, and our ultimate objective is to meet the needs of the Air Force. If the Air Force needs us to support the community in this way, this is what we'll do."

MILITARY

Poland: Bases would have to sustain thousands of troops, family

FROM PAGE 1

higher rates of suicide than other formations. Meanwhile, Wormuth said Army data indicates that Stryker units could have even higher rates of suicide than their tanker counterparts.

“I’m not even sure that the armored units are having the highest rates, but we want to understand what’s happening there,” she said. “I do worry about the [operational] tempo for those units.”

A decision to base a brigade in Poland would likely be welcomed by political leaders in Warsaw. Last year, the Army established its first permanent garrison in Poznan, which is home to the forward headquarters of V Corps.

Polish officials lauded that move and have made no secret of their desire for more American troops.

Still, a push to make basing a brigade in Poland a reality is likely to be a long shot given the high startup costs of building facilities to support several thousand troops and family members.

Such a shift also would amount to a major change in how the Army thinks about its missions overseas, where the emphasis for the past decade has been on the operational flexibility associated with



GIANNA SULGER/U.S. Army

U.S. soldiers assigned to Eagle Troop, 2nd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, walk to the range during exercise Defender 24, at Bemowo Piskie Training Ground, Poland, on Tuesday.

rotational forces.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George, testifying alongside Wormuth, said one issue to resolve

would be determining what kind of units to send should a decision come to base more forces overseas.

“I think the challenge would be, on anything permanent basing, would be... where is it going to come from? What unit is it going

to come from stateside? And so right now we have flexibility with deploying our units. That helps,” George said.

The debate about basing more brigades in Europe, with a focus on Poland or the Baltics, has been going on for many years among security analysts. Currently, the Army has two brigade-sized ground forces permanently assigned to the Continent — the 173rd Airborne headquartered in Italy and the 2nd Cavalry Regiment in Germany.

Three additional U.S. brigade combat teams also are on rotational missions in Europe, in connection to a mission to deter Russian aggression on NATO’s eastern flank.

But while armored and infantry units have been a high-profile focal point of the Pentagon’s effort to bolster defenses in Europe, assets such as air defense also have become a top priority.

George indicated that if there was room to expand, it may not be done with brigade combat teams.

“There’s probably other things that we need to grow right now if we’re going to grow a new unit, like air defense artillery or counter (unmanned aerial system) batteries, or some of those other capabilities,” George said.



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MIDEAST

Netanyahu: Response is Israel's call

Western allies seek restraint; Iran vows to counter any incursion

BY JULIA FRANKEL
AND TIA GOLDENBERG
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Wednesday his country would be the one to decide whether and how to respond to Iran's major air assault earlier this week, brushing off calls for restraint from close allies.

Israel has vowed to respond to Iran's unprecedented attack without saying when or how, leaving the region bracing for further escalation after months of unrest linked to the ongoing war in Gaza.

Israel's allies have been urging Israel since the attack to hold back on any response that could spiral. These calls were repeated on Wednesday during visits by the British and German foreign ministers.

The diplomatic pressures came as Iran's president warned that even the "tiniest" invasion of its territory would bring a "massive and harsh" response. Violence meanwhile surged on Wednesday between Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese group Hezbollah, which fired a volley of rockets on northern Israel. The attack wounded at least 14 Israeli soldiers, six seriously, the army said.

Speaking to a meeting of his Cabinet on Wednesday, Netanyahu said he met with both ministers and thanked them for their countries' support. But he said Israel would make the call on its own on how to respond despite "all sorts of suggestions and advice" coming from Israel's allies, some of whom — including the U.S., U.K. and France — helped Israel repel Iran's drone and missile assault.

"I want to be clear: we will make our decisions ourselves. The state of Israel will do whatever is necessary to defend itself," Netanyahu said.

Despite the tough rhetoric, Israel appears unlikely to attack Iran directly without at least the support of its top ally, the U.S. But it could resort to more covert methods such as targeting senior Iranian commanders or Iran-backed groups in other countries, or launching a cyber attack.

It's unclear how Iran might respond given the heightened tensions. Any miscalculation by either side risks setting off a regional war.

President Joe Biden's administration on Tuesday announced new sanctions on Iran and has worked to coordinate a global rebuke of the attack while urging all sides to de-escalate. U.S. officials said earlier this week that Biden told Netanyahu that Washington would not participate in any offensive action against Iran.

Over the weekend, Iran launched hundreds of missiles and drones at Israel in response to an apparent Israeli strike on Iran's embassy compound in Syria on April 1 that killed 12 people, including two Iranian generals.

Israel says it and its partners successfully intercepted nearly all the missiles and drones. A 7-year-old girl was wounded in the attack, which did not cause any deaths or major damage.

Israel and Iran have waged a shadow war for decades, but the strike over the weekend was the first direct Iranian military attack on Is-



VAHID SALEMI/AP

Missiles are carried on a truck as an Iranian army band leader conducts during Army Day parade at a military base in northern Tehran, Iran, on Wednesday. President Ebrahim Raisi warned that the "tiniest invasion" by Israel would bring a "massive and harsh" response.

rael.

With tensions surging, Israel's allies have reinforced a message of restraint.

Earlier on Wednesday, British Foreign Secretary David Cameron and German Foreign

"Everyone must now act prudently and responsibly. I'm not talking about giving in. I'm talking about prudent restraint, which is nothing less than strength."

Annalena Baerbock
German foreign minister

Minister Annalena Baerbock, who were on separate visits to the region, each appealed for calm.

Cameron said "it's clear the Israelis are making a decision to act" against Iran, but he hoped they would do so "in a way that is smart as well as tough and also does as little as possible to escalate this conflict." He spoke after meeting with Israel's President Isaac Herzog, whose office is mainly ceremonial.

Baerbock said Germany stands "in full solidarity with Israel" but called on it to exercise restraint.

"Everyone must now act prudently and responsibly. I'm not talking about giving in. I'm talking about prudent restraint, which is nothing less than strength," she told reporters. "Because Israel has already shown strength with its defensive victory at the weekend."

The ministers said they would push for fur-

ther international sanctions on Iran.

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi warned Israel against any retaliation as he addressed an annual army parade, which had been relocated to a barracks from its usual route and was not carried live on state TV — possibly because of fears that it could be targeted.

In remarks carried by Iran's official IRNA news agency, Raisi said Saturday's attack was limited, and that if Iran had wanted to carry out a bigger attack, "nothing would remain from the Zionist regime."

Regional tensions have soared since the Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel launched by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Palestinian armed groups supported by Iran. The attack killed some 1,200 Israelis, and the militants took around 250 hostages. Israel responded with one of the deadliest and most destructive military onslaughts in recent history, killing nearly 34,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza health officials, who do not distinguish between combatants and civilians in their count but say most of the dead are women and children.

Israel has withdrawn most of its forces from Gaza after major offensives that left its two biggest cities — Gaza City and Khan Younis — in ruins. But Israeli officials say the war is not over and that they plan to send ground forces into the southernmost Gaza city of Rafah, where more than half the territory's population of 2.3 million people have sought refuge from fighting elsewhere.

Hamas is still holding around 130 hostages, a quarter of whom are believed to be dead, and international efforts to broker a cease-fire and hostage release have made little progress.

Hezbollah, another close Iran ally, has traded fire with Israel along the border on a near-daily basis since the war began, in a low-intensity conflict that risks igniting all-out war. Iran-backed groups in Iraq and Syria have also launched attacks, and the Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen have targeted international shipping in the Red Sea, portraying it as a blockade of Israel.

Munitions: US forces countered 130 attacks, Navy says

FROM PAGE 1

lation in February, but it languished in the House until Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., said Monday that he will break the package into three pieces to appease members of his party. The complicated strategy could further delay the aid.

Del Toro said Tuesday that it was important to keep the packages bundled together, describing the efforts to support allies and partners against Russia, Iran and China as interrelated.

In the Middle East, "all roads lead to Iran," he warned. The nation is a designated state sponsor of terrorism and props up Hamas militants in Gaza, the Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen. It has also provided weapons for Russia's war in Ukraine.

"The over \$2 billion that's provided for in the supplemental is entirely critical to our Navy and Marine Corps to be able to replenish those munitions and continue to provide the types of defensive measures that we have this past 6½ months now," Del Toro said.

U.S. forces have so far countered more than 130 direct attacks by Iran-backed Houthi militants on Navy and merchant ships in the Red Sea, he said.

Two Arleigh Burke-class, guided-missile destroyers operating in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea — the USS Carney and USS Arleigh Burke — shot down at least six Iranian ballistic missiles during Iran's aerial attack on Israel on April 13 and April 14, according to Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine. The U.S. also intercepted more than 80 drones.

"The fact that less than 1% of the weapons reached their targets this weekend in Israel does not in any way reflect to lack of effort or malign intent by Iran," she said. "Rather, it is a testament to the service members who successfully deployed modern missile defense capabilities."

Those capabilities are expensive, costing millions of dollars per missile. The Navy has been firing SM-2 missiles, SM-6 missiles and most recently SM-3 missiles to counter the ballistic missile threat from Iran, Del Toro said.

"We are now closely approaching a billion dollars in expenditures for munitions that we need paid back by the supplemental," he said.

EUROPE

Rebranded Esso stations to take US gas cards, but not yet

By **BRADLEY LATHAM**
Stars and Stripes

WIESBADEN, Germany — American service members in Germany may want to have a translation app handy the next time they pay for gas at an unfamiliar Esso station.

EG Group, the company that owns and operates Esso in the country, is rebranding 223 OMV stations it purchased in 2022, meaning that participants in the military's Esso card program will eventually have greater access to discounted gas at prices comparable to the United States.

However, many of those stations will be delayed in accepting the card, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service said in a social media post Tuesday.

Esso cardholders, which include active-duty personnel, civilians and family members, should ask first if a station accepts the fuel card payment before pumping, or they may end up paying full price, which is nearly double the military rate.

Many station attendants do speak English, though it's not a given. Alternatively, waving an Esso card in the air might suffi-

ciently resolve a communications barrier.

Col. Kevin Poole, commander of U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria, said in a video posted to the command's Facebook page Tuesday that the Esso transition is already happening.

"We know of seven gas stations that have currently already been converted," Poole said. "What I don't want is an unnecessary shock to the wallet when you go in, and the attendant tells you they don't accept the card."

The command wasn't immediately able to say Wednesday

whether they were aware of any customers who have been caught off-guard by this transition.

The AAFES Germany fuel program's frequently asked questions webpage states that a customer can request partial reimbursement at an Exchange customer service desk, in the event an approved Esso station's card system wasn't working, and the customer had enough fuel ration and prepaid balance to cover the transaction.

It remains unclear whether customers who paid full price at a newly branded station prior to

Tuesday's announcement would be reimbursed. AAFES on Wednesday said it was working on answering the question.

EG Group acquired 285 OMV fuel service stations two years ago, according to company statements.

Most of the stations being rebranded are in Bavaria. It will bring the total number of Esso stations in Germany to more than 1,200, the AAFES post said.

Existing Esso stations in Germany won't be affected by the rebranding and will continue to accept the Exchange Esso fuel ration cards, according to AAFES.

STARS AND STRIPES MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

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NATION

House aid bill moves on as speaker fights to stay

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Mike Johnson, facing a choice between potentially losing his job and advancing aid for Ukraine, forged ahead Wednesday toward a vote later this week on a package of funding that also includes Israel and Taiwan.

After agonizing over how to proceed on the package for days, the Republican speaker texted GOP lawmakers that he will start a dayslong push to hold votes on three funding packages for Ukraine, Israel, allies in the Indo-Pacific, as well as a several other foreign policy proposals in a fourth bill.

Johnson said he was proposing that some of the aid for Ukraine be structured as loans, along with greater oversight, but the decision to support Ukraine at all has angered populist conservatives in the House and given new energy to a threat to remove him from the speaker's office.

"By posting text of these bills as soon as they are completed, we will ensure time for a robust amendment process," Johnson wrote in his message, which was shared by two Republican law-

makers.

The votes on the package are expected Saturday evening, Johnson said. But he faces a treacherous path to get there.

The speaker will almost certainly need Democratic support on the procedural maneuvers to advance his complex plan of holding separate votes on each of the aid packages.

It was not clear whether Democrats would assist Johnson. They were still awaiting the details of the legislation and have become increasingly impatient with his deliberations.

Democrats have demanded that the foreign aid bill hew closely to a \$95 billion foreign aid package that the Senate passed in February.

That legislation would fund the U.S. allies, as well as provide humanitarian aid for civilians in Gaza and Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the threat to oust Johnson from Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., gained support



Johnson

this week. One other Republican, Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky, said he was joining Greene and called for Johnson to resign.

Other GOP lawmakers have openly complained about Johnson's leadership.

"You are seriously out of step with Republicans by continuing to pass bills dependent on Democrats," Greene wrote on the social platform X. "Everyone sees through this."

In an effort to satisfy conservatives, Johnson said he would hold a separate vote on a border security package that contains most of a bill that was already passed by House Republicans last year.

But conservatives quickly denounced that plan as insufficient. Rep. Chip Roy of Texas called the strategy a "complete failure."

As part of the foreign aid push, Johnson also said House members would have an opportunity to vote on a raft of foreign policy proposals, including allowing the U.S. to seize frozen Russian central bank assets, placing sanctions on Iran, Russia and China, and potentially banning the popular video app TikTok if its China-based owner doesn't sell its stake.

As Mayorkas impeachment trial begins, Dems plot quick dismissal

BY MARY CLARE JALONICK

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate on Wednesday opened the impeachment trial of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas over his handling of the U.S.-Mexico border, swearing in senators as jurors while Democrats said they wanted to end the trial before arguments even begin.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said that he will move to dismiss the trial, arguing that House Republicans' two impeachment articles "fail to meet the high standard of high crimes and misdemeanors" and could set a dangerous precedent.

"For the sake of the Senate's integrity and to protect impeachment for those rare cases we truly need it, senators should dismiss today's charges," Schumer said as he opened the Senate.

An outright dismissal of House Republicans' prosecution of Mayorkas, with no chance to argue the case, would be an embarrassing defeat for House Republicans and embattled House Speaker Mike Johnson, who made the impeachment a priority. And it is

likely to resonate politically for both Republicans and Democrats in a presidential election year when border security has been a top issue.

Republicans argue that President Joe Biden has been weak on the border as arrests for illegal crossings skyrocketed to over 2 million people during the last two years of his term, though they have fallen from a record-high of 250,000 in December amid heightened enforcement in Mexico. Democrats say that instead of impeaching Mayorkas, Republicans should have accepted a bipartisan Senate compromise aimed at reducing the number of migrants who come into the U.S. illegally.

The House narrowly voted in February to impeach Mayorkas for his handling of the U.S.-Mexico border, arguing in the two articles that he "willfully and systematically" refused to enforce immigration laws. House impeachment managers appointed by Johnson, R-La., delivered the charges to the Senate on Tuesday, standing in the well of the Senate and reading them aloud to a captive audience of senators.

As Johnson signed the articles Monday in preparation for sending them across the Capitol, he said Schumer should convene a trial to "hold those who engineered this crisis to full account."

Schumer "is the only impediment to delivering accountability for the American people," Johnson said. "Pursuant to the Constitution, the House demands a trial."

Once the senators are sworn in on Wednesday, the chamber will turn into the court of impeachment, with Democratic Sen. Patty Murray of Washington presiding. Murray is the president pro tempore of the Senate or the senior-most member of the majority party who sits in for the vice president.

The entire process could be done within hours after the trial is called to order. Schumer said he will seek an agreement from Republicans for a period of debate — an offer they are unlikely to accept — and then allow some Republican objections. He will then move to dismiss the trial and hold a vote.

To win that vote, Schumer will need the support of all of the Senate's Democrats and three independents.



YUKI IWAMURA/AP

Donald Trump talks to members of the media Tuesday while visiting a bodega who's owner was attacked last year in New York.

First 7 jurors chosen for Trump hush money trial, 11 still remaining

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The first seven jurors for Donald Trump's hush money trial were seated Tuesday after lawyers grilled the jury pool about their social media posts, political views and personal lives to decide who can sit in fair judgment of the former president.

The panelists who were selected are an information technology worker, an English teacher, an oncology nurse, a sales professional, a software engineer and two lawyers.

Eleven more people still must be sworn in before opening statements begin as early as next week in the first criminal trial of a former commander in chief. It's a moment of reckoning for Trump, who has tried to put off his prosecutions until after the November election and casts himself as the victim of a politically motivated justice system.

The trial puts Trump's legal problems at the center of his closely contested race against President Joe Biden. It's the first of Trump's four criminal cases to reach trial, and it may be the only one to return a verdict before voters decide whether to elect the presumptive GOP presidential nominee.

The methodical process unfolding in the Manhattan courtroom highlights the challenge of finding people who can fairly judge the polarizing defendant in the city where he built his real estate empire before being elected president in 2016.

Even so, jury selection moved quicker than expected Tuesday afternoon. It was set to resume Thursday.

On his way out of the courthouse, Trump stopped in the hallway to rail against the case to reporters, accusing Judge Juan Merchan of "rushing" the trial. He has denied any wrongdoing.

"We are going to continue our fight against this judge," said Trump, who pushed unsuccessfully to have Merchan removed from the case.

During an appearance later Tuesday at a bodega in Harlem, Trump was asked what he thought of the jurors he had seen. He said it was "a little bit early to see," adding, "We'll see what happens."

Over two days, dozens of potential jurors have been excused after saying they could not be impartial or because they had other commitments. Trump's lawyers challenged a handful of people over social media posts, and one person was dismissed over a 2017 post about Trump that said "Lock him up!"

Several would-be jurors told the judge they believed they could decide the case fairly, no matter their feelings about Trump or his policies as president.

Prosecutor Joshua Steinglass took Trump's notoriety head-on, telling the jury pool that attorneys were not looking for people who had been "living under a rock for the past eight years." They just needed to keep an open mind.

"This case has nothing to do with your personal politics ... it's not a referendum on the Trump presidency or a popularity contest or who you're going to vote for in November. We don't care. This case is about whether this man broke the law," he said.

NATION



EVERT NELSON, THE TOPEKA (KAN.) CAPITAL-JOURNAL/AP

Metal sidings are thrown up in trees on Ethan Steenbach's property Tuesday morning, in Overbrook, Kan., following a tornado that hit the area. Strong storms have caused damage in parts of the middle U.S. and spawned tornadoes in Kansas and Iowa.

Tornadoes strike in Kansas, Iowa as strong storms swarm

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Strong storms caused damage in parts of the middle U.S. on Tuesday and spawned tornadoes in Kansas and Iowa, including one that left two people hurt.

An EF-1 tornado touched down shortly after 6 a.m. near the northeastern Kansas town of Richland, the National Weather Service said. The twister reached speeds of up to 100 mph and was on the ground for about 20 minutes, the service said.

Two people were injured when their RV flipped over during the tornado. Details about the injuries were not immediately available. Buildings and trees also were damaged in the neighboring town of

Overbrook.

In central Iowa, a barn was demolished and other buildings were damaged after a tornado touched down in a rural area of Dallas County. The weather service also reported ping pong ball-sized hail in Bloomfield, just north of the Missouri line. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

The weather service said the central U.S. was under threat of severe weather through Tuesday. Thunderstorms were expected in parts of Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and northwestern Illinois, potentially with large hail and damaging winds. Some isolated storms were also possible in the mid-South, the service said.

In Missouri, Chicago-bound American Eagle Flight 3661 returned to Kansas City International Airport just before 6 a.m., soon after it took off, due to a possible lightning strike, American Airlines spokesperson Gianna Urgo said in an email. Maintenance workers were inspecting the aircraft to see if it was damaged. Passengers were later put on other flights, Urgo said.

A camper was blown over and the roof was ripped off a building when a strong storm hit the area around Smithville Lake in western Missouri, the Clay County Sheriff's Department said. Downed trees and power lines were reported in several communities near Kansas City.

Biden's latest plan for student loans advances as a proposed regulation

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden's latest plan for student loan cancellation is moving forward as a proposed regulation, offering him a fresh chance to deliver on a campaign promise and energize young voters ahead of the November election.

The Education Department on Tuesday filed paperwork for a new regulation that would deliver the cancellation that Biden announced last week. It still has to go through a 30-day public comment period and another review before it can be finalized.

It's a more targeted proposal than the one the U.S. Supreme Court struck down last year. The new plan

uses a different legal basis and seeks to cancel or reduce loans for more than 25 million Americans.

Conservative opponents, who see it as an unfair burden for taxpayers who didn't attend college, have threatened to challenge it in court.

The Democratic president highlighted the plan during a trip to Wisconsin last week, saying it would provide "life-changing" relief. He laid out five categories of people who would be eligible for help.

The new paperwork filed by the Education Department includes four of those categories, while a separate proposal will be filed later addressing how people facing various kinds of hardship can get relief.

The broadest forgiveness category

would help borrowers who owe more than they originally borrowed because of runaway interest. It would eliminate up to \$20,000 in interest for anyone in that situation, while those with annual incomes below \$120,000 and enrolled in income-driven repayment plans would get all their interest erased with no maximum limit. It would be done automatically.

Another category would cancel loans for people who have been paying back undergraduate student loans for at least 20 years, and those who have been paying graduate loans at last 25 years. It would automatically cancel loans for those who went to colleges or programs considered to have low financial value.

Tuberville bill seeks quarterly VA abortion data

By SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs would be required to submit detailed data on abortions performed at its facilities under a bill introduced Tuesday by Sen. Tommy Tuberville.

The legislation is the latest effort by Tuberville, R-Ala., to clamp down on federal support for abortion access. He blocked senior military promotions for much of last year in a failed bid to force the Defense Department to drop its abortion access policy.

"Our veterans deserve a VA that is 100% focused on ensuring they receive timely and quality care, not on implementing [President] Joe Biden's abortion-on-demand-agenda," Tuberville said in a statement.

The bill would force the VA to submit quarterly reports on the number of abortions it facilitates, the method through which the abortions are being conducted, and the number of gestational weeks at which the abortions are occurring.

A companion bill was introduced in the House by Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeke, R-Iowa. Tuberville's bill is co-sponsored by eight fellow Republican senators.

The VA told lawmakers last year that it provided 88 abortions — 60 medical and 28 surgical — in the first year that it offered the procedure, from Sept. 9, 2022, to Sept. 30, 2023. The VA has refused to release updated data since then, according to Tuberville.

The VA began offering abortions to veterans and eligible dependents after the Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to an abortion in 2022 and several states either banned or severely restricted access to the procedure.

Abortions facilitated by the VA are only available in cases of rape or incest or if the mother's life or health is at risk because of the pregnancy.

Some Republicans have argued the VA's allowance of abortions for health risks violates the Hyde Amendment, which does not include a risk to health as a permissible reason to use federal funds for abortions.

Tuberville said the Veterans



CARLOS BONGIOANNI/Stars and Stripes

Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Ala., recently introduced a bill that would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit detailed data on abortions performed at its facilities.

Health Care Act of 1992 prohibits the VA from providing abortion services of any kind.

"For the Biden administration to twist the law into something other than what Congress intended and force the cost on the taxpayer is a disgrace," he said.

The VA has not defined the health risks that would qualify a veteran for an abortion but has maintained it is not one of the government agencies subject to the Hyde Amendment.

Of the 88 abortions performed from September 2022 to September 2023, 64 were because the pregnancy threatened the mother's health.

Terrence Hayes, the VA's press secretary, said in a statement Tuesday that the VA could not comment on the pending legislation but the agency is committed to providing comprehensive care to female veterans, including reproductive health care.

"As always, VA is committed to protecting veteran privacy and maintaining the trust between veterans and their doctors," he said.

VA Secretary Denis McDonough has resisted attempts to pry detailed abortion data from the VA, arguing they infringe on patient privacy. He told lawmakers last year that information on how a veteran's life could be endangered by carrying a pregnancy to term, for example, "goes to the heart of a veteran's relationship with her doctor."

WORLD

Russian missiles hit northern Ukraine city

By ILLIA NOVIKOV
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Three Russian missiles slammed into a downtown area of the northern Ukrainian city of Chernihiv on Wednesday, hitting an eight-floor apartment building and killing at least 14 people, authorities said.

At least 61 people, including two children, were wounded in the morning attack, Ukrainian emergency services said. Chernihiv lies about 90 miles north of the capital, Kyiv, near the border with Russia and Belarus, and has a population of around 250,000 people.

The latest Russian bombardment came as the war approached what could be a critical juncture as a lack of further military support from Ukraine's Western partners increasingly leaves it at the mercy

of the Kremlin's bigger forces.

Through the winter months, Russia made no dramatic advance along the 620-mile front line, focusing instead on attritional warfare. However, Ukraine's shortage of artillery ammunition, troops and armored vehicles has allowed the Russians to gradually push forward, military analysts say.

A crucial element for Ukraine is the holdup in Washington of approval for an aid package that includes roughly \$60 billion for Ukraine. House Speaker Mike Johnson said Sunday that he would try to move the package forward this week.

Ukraine's need is now acute, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

"The Russians are breaking out

of positional warfare and beginning to restore maneuver to the battlefield because of the delays in the provision of U.S. military assistance to Ukraine," the ISW said in an assessment late Tuesday.

"Ukraine cannot hold the present lines now without the rapid resumption of U.S. assistance, particularly air defense and artillery that only the U.S. can provide rapidly and at scale," it said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pleaded with Western countries to provide his country with more air defense equipment, including more surface-to-air Patriot guided missile systems. He said the Chernihiv strike "would not have happened if Ukraine had received enough air defense equipment and if the world's determination to counter

Russian terror was also sufficient."

Zelenskyy told PBS in an interview broadcast earlier this week that Ukraine recently ran out of air defense missiles while it was defending against a major missile and drone attack that destroyed one of Ukraine's largest power plants, part of a recent Russian campaign targeting energy infrastructure.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba repeated Zelenskyy's appeal for more help as he prepared to attend a Group of Seven foreign ministers' meeting in Italy.

"We need at least seven more Patriot batteries to protect our cities and economic centers from destruction," Kuleba told German daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung in an

interview published Wednesday. "Why is it so difficult to find seven Patriot batteries?"

Ukrainian forces are digging in, building fortifications in anticipation of a major Russian offensive that Kyiv officials say could come as early as next month.

Ukraine is using long-range drone and missile strikes behind Russian lines that are designed to disrupt Moscow's war machine.

Russia's defense ministry said Wednesday that a Ukrainian drone was shot down over the Tatarstan region early Wednesday. That's the same area that was targeted in early April by Ukraine's deepest strike so far inside Russia, about 745 miles east of Ukraine.

Ukrainian drone developers have been extending the weapons' range.

UAE sees record rainfall that floods Dubai airport

By JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The desert nation of the United Arab Emirates attempted to dry out Wednesday from the heaviest rain ever recorded there after a deluge flooded out Dubai International Airport, disrupting flights through the world's busiest airfield for international travel.

The state-run WAM news agency called the rain Tuesday "a historic weather event" that surpassed "anything documented since the start of data collection in 1949." That's before the discovery of crude oil in this energy-rich nation then part of a British protectorate known as the Trucial States.

Rain also fell in Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. However, the rains were acute across the UAE.

One possible contributor may have been "cloud seeding," in which small planes operated by the government fly through clouds burning special salt flares. Those flares can in-

crease precipitation.

Several reports quoted meteorologists at the National Center for Meteorology as saying they flew six or seven cloud-seeding flights before the rains. Flight-tracking data analyzed by The Associated Press showed one aircraft affiliated with the UAE's cloud-seeding efforts flew around the country Monday.

The National, an English-language, state-linked newspaper in Abu Dhabi, quoted an anonymous official at the center on Wednesday as saying no cloud seeding took place on Tuesday, without acknowledging any earlier flights. The center did not respond to questions Wednesday from the AP.

The rains began late Monday, soaking the sands and roadways of Dubai with some 0.79 inches of rain, according to meteorological data collected at Dubai International Airport. The storms intensified around 9 a.m. local Tuesday and continued throughout the day, dumping more rain and hail onto the overwhelmed city.



JON GAMBRELL/AP

A man sits in a semitruck stuck in floodwater in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Wednesday. The UAE attempted to dry out Wednesday from the heaviest rain ever recorded in the desert nation after a deluge flooded out Dubai International Airport.

By the end of Tuesday, more than 5.59 inches of rainfall had soaked Dubai over 24 hours. An average year sees 3.73 inches of rain at Dubai International Airport, a hub for the long-haul carrier Emirates.

At the airport, standing water lapped on taxiways as aircraft landed. Arrivals were halted Tuesday night, and passengers struggled to reach terminals through the floodwater covering surrounding roads.

Amnesty alleges abuse of suspected ISIS detainees in Syria

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Amnesty International said Wednesday it has documented widespread abuses, including torture and deprivation of medical care, in detention facilities holding thousands of suspected Islamic State members and their relatives in northeast Syria.

The centers and camps hold about 56,000 people — the majority of them children and teens — and are run by local authorities affiliated with the U.S.-backed, Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. The SDF and its allies, including U.S.-led coalition forces, defeated ISIS in Syria in 2019, ending its self-proclaimed Islamic "caliphate" that had ruled over a large swath of terri-

tory straddling Iraq and Syria.

What to do with the suspected ISIS fighters and their families has become an intractable issue. Many countries whose citizens traveled to Syria to join ISIS have been reluctant to repatriate them, as have local communities in Syria.

"People held in this system are facing large-scale violations of their rights, some of which amount to war crimes," Nicolette Waldman, Amnesty's senior crisis adviser, told journalists.

The United States is also responsible for the alleged violations because it played a key role in establishing and maintaining the detention system, providing hundreds of millions of dollars to the SDF and af-

iliated forces and regularly interrogating detainees, Waldman said.

The human rights group interviewed 126 people accused of ISIS affiliation currently or formerly detained, along with representatives of the local administration and aid workers.

The Amnesty report said the majority of detainees are being held "indefinitely, without charge or trial, in violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law," while those who have been tried were, in many cases, convicted on the basis of confessions extracted under torture.

Amnesty called on local authorities, the U.S. government and other allies to bring the detention system

into compliance with international law and urged the United Nations to work with them to establish a screening process to release all who are not "reasonably suspected" of having committed a serious crime.

The Autonomous Authorities of the North and East Syria Region, the civilian administration affiliated with the SDF, wrote in response to the Amnesty findings that it had not received any official complaints regarding torture in detention facilities and "if this happened, they are individual acts."

The administration said it would take action against employees who committed violations if evidence is provided. It denied allegations that inmates were deprived of food, wa-

ter and medical care. It acknowledged overcrowding in the facilities, which it attributed to lack of financial resources to secure larger centers.

The local authorities took issue with the allegation that people were arbitrarily detained, asserting that most detainees "are members of a terrorist organization and were arrested during the battles" and that many had committed crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The U.S. State Department said in its own response that "we share many of (Amnesty's) concerns" and it has been working to address them. It called on the international community to "aid local entities' management of these challenges."

STARS AND STRIPES

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Building Resiliency

Military kids have unique experiences that make their childhood both exciting and difficult. Throughout it all, however, they learn to rely on their parents, their military family and resources, and each other.



Victoria / Humphreys West Elementary School



Goodbyes are hard for me

Thomas K. / Homeschool

I am Thomas, I am 7 and I am a military child.

My dad is my hero, I am proud to be a military child but I don't like that I have to say goodbye to family and friends so many times in my life. The hardest goodbye is when my dad has to go work far away, I miss his hugs.

But I get to meet a lot of friends al right, because I've lived in different places and went to different schools and all that.

If you are a military child like me, know that we are strong and happy and heroes too!

To all military kids, I think of you and I Love you

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MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Students from **Vilseck High School** shared poems with their thoughts, feelings and experiences as military kids.

Double Christmas

Aubry B.

It's April,
But it's Christmas day again.
Except Santa Claus and his elves are
Bearded men with neon T-shirts.
Except the packages I receive
Require a box-cutter to open them
Except the gifts I get
Are things I already had.
Except there is no tree,
No lights,
No cookies,
No carols,
No stockings,
And no snow.
But there is still
Anticipation,
Excitement,
Hope,
And joy in each new discovery.
For it may be April,
But for a military child like me,
It's Christmas day again.

My Suitcase

Isabella K.

The wheels on my suitcase rattle
its sides are wounded
The handle has fallen off
its color dimmed and its skin stained
equipped with a zipper that is often stuck

But my suitcase is bursting
full of memories from all over
It has seen nearly every ocean
Nearly every sky
It has met many others
Much different than itself
Its heard many languages
and smelled many smells
its color may have dimmed
But it is full of the colors of the world

My suitcase is exhausted from travel
It is worn and different
but it envy's none
it keeps going
Looking for the next new memory
the next new hue to add to its collection
It has payed its dues to see this world
And it was all worth it

Month Of The Military Child Poem

Lucas B.

In the month of the brave military child,
Their resilience shines, meek and mild.
Through changes vast and lands unknown,
Their courage and strength have grown.
In every deployment, every move they face,
They adapt with grace and embrace.
Their hearts full of love, their spirits so bold,
In the midst of challenges, they never fold.
They stand by their parents, strong and true,
Their sacrifices many, their loyalty not few.
In the month dedicated to these special
hearts,
We honor their journeys, their unique parts.
To the military children, we raise our voice,
Saluting your bravery, your unwavering
choice.
May you find joy in each new day,
In the month of the military child, we proudly
say, "Hooray!"

What We Are

Santiago P.

Run, run like a rat
Hundreds of rats in a sewer
Stuck in skewers of "great cheese"
Jeez cut me a break from these fake flees
I am just a rat
with the responsibility that one day I will run the
sewers
Not run but stay, that is what they need

Happy Memories



Five Reasons I Love Being a Military Child

Royce / Killin Elementary School

1. My Dad is a pilot and he use to fly a plane called a F-18.
2. Okinawa has a bunch of places like the beach, and school.
3. My Dad is trying to get to Annapolis Maryland.
4. I love my life because it is amazing and I have my Mom and Dad.
5. I love being a child because I am a healthy Military child.



What does it mean to be a military child?

Hailey / Sollars Elementary School

I lived in different places because my mom is in the military. I visit my dad at different places because he is in the military too. I'm excited about being a military child. As a military child, I rode in a helicopter and visited Tokyo Disneyland.

View more entries at militarychild.stripes.com

WHERE MILITARY TEENS BELONG!

Club Beyond is where Friends, Fun, and Faith Connect.

Involvement in Club Beyond means come any time, no need to "join", just show up! Activities include:

- **CLUB MEETINGS**
a "party" with a purpose
- **SMALL GROUPS**
discover what you believe
- **CAMPS & SPECIAL EVENTS**
experience fun and adventure



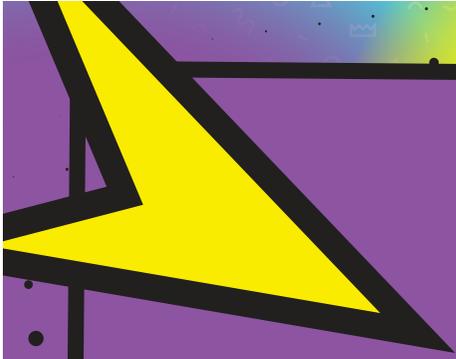
clubbeyond.org

For information on Club Beyond in your community, email Abby at europeinfo@clubbeyond.org



"I go to Club Beyond because I have so much fun hanging out with the leaders and other teens."

Club Beyond is an approved non-federal entity and is not a part of the Department of Defense. CFC#10536.



MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Messages from Guam

Read what students from Andersen Elementary School have to say about their lives as military kids.

My Life as a Military Child

Alexander C.

Are you a military child? First My mom is in the army. She fought for the island. Sometimes my mom can be home on weekends. She also travels a lot but it's okay.

Next she works a lot and she has to clean her work. That's why we don't see her sometimes. Soon she will work at a new building and maybe see her more often.

Then I like being a military child because I go to school at Andersen Elementary. I also make new friends. The thing that I don't like is that my mom has to go to the Philippines next week.

Last I like being a military child because I moved from Colorado to Guam. I also went roller skating in Colorado. Something I did in Guam is I went to a ramen house, and I went to the pool.

This is my reason for being a military child.

My life as a military Brat

Ariya M.

First, my mom is in the air force. I do like moving. I like going on planes. I once lived in Germany and. I moved to different places when I was little. I went to two different schools. I saw the eiffel when i went to peris.

My Life as a Military Brat

Ava M.

What does it mean to be a military child? Well, to me, it means I can do things that other people can't do.

First, I can go on base. I can go to the the commissary. But others might not be able to. You can buy strawberries and bananas there. Next, I got to school on base. I meet new people. I go to classes like Art and PE.

My Life as a Military Brat

Riley R.

How is your life as a military brat? First, I'm a military brat. It's hard because you have to leave your friends. It makes me sad when I move. Do you like moving? I don't.

Next, My dad is in the Air Force. My dad had to go to nebraska. It made me sad when my dad left.

Then, My dad had to go and do training. He did the training for his job. He's gone to many different places.

Last, when you're a military brat you don't really have a choice, you must move to a different place when they tell you to. This is the life of a military brat.

My Life as a Military Brat

Julia F.

Are you a military child? I am! First, when I was 3 years old I was in Germany and before that I was in Boston. Now I'm in Guam, but when school ends, I'm moving to Idaho. My friend said I'm moving to Florida after I go to Idaho but I asked my mom and she said no. I heard Idaho has snow in it. Also in Idaho, I will live in a mountain home.

Next, Idaho is way bigger than Guam. So, I think it will be like 2 days to get there. I'm sad to move because I have to leave my friends. But it's okay because I can make new friends at my new school!

Then, sometimes, we give away things. My mom gave some of my toys to the homeless shelter because I don't play with them. I might have a hard time choosing what to bring and leave. But I know I can do it.

Last, I might get a PS5 when I go to Idaho because my dad got one for both of us. But, Elie does not share it. But it's okay because I play on my Ipad more. My best friend Nikki got me some stuff because I'm leaving. It was very kind of her. She also gave me some treats but my little brother ate them all. To me I think moving to Idaho will be great. Because I heard so much stuff about it. I don't know if I'll like Idaho, but it looks like a great place to live! I'll still be sad, but happy I'm going somewhere new! I hope Idaho is as great as they say! This is what it's like to be a military child.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man killed Uber driver after scam targets both

OH SOUTH CHARLESTON — An elderly Ohio man who authorities said fatally shot an Uber driver who he thought was trying to rob him after a scam caller deceived them both has been indicted on a murder charge.

William Brock, 81, also faces counts of kidnapping and felonious assault in the indictment by a Clark County grand jury.

The shooting occurred at Brock's home in South Charleston. Officers from the county sheriff's office responded there after Brock called 911 and said he had shot someone who was trying to rob him.

Brock had received scam calls from someone pretending to be an officer from the local court who began making threats and demanding money, authorities said.

The victim, Loletha Hall, 61, was an Uber driver who had been told to retrieve a package from Brock's home, a request authorities said apparently was made by the same scam caller or an accomplice.

NASA: Item that crashed into roof came from ISS

FL NAPLES — NASA confirmed that a mystery object that crashed through the roof of a Florida home was a chunk of space junk from equipment discarded at the International Space Station.

The cylindrical object that tore through the home in Naples was subsequently taken to the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral for analysis.

The space agency said it was a metal support used to mount old batteries on a cargo pallet for disposal. The pallet was jettisoned from the space station in 2021, and the load was expected to eventually fully burn up on entry into Earth's atmosphere, but one piece survived.

The chunk of metal weighed 1.6 pounds and was 4 inches tall and roughly 1½ inches wide.

Funeral home holding 190 bodies charged with fraud

CO DENVER — A couple who owned a Colorado funeral home where authorities last year discovered 190 decaying bodies were indicted on federal charges that they misspent nearly \$900,000 in pandemic relief funds on vacations, cosmetic surgery, jewelry and other personal expenses, according to unsealed court documents.

The indictment reaffirms accusations from state prosecutors that Jon and Carrie Hallford gave families dry concrete instead of cremated ashes and alleges the couple buried the wrong body on two occasions.

The indictment alleges the couple used \$882,300 in pandemic re-



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Taking a trip up north

Boeing's CST-100 Starliner spacecraft capsule makes its way from the Boeing facility at the Kennedy Space Center to Space Launch Complex 41 at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, on Tuesday, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. The capsule will be transported to the International Space Station on a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket, scheduled to launch on May 6.

lief funds to buy items that also included a vehicle, dinners, tuition for their child and cryptocurrency.

State fined for foster care abuse allegations

TX CORPUS CHRISTI — A federal judge is fining Texas \$100,000 per day for routinely neglecting to adequately investigate allegations of abuse and neglect raised by children in the state's struggling foster care system.

U.S. District Judge Janis Graham Jack in Corpus Christi ruled that the Texas Health and Human Services agency has shown contempt of her orders to fix the way the state investigates complaints by children in its care.

This is the third such contempt finding in a case that began with a 2011 lawsuit over foster care conditions at the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the child welfare arm of HHS.

In a 427-page ruling, the judge cited a "continued recalcitrance" by the agency's Provider Investigations unit to conduct thorough, accurate and timely probes of allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Women's prison known as 'rape club' closing

CA DUBLIN — The federal Bureau of Prisons said it will close a women's prison

in California known as the "rape club" despite attempts to reform the troubled facility after an Associated Press investigation exposed rampant staff-on-inmate sexual abuse.

Bureau of Prisons Director Collette Peters said in a statement to the AP that the agency had "taken unprecedented steps and provided a tremendous amount of resources to address culture, recruitment and retention, aging infrastructure — and most critical — employee misconduct."

"Despite these steps and resources, we have determined that FCI Dublin is not meeting expected standards and that the best course of action is to close the facility," Peters said. "This decision is being made after ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of those unprecedented steps and additional resources."

Since 2021, at least eight FCI Dublin employees have been charged with sexually abusing inmates.

Pilot of experimental plane fell out, hit the tail

PA HANOVER TOWNSHIP — The pilot of an experimental aircraft fell out of the plane and hit the tail, causing the plane to crash in northeastern Pennsylvania in 2022, killing him and a pilot-rated passenger, according to federal investigators.

The National Transportation

Safety Board said the "experimental amateur-built" Bearhawk Patrol airplane crashed at a farm near Hanover Township in October 2022. The Luzerne County coroner's office identified the two victims as Michael Bowen, 59, of Jonestown; and Ronald Snyder 76, of Bernville.

The probable cause of the accident was the pilot unlatching his seat belt during flight — possibly to examine some rigging he mentioned having a problem with earlier, investigators said in their final report. Being unbuckled allowed him to be thrown from the aircraft and hit the tail.

Audit: Governor's office bought \$19K lectern

AK LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders' office potentially violated state laws on purchasing, state property and government records when it purchased a \$19,000 lectern for the Republican governor that's prompted nationwide attention, an audit requested by lawmakers said.

Legislative auditors referred the findings in the long-awaited audit of the lectern to local prosecutors and the attorney general, and lawmakers planned to hold a hearing on the report. The report cited several potential legal violations, including paying for the lectern before it was delivered and the handling of records regarding

the purchase.

The blue and wood paneled lectern was bought in June with a state credit card for \$19,029.25 from an events company in Virginia. The Republican Party of Arkansas reimbursed the state for the purchase on Sept. 14, and Sanders' office has called the use of the state credit card an accounting error.

USC cancels speech by supporter of Palestinians

CA LOS ANGELES — The University of Southern California has canceled a commencement speech by its 2024 valedictorian, a Muslim student who has expressed support for Palestinians, citing "substantial" security risks for the event that draws 65,000 people to campus.

Andrew T. Guzman, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs for the private university in Los Angeles, said in a statement that the debate over the selection of the valedictorian has taken on an "alarming tenor."

Valedictorian Asna Tabassum, who is graduating with a major in biomedical engineering and a minor in resistance to genocide, said she was blindsided by the decision, in a statement provided by the Greater Los Angeles Area office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published weekdays (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations where overseas DOD personnel are located.

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OPINION

Biden faces a familiar problem: Attacks from the left

BY CARL P. LEUBSDORF

The Dallas Morning News

The threat to President Joe Biden's reelection from progressive critics of his support of Israel's war in Gaza replicates a familiar pattern that jeopardized the prospects of past Democratic candidates.

Party progressives critical of Biden showed significant support in several Democratic presidential primaries this spring. But recent polls indicate most Democrats strongly back the president's reelection and, in fact, his support is solidifying.

In past elections, progressive resistance stemmed from differences over issues like U.S. support for military actions overseas — as is the case this year — or the extent of government support for health coverage at home. The former fueled liberal challenges to President Harry Truman and former Vice President Hubert Humphrey, the latter to President Jimmy Carter and Hillary Clinton.

In 1948, former Vice President Henry Wallace challenged Truman's firm stance against the Soviet Union's expansionist policies. But he failed to prevent Truman from narrowly winning in a four-way contest that included Republican Thomas Dewey and states' rights independent Strom Thurmond.

In subsequent elections, however, liberal resistance was more successful, helping to cause the defeats of Humphrey in 1968, Carter in 1980, Al Gore in 2000 and Clinton in 2016. The U.S. role in Vietnam was the issue in 1968, health care in 1980 and 2016, and environmental policy in 2000.

Biden hopes that, by raising the specter of former President Donald Trump's threat to women's rights and American democracy, he can replicate Truman's 1948 success in surmounting both Wallace's challenge from the left and Thurmond's from the right.

This year's progressive challenge to Biden, like those to Truman and Humphrey, reflects opposition to his muscular foreign policy, primarily his support of Israel's war in Gaza but also his efforts to help Ukraine resist the 2022 Russian invasion.

Though the issues and the geography are different, it resembles the left-wing opposition to the U.S. role in Vietnam. At that time, U.S. progressives championed the Communist government of North Vietnam over the repressive, U.S.-backed South Vietnamese regime.

Today's leftist groups are both campaigning for Palestinian rights and condemning Israel's policies in Gaza and Israel itself. While many back Israel's right to defend itself after Hamas' brutal October invasion, they accuse the Israelis of genocide for killing thousands of Palestinian civilians, destroying much of Gaza and blocking international relief efforts.

In a lengthy report on the left-wing resistance to Biden, *The New York Times* said last Saturday that support for the Palestinians has become "a defining issue of the Democratic left," including among groups that previously concentrated on domestic issues like climate change, housing and immigration.

Rather than the individual opposition of isolated groups, it said, "the pro-Palestinian movement is now propelled both by long-time — and sometimes hard-line — activists and by mainstream pillars of the Democratic coalition."

That was underscored last week when a dozen liberal organizations and labor unions urged Biden to end military aid to Israel until it lifts restrictions on humanitarian aid for Gaza.

The group included progressive groups like MoveOn and the Working Families Party and more mainstream Democratic organizations like the Center for American Progress and NextGen America, founded by billionaire environmentalist Tom Steyer. It also included two prominent pro-Democratic labor unions, the Service Employees International Union and the National Education Association, both of which have endorsed Biden's reelection.

A new poll by *The New York Times* and Siena University showed a plurality of registered Democrats said they sympathize more with the Palestinians than the Israelis. That position is especially strong among voters

18-29, who back the Palestinians by a 3-to-1 margin. By contrast, Democrats over 65 favor Israel by a similar 3-to-1 margin.

As a result, the poll showed that voters under 29 are evenly split between Biden and Trump, even though the former president is at least as pro-Israel as is Biden and those voters consider themselves more Democratic than Republican and more liberal than conservative. But it also showed Biden offsetting his problem with younger voters by making gains among other significant segments of the Democratic base. In the past six weeks, the poll said, Biden's support has gone up 7 points among women, 3 points among Blacks and 10 points among Hispanics. As a result, he narrowed Trump's advantage among registered voters from 5 points to a statistically insignificant 1 point.

In recent weeks, while maintaining his support for Israel, Biden has reacted to his liberal critics by stepping up pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to allow increased humanitarian aid to Gaza, abandon plans to attack the city of Rafah and show restraint after last weekend's Iranian drone attack.

That won't satisfy critics who want to stop U.S. military aid to Israel and hope to influence the party's platform when the Democratic National Convention meets this August to renominate Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. Significant anti-Biden demonstrations there seem almost inevitable.

Politically, a lot may depend on what the Israelis do in the ensuing months and the administration's reaction. But Biden will certainly maintain his basic pro-Israel position, even at the cost of some support from younger Democratic voters.

At present, given his improved standing in the *Times/Siena* poll and other recent surveys, Biden's strategists may well believe he can surmount that resistance. But regaining more of their support would certainly make his re-election easier and prevent him from suffering the fate that befell Humphrey, Carter, Gore and Hillary Clinton.

Carl P. Leubsdorf is a former Washington bureau chief of *The Dallas Morning News*.

Trump needs strong running mate to spread the word

BY JOE BATTENFELD

Boston Herald

Donald Trump's hush money trial makes it more imperative than ever that he pick a credible running mate in the coming weeks to rally his supporters behind his defense.

With Trump sidelined from the campaign trail, there is no one currently in the GOP ranks who can replace him.

A solid pro-MAGA surrogate VP pick could be the answer.

She or he would be able to travel the country and draw attention to the ongoing farce trial in New York that has taken crucial time and money away from the campaign.

Does anybody honestly believe this trial is not politically motivated? Or that Trump will get a fair and impartial jury in liberal Manhattan? These are questions the GOP running mate can raise across the country in pro-Trump strongholds.

All Trump's opponents want is to stop him by any means necessary, including locking him up. Democrats don't care if they forever damage the judicial process by

weaponizing it.

The reason Democrats need to stop Trump is because their own candidate is so weak. Joe Biden these days looks like he can barely walk as he gets off his helicopter. Not a great message to the world.

They may succeed in getting a conviction but in the process give Trump forces even more reason to vote this November.

It's going to be difficult for the former president to endure the unprecedented media and legal barrage he's facing. When prospective jurors were brought in on Monday, Trump already looked shaky and exhausted.

That's why getting a running mate soon could be critical while he is held hostage in the trial.

The trial could easily backfire by making Trump look like a martyr.

Even if he's convicted in the next few months, Trump can still run for president and become commander in chief. But it could lead to efforts by Democrats to block him from doing so.

The prosecution is leading with two com-

pletely non-credible witnesses, Stormy Daniels and sketchy lawyer Michael Cohen.

But Democrats are hoping Trump loses his temper during the trial or is charged with contempt.

Whoever the running mate is will be instantly the subject of a barrage of attacks. The crop of potential candidates includes South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, New York Rep. Elise Stefanik, Sen. J.D. Vance of Ohio, and former Rep. and Naval Reserve officer Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii. Other names are Sen. Katie Britt of Alabama and Arkansas Gov. and former White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

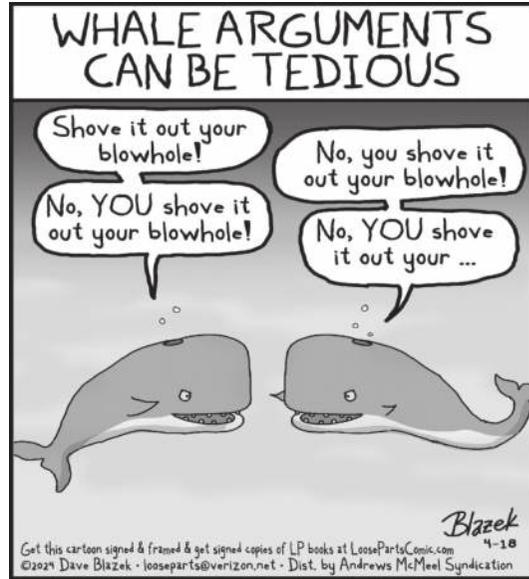
Leading what's described as an "Apprentice"-like search is Trump adviser Susie Wiles and the campaign has already hired a firm to vet candidates. Also influential in picking a running mate will be Donald Trump Jr. and Melania Trump.

Joe Battenfeld is a Boston Herald political columnist and multimedia reporter.

Bizarro

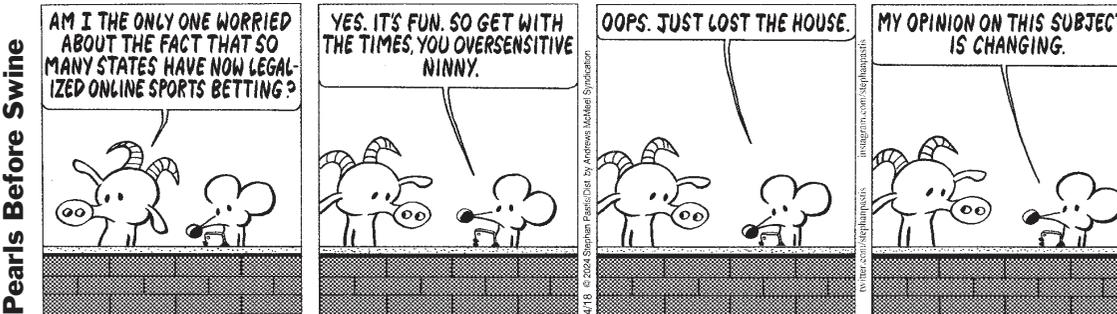
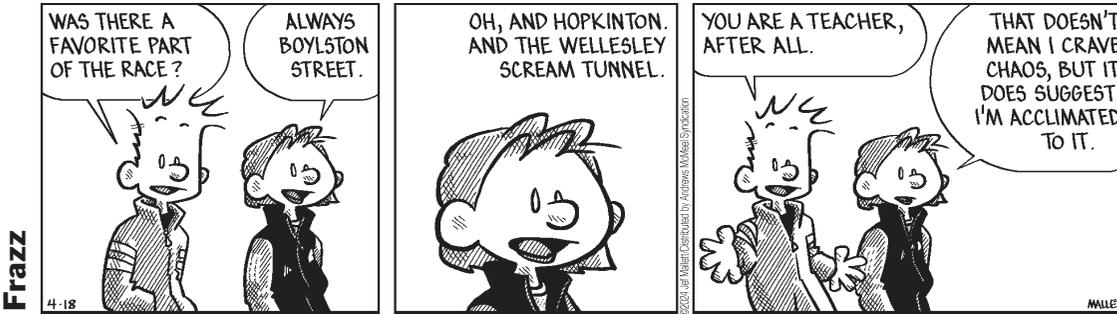


Loose Parts



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

Grid for Eugene Sheffer Crossword with numbered squares.



ACROSS

- 1 Painter Chagall
5 Beer barrel
8 RCA purchase
12 Six-sided state
13 Rowing need
14 Aviation prefix
15 NYC gallery
16 Dad on 'Black-ish'
17 Slanted type (Abbr.)
18 Rival of Athens
20 Brzezinski of MSNBC
22 Attraction in Banff National Park
26 Thin cookie
29 Sportscaster Scully
30 PBS supporter
31 Love god
32 Cacophony
33 Tempo
34 Be sick
35 Camp bed
36 Bar orders
37 Ski resort in New York state
40 Duel prompter
41 Mountain inns
45 'Trust Exercise' author Susan
47 Showtime rival
49 Speck
50 Prince in 'Frozen'

DOWN

- 21 Bit of physics
23 Musical set in Argentina
24 Caulterize
25 Takes courses?
26 Prosperity
27 Met solo
28 Pete Seeger composition
32 Florida footballer
33 Linen closet items
35 IRS employee
36 Life story
38 Actress Kimberly
39 Walk heavily
42 Rise
43 Jazzy James
44 Back talk
45 'Evita' role
46 Possessed
48 Sheepish remark

Answer to Previous Puzzle



4-18

CRYPTOQUIP

VUR AUP'X WMGK XU HKPEUD
EU BRHW EXRCC CDUB XWZE
IUGKDPBKPX AUHRBKPX.
VUR'DK UGKD-DKAMHXZPI.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHY COULDN'T THE TEDDY BEAR FINISH GORGING ON HIS FOOD? BECAUSE HE WAS ALREADY STUFFED.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals F

FACES

A life well loved

Actress Kate Hudson to release debut album, 'Glorious'

By MARIA SHERMAN
Associated Press

More than two decades ago, Kate Hudson took on the role of one of the most celebrated music fans to ever hit the silver screen: Penny Lane in "Almost Famous." It is required viewing for record obsessives — and for Hudson, an extension of a lifelong adoration of music.

"I would die without music," she told The Associated Press from Los Angeles. "I know what it feels like to sit in your room, put on an album, and dream. It can completely change the trajectory of your life."

On May 17, Hudson will get the opportunity to do that for other listeners when she releases her debut album, "Glorious." It is an ambitious record, written by Hudson with her close collaborators Linda Perry, Johan Carlsson, and her fiancé Danny Fujikawa, spanning folk, rock and synth, soulful ballads and big pop songs. "My influences move," she says. "I didn't want to be pigeonholed into a genre."

Hudson has been writing songs since she was a teenager, but the coronavirus pandemic brought up big questions and eventually, the desire to pursue an album professionally. "What is the next half of my life going to look like in terms of my connection

to the arts?" One thing that kept circulating for me was that if I didn't make an album, it would be a great regret," she says.

And so, she gave into the process.

"I wanted to be an open channel," she says. "I didn't want to overthink anything."



She wrote 26 songs, 12 of which made the final track list. All the songs are new — self-reflections on her life, like "Live Forever," which considers motherhood and watching your adult children leave home, or "Never Made a Moment," about the end of a relationship and learning to survive without that person.

"Glorious" is the title track, which she says "embodies the album. It's about a life well loved — even in its challenges, it is glorious."

She aims to uplift listeners with the record, in whatever way they find it resonates. "If there's just, like, one person out there that takes the album, and then turns it on, closes their eyes and, like, feels something shift in them, then I feel like I've achieved success," she says.



Guy Aroch/Big Hassle Media

Kate Hudson's multiple genre-spanning first album, "Glorious," is coming in May.

Kelce hosting celebrity spinoff of 'Are You Smarter' game show

From wire reports

Travis Kelce just scored another hosting gig: The three-time Super Bowl champ will lead a spinoff of "Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?"

Kelce's iteration of the game show — "Are You Smarter Than a Celebrity?" — will be the Kansas City tight end's first entry into series television after hosting "Saturday Night Live" last year and starring in the short-lived 2016 E! reality dating show, "Catching Kelce." Amazon's Prime Video on Tuesday ordered 20 episodes of the new series, which is being produced by MGM Alternative.

"I grew up loving game shows, and I'm excited to be following in the footsteps of so many TV icons by hosting my very first one with 'Are You Smarter Than a Celebrity?'" Kelce said in a statement.



Kelce

Barry Poznick, general manager of MGM Alternative and co-creator of the series, called Kelce "the ultimate class clown."

"Are You Smarter Than a Celebrity?" will offer "a new, loud twist" on the original format of the early-2000s game show. The spinoff will feature an adult contestant in each game who will rely on a classroom of celebrities from stage, screen and sports to help answer 11 questions pulled from elementary-school curriculum. The grand prize is \$100,000.

Although no debut date has been announced, the series will premiere in more than 240 countries and territories, Prime Video said.

Activist studio shuttered after 20 years

Participant, the activist film and television studio that has financed Oscar winners like "Spotlight" and socially conscious documentaries like "Food, Inc." and "Waiting For Superman" is closing its doors after 20 years.

"This is not a step I am taking lightly," Jeff Skoll, who founded the company in 2004, wrote in a memo he shared with his staff. "But after 20 years of groundbreaking content and world-changing impact campaigns, it is the right time for me to evaluate my next chapter and approach to tackling the pressing issues of our time."

Participant has released 135 films. Fifty were documentaries and many were tied to awareness-raising impact campaigns. Their films have won 21 Academy Awards.



Donald Glover to retire Childish Gambino persona

By DAVID MATTHEWS
New York Daily News

Donald Glover is retiring his Childish Gambino persona after releasing two more albums, the entertainer announced.

He shared the news on an Instagram Gilga Radio livestream that aired Sunday night.

A mock radio ad for the first of the new albums, titled "Bando Stone & the New World," said it would be "available this summer." He also debuted a new, untitled song, as well as "Human Sacrifice" and "Little Big Foot," which leaked previously.

The album is tied to a film the multi-talented artist is making. "I started working on this film called 'Bando Stone & the New World' and I always loved soundtracks," he said.

The second new album is actually a reworked version of his last album, "3.15.20," un-

der the title "Atavista," reportedly the album's original working title.

"We put it out kind of quickly; I didn't master or mix it," Glover said. "I just put it out. I was going through a lot."

Glover previously posted a track list and running time for "Atavista" on an Instagram story. No release dates for the new albums was announced, but Glover seemed to indicate a release schedule for the two LPs.

"There's a Childish Gambino album, there's the final Childish Gambino album [after 'Atavista'], a soundtrack for the fans," he said.

Glover said the album was inspired by Prince's soundtrack for the 1989 "Batman" film and the soundtrack to 1995's "Batman Forever."

"My fans are great and have been so patient and are starving — this album is for you guys," he said.

The "Atlanta" and "Community" star has released four albums already under the Childish Gambino moniker. His song "This Is America," off the album "Upbeat Summer Hits," won song of the year, best music video, best rap/sung performance and song of the year at the 2019 Grammy Awards.

"Redbone," off the album "Awaken My Love," won best traditional R&B performance at the 2017 Grammys.

Glover, 40, previously hinted he'd give up the persona in the future.

"I like it when something's good and when it comes back, there's a reason to come back, there's a reason to do that," he told HuffPost in 2017.

"Like I feel like there's gotta be a reason to do things ... there's only so far you can go before you just are the radio."

Donald Glover, shown Jan. 15, says his upcoming album is tied to a film he's working on, "Bando Stone & the New World."

MYUNG J. CHUN, LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

SCOREBOARD/COLLEGE FOOTBALL

PRO HOCKEY

PWHL

	GP	W	L	OW	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Toronto	19	10	6	3	0	36	50	41
Minnesota	19	8	4	4	3	35	47	35
Montreal	18	7	5	3	4	31	44	45
Ottawa	19	7	6	0	6	27	50	50
Boston	19	4	9	4	2	22	38	48
New York	19	3	9	4	3	20	39	49

Teams awarded three (3) points for a regulation win, two (2) points for an overtime or shootout win, one (1) point for an overtime or shootout loss, and zero (0) points for a regulation time loss.

Sunday, March 24

Minnesota 3, Montreal 2, SO

Monday, March 25

New York 3, Boston 2

Thursday, April 18

Toronto at Boston

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Inter Miami CF	4	2	3	15	19	14
New York	4	1	3	15	11	7
Philadelphia	3	0	4	13	14	9
Columbus	3	1	4	13	10	7
Cincinnati	3	2	3	12	8	7
Atlanta	3	2	2	11	12	7
Charlotte FC	3	3	2	11	9	8
CF Montréal	3	3	1	10	10	14
Toronto FC	3	4	1	10	8	12
D.C. United	2	2	4	10	12	12
Chicago	2	3	3	9	11	14
NYCFC	2	4	2	8	7	9
Orlando City	2	3	2	8	8	13
Nashville	1	2	4	7	8	13
New England	1	5	1	4	5	13

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LA Galaxy	4	1	3	15	17	12
Vancouver	4	2	1	13	15	9
Houston	4	2	1	13	9	7
Real Salt Lake	3	2	3	12	11	8
Colorado	3	2	3	12	13	12
LAFC	3	3	2	11	13	12
Minnesota	3	2	2	11	10	9
St Louis City	2	1	5	11	12	11
Sporting KC	2	2	4	10	14	13
Portland	2	3	3	9	16	16
Austin FC	2	3	3	9	11	13
Seattle	1	3	3	6	9	7
FC Dallas	1	4	2	5	6	10
San Jose	1	7	0	3	10	20

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Saturday's games

Cincinnati at Atlanta
 Portland at Columbus
 Nashville at Miami
 Orlando City at CF Montréal
 D.C. United at New York City FC
 New England at Toronto FC
 Real Salt Lake at Chicago
 Austin FC at Houston
 St Louis City at Sporting Kansas City
 FC Dallas at Colorado
 New York at Los Angeles FC
 Vancouver at Seattle

Sunday's games

Minnesota at Charlotte FC
 San Jose at LA Galaxy

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	3	0	1	10	12	8
North Carolina	3	1	0	9	9	3
Washington	3	1	0	9	7	4
Chicago	2	1	1	7	5	3
Orlando	1	0	3	6	5	4
Bay FC	2	2	0	6	7	7
San Diego	1	1	1	4	2	2
Gotham FC	1	1	1	4	2	2
Louisville	0	0	4	4	4	4
Angel City	1	2	1	4	4	6
Houston	1	2	1	4	5	10
Seattle	1	3	0	3	4	6
Utah Royals FC	1	3	0	3	3	6
Portland	0	3	1	1	6	10

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Friday's game

San Diego at Orlando

Saturday's games

Gotham FC at Washington
 Utah Royals FC at Louisville
 Bay FC at Kansas City
 Houston at Portland

Sunday's games

Chicago at Seattle
 North Carolina at Angel City

Friday, April 26

Orlando at Washington
 Kansas City at Angel City

TENNIS

Porsche Grand Prix

Tuesday

At Porsche Arena
Stuttgart, Germany
Purse: Euro 802,237
Surface: Red clay indoor
Women's Singles
Round of 32

Jasmine Paolini, Italy, def. Sara Errani, Italy, 6-1, 6-0.

Zheng Qinwen (5), China, def. Sorana Cirstea, Romania, 6-2, 6-3.

Marketa Vondrousova (6), Czech Republic, def. Donna Vekic, Croatia, 6-4, 6-3.

Elise Mertens, Belgium, def. Tatjana Maria, Germany, 6-1, 4-6, 6-0.

Linda Noskova, Czech Republic, def. Jena Ostapenko (8), Latvia, 6-3, 6-1.

Barcelona Open

Tuesday

At Real Club de Tennis Barcelona
Barcelona, Spain
Purse: Euro 2,782,960
Surface: Red clay
Men's Singles
Round of 64

Dusan Lajovic, Serbia, def. Diego Schwartzman, Argentina, 6-1, 6-2.

Roberto Carballes Baena, Spain, def. Hugo Grenier, France, 6-2, 6-4.

Luca van Assche, France, def. Zhang Zhizhen, China, 7-5, 6-2.

Jaume Munar, Spain, def. Yoshihito Nishioka, Japan, 6-3, 6-1.

Tomas Machac, Czech Republic, def. Junheng Shang, China, 6-4, 6-4.

Daniel Altmaier, Germany, def. Alexei

Popyrin, Australia, 6-3, 7-6 (4).
 Rafael Nadal, Spain, def. Flavio Cobolli, Italy, 6-2, 6-3.

Round of 32

Facundo Diaz Acosta, Argentina, def. Borna Coric (15), Croatia, 6-2, 7-5.

Brandon Nakashima, United States, def. Andrey Rublev (2), Russia, 6-4, 7-6 (6).

Matteo Arnaldi, Italy, def. Sebastian Baez (8), Argentina, 5-7, 7-6 (8), 6-2.

Tomas Martin Etcheverry (13), Argentina, def. Nick Hardt, Dominican Republic, 7-5, 6-2.

BMW Open

Tuesday

At MTTC Iphitos
Munich
Purse: Euro 579,320
Surface: Red clay
Men's Singles
Round of 32

Jurij Rodionov, Austria, def. Aleksandar Vukic, Australia, 6-2, 6-3.

Taro Daniel, Japan, def. Christopher O'Connell, Australia, 6-3, 6-4.

Cristian Garin, Chile, def. Dominik Koepfer (7), Germany, 7-6 (3), 6-3.

Daniel Elahi Galan, Colombia, def. Camilo Ugo Carabelli, Argentina, 7-6 (2), 6-4.

Felix Auger-Aliassime (5), Canada, def. Maximilian Marterer, Germany, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (6), 7-6 (3).

Botic Van de Zandschulp, Netherlands, def. Ivan Gakhov, Russia, 6-4, 2-6, 6-3.

Yannick Hanfmann, Germany, def. Alexander Shevchenko (8), Russia, 6-7 (6), 6-3, 7-5.

Marc-Andrea Huesler, Switzerland, def. Marko ToPo, Germany, 3-6, 6-1, 6-3.

DEALS

Tuesday's transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball
American League

BALTIMORE ORIOLES — Sent RHP Kyle Bradish on a rehab assignment to Bowie (EL). Selected the contract of C David Banuelos from Norfolk (IL). Placed RHP Tyler Wells on the 15-day IL, retroactive to April 13. Designated INF Livan Soto for assignment.

CHICAGO WHITE SOX — Agreed to terms with OF Tommy Phan on a minor league contract. Selected the contract of RHP Jonathan Cannon from Charlotte (IL). Designated RHP Josimar Cousin for assignment. Optioned LHP Jared Shuster to Charlotte.

HOUSTON ASTROS — Optioned RHP Spencer Arrighetti to Sugar Land (PCL). Recalled RHP Forrest Whitley from Sugar Land (PCL).

LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Signed SS Elliot Soto to a minor league contract.

MINNESOTA TWINS — Recalled OF Trevor Larnach from St. Paul (IL). Optioned OF Matt Wallner to St. Paul.

NEW YORK YANKEES — Sent LHP Josh Maciejewski outright to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL).

TEXAS RANGERS — Recalled RHP Jack Leiter from Round Rock (PCL). Sent 1B Nathaniel Lowe to Round Rock on a rehab assignment.

TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Reinstated RHPs Erik Swanson and Jordan Romano from the 15-day IL. Designated RHP Mitch White for assignment. Optioned P Nate Pearson to Buffalo (IL).

National League

ATLANTA BRAVES — Agreed to terms with 1B Yuli Gurriel on a minor league contract. Placed 2B Ozzie Albies on the 10-day IL. Selected the contract of SS David Fletcher from Gwinnett (IL).

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Recalled OF Andy Pages and RHP Kyle Hurt from Oklahoma City (PCL). Selected the contract of RHP Eduardo Salazar from Oklahoma City. Optioned RHP Ricky Vanasco and LHP Nick Ramirez to Oklahoma City. Designated OF Taylor Trammell for assignment.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Signed OF Justin Dirden to a minor league contract. Placed OF Christian Yelich on the 10-day injured list, retroactive to April 13. Recalled INF/OF Owen Miller from Nashville (IL).

NEW YORK METS — Sent RHP Max Kranick on a rehab assignment to Binghamton (EL).

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Sent RHP Taijuan Walker on a rehab assignment to Lehigh Valley (IL).

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Sent C Yasmani Grandal on a rehab assignment to Indianapolis (IL).

SAN DIEGO PADRES — Optioned C Brett Sullivan to El Paso (PCL). Recalled SS Matthew Batten from El Paso.

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association
BOSTON CELTICS — Recalled C Neemias Queta and F Jordan Walsh from the Maine Celtics of the G League.

PHOENIX SUNS — Signed G Grayson Allen to a multi-year contract extension.

Women's National Basketball Association

CONNECTICUT SUN — Signed C Taiyanna Jackson and G Helena Pueyo to rookie

scale contracts.
NEW YORK LIBERTY — Signed G Jaylyn Sherrod to a rookie scale contract.

FOOTBALL

National Football League

CLEVELAND BROWNS — Announced the signing WR Rashard Higgins and LB Christian Kirksey to one-day contracts for them to retire as members of the team.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — Waived DB Ayo Oyelola.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Signed WR Trent Taylor to a contract.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Signed P Jon Ryan.

WASHINGTON COMMANDERS — Waived LS Tucker Addington.

HOCKEY

National Hockey League

ARIZONA COYOTES — Recalled RW Aku Ratu from loan to Tucson (AHL).

BOSTON BRUINS — Assigned D Derek Forbort to Providence (AHL) on a conditioning loan. Reassigned F John Beecher to Providence. Recalled C Jayson Megna from Providence.

BUFFALO SABRES — Loaned F Lukas Rousek to Rochester (AHL).

CAROLINA HURRICANES — Recalled D Dylan Coghlan from Springfield (AHL). Recalled LW Max Comtois from Chicago (AHL).

COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS — Recalled C Luca Del Bel Belluz from Cleveland (AHL).

FLORIDA PANTHERS — Reassigned G Evan Cormier to Charlotte (AHL) from Florida (ECHL).

MONTREAL CANADIENS — Agreed to terms with F Luke Tuch on a two-year, entry-level contract. Recalled D Logan Mailoux from Laval (AHL).

NASHVILLE PREDATORS — Reassigned LW Navrin Mutter to Milwaukee (AHL) from Atlanta (ECHL).

NEW JERSEY DEVILS — Assigned F Shane Bowers and Graeme Clarke to Utica (AHL).

NEW YORK ISLANDERS — Signed D Laurel Hollow to a two-year, entry-level contract.

NEW YORK RANGERS — Reassigned Gs Talyn Boyko and Olof Lindbom to Hartford (AHL) from Cincinnati (ECHL).

VANCOUVER CANUCKS — Returned G Arturs Silovs on loan to Abbotsford (AHL).

VEGAS GOLDEN KNIGHTS — Recalled F Jonas Rondbjerg from Henderson (AHL).

WASHINGTON CAPITALS — Recalled RW Kevin O'Neil and D Lucas Johansen from loan to Hershey (AHL).

SOCCER

Major League Soccer

MLS — Fined Portland Timbers G Maxime Crépeau an undisclosed amount for failing to leave the field in a timely manner.

SPORTING KANSAS CITY — Loaned MF Ozzie Cisneros to MLS NEXT Pro club Carolina Core FC for the remainder of the 2024 season.

National Women's Soccer League

NWSL — Named Matt Soloff senior vice president of business development.

ORLANDO PRIDE — Waived D Tori Hansen and G Kaylie Collins.

UTAH ROYALS FC — Signed MF Macey Leigh Fraser to a three-year contract.

COLLEGE

BYU — Hired Kevin Young as men's head basketball coach.

AP SPORTLIGHT

April 18

1908 — Tommy Burns knocks out Jewey Smith in the fifth round in Paris to retain the world heavyweight title.

1946 — Jackie Robinson debuts as the second baseman for the Montreal Royals.

1959 — The Montreal Canadiens win their fourth consecutive Stanley Cup with a 5-3 victory over the Toronto Maple Leafs in the fifth game.

1962 — Boston's Bill Russell scores 30

points and grabs 40 rebounds to lead the Celtics to a 110-107 overtime win over the Los Angeles Lakers and their fourth consecutive NBA title. Russell's 40-rebound effort matches his NBA Finals record set on March 29, 1960.

1987 — Philadelphia's Mike Schmidt hits his 500th home run with two outs in the ninth to rally the Phillies to an 8-6 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates at Three Rivers Stadium.



PHELAN M. EBENHACK/AP

After leading Michigan to the national championship, Jim Harbaugh left to become head coach of the NFL's Los Angeles Chargers.

NCAA gives Michigan 3 years of probation

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

Michigan was given three years of probation, fined and hit with recruiting limits by the NCAA on Tuesday after football coaches and staff had impermissible contact with recruits and players under then-coach Jim Harbaugh while access was restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NCAA said it had reached a negotiated resolution with the school that has been approved by the committee on infractions involving five former and current coaches and staffers, but it did not include allegations that Harbaugh failed to cooperate with investigators. That is now a separate case.

"We are pleased to reach a resolution on this matter so that our student-athletes and our football program can move forward. We have no additional information and cannot comment further on other aspects of the NCAA's inquiries," Michigan athletic director Warde Manuel said in statement.

Harbaugh's attorney, Tom Mars, said the coach was not invited to participate in the settlement process or aware that an agreement had been reached between the school on the NCAA. Harbaugh is now coach of the Los Angeles Chargers.

"I'm not saying he would have participated. That would have depended on what terms the NCAA wanted," Mars told AP. "Seems odd they didn't even give Jim the opportunity to participate or decline. What's that say about the NCAA's intentions?"

The recruiting case is also separate from the NCAA's investigation into impermissible in-person scouting and sign stealing that

roiled Michigan's national championship season in 2023, and resulted in a three-game suspension of Harbaugh by the

NHL

Caps secure last playoff berth

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — T.J. Oshie shot the puck into an empty net and, in the process, scored one of the more improbable game-winning goals in recent NHL history and sent the Washington Capitals to the playoffs.

Oshie's empty-net goal with 3 minutes left helped the exhausted Capitals beat the Philadelphia Flyers 2-1 on Tuesday night under absurd circumstances. The score was tied when Philadelphia coach John Tortorella pulled his goaltender for an extra attacker because his team needed to win in regulation to keep its hopes alive.

What Tortorella didn't know was that Detroit scoring with 3.3 seconds remaining to force overtime at Montreal perhaps a min-

ute earlier actually eliminated the Flyers.

"We'll take it," Capitals captain Alex Ovechkin said. "Thanks, Philly."

Tortorella found out just after Oshie's empty-netter about the Red Wings result. By then it was too late, and the result also eliminated Detroit and the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Washington will face the Presidents' Trophy-winning New York Rangers in the first round beginning this weekend, returning to the playoffs after a one-year absence ended its eight-year streak.

"It means a lot," said Oshie, one of a handful of players remaining from the Capitals' 2018 Stanley Cup team, along with Ovechkin, John Carlson and Tom Wilson. "Once you win one time, the regular season just doesn't have as much meaning as the

playoff games, so to get back there is going to be super special and definitely won't take it for granted. The boys will be ready to rock."

A recent six-game losing streak looked to have tanked the Caps' chances, but behind more strong play from goalie Charlie Lindgren, they kept themselves in the race. Lindgren looked shaky at times against the Flyers, giving up some big rebounds, but he made the saves, 27 total, when they mattered in his second start in as many days and 48th of the season — by far the most he has played in his NHL career.

Ovechkin provided the earlier offense, scoring his 31st goal of the season and 853rd of his career on a deflection of Dylan McIlrath's shot late in the first to move 42 back of breaking Wayne Gretzky's record.



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Washington's Alex Ovechkin celebrates his 31st goal of the season late in the first period Monday in Philadelphia.

ROUNDUP

Panthers clinch Atlantic Division title

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Sam Bennett and Sam Reinhart scored 10 seconds apart midway through the second period, and the Florida Panthers beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-2 on Tuesday night.

With the victory and Boston's 3-1 loss to Ottawa, Florida clinched the Atlantic Division title. The Panthers (52-24-6) finished the season with a four-game winning streak to make up a five-point deficit in the standings.

"It's been a crazy year," Panthers forward Matthew Tkachuk said. "I feel like, throughout the whole year, us and Boston were in the driver's seat leading the division and it's kind of gone back and forth the last few months. ... It means a lot to get home ice because it shows that we had a solid season and I'm glad there's something to show for it."

Carter Verhaeghe and Brandon Montour also scored for Florida, and Anthony Stolarz made 24 saves.

The Panthers will play the Tampa Bay Lightning in the opening round of the playoffs.

Senators 3, Bruins 1: Jiri Smejkal scored his first career goal midway through the second period and Jakob Chychrun scored less than a minute later as visiting Ottawa beat Boston in the regular-season finale for both teams.

Artem Zub added an empty-net goal with 1:48 remaining and Anton Forsberg had 34 saves for the Senators, who avoided a three-game season sweep by Boston and spoiled the Bruins' hopes of clinching the Atlantic Division. The Bruins (47-20-15) led second-place Florida by a point entering Tuesday night.

Blue Jackets 6, Hurricanes 3: Zach Werenski had two goals and two assists, Jet Greaves made 38 saves and host Columbus beat a



WILFREDO LEE/AP

Florida Panthers left wing Matthew Tkachuk attempts a shot against Toronto Maple Leafs goaltender Joseph Woll and defenseman Simon Benoit during the second period Tuesday in Sunrise, Fla.

diminished version of playoff-bound Carolina.

Carolina finished with 111 points at 52-23-7, the second-best record in the Eastern Conference behind the division champion New York Rangers. The Hurricanes reached the postseason for the sixth straight year.

Red Wings 5, Canadiens 4 (SO): Patrick Kane scored the shootout winner in his team's win over Montreal in its regular-season finale, but visiting Detroit was eliminated from playoff contention.

The Red Wings entered the night tied with Washington for the East's second wild-card spot with 89 points. The Capitals, however, held the tiebreaker over Detroit with more regulations wins and

clinched the final playoff spot with a 2-1 win over the Philadelphia Flyers on Tuesday.

Detroit has missed the playoffs eight straight seasons.

Jets 4, Kraken 3: Kyle Connor scored twice and Tyler Toffoli broke a third-period tie to lift host Winnipeg to a key victory over Seattle.

The win clinched second place in the Central Division for the Jets and home-ice advantage in their first-round playoff series with the Colorado Avalanche.

Golden Knights 3, Blackhawks 1: Brayden McNabb, Michael Amadio and Nicolas Roy scored, and host Vegas moved into third place in the Pacific Division after defeating Chicago.

The Knights, who have won

three consecutive games, are one point ahead of Los Angeles. If Vegas beats Anaheim on Thursday, the Knights will clinch that spot and face Edmonton in the first round of the playoffs. The Kings host the Blackhawks in their season finale on Thursday night.

Canucks 4, Flames 1: Tyler Myers had a goal and an assist, Thatcher Demko stopped 39 shots in his return from a knee injury and host Vancouver beat Calgary to clinch the Pacific Division title.

Nils Hoglander, Dakota Joshua and J.T. Miller also scored to help Vancouver win a division for the first time since 2013. The Canucks are two points behind Dallas for the No. 1 spot in the Western Conference, and both teams have one game remaining.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

	GP	W	LOT	Pts	GF	GA
z-N.Y. Rangers	82	55	23	4	114	282
x-Carolina	82	52	23	7	111	279
y-Florida	82	52	24	6	110	268
x-Boston	82	47	20	15	109	267
x-Toronto	81	46	25	10	102	299
x-Tampa Bay	81	44	29	8	96	285
x-N.Y. Islanders	81	38	27	16	92	241
x-Washington	82	40	31	11	91	220
Detroit	82	41	32	9	91	278
Pittsburgh	81	38	31	12	88	251
Philadelphia	82	38	33	11	87	235
Buffalo	82	39	37	6	84	246
New Jersey	82	38	39	5	81	264
Ottawa	82	37	41	4	78	255
Montreal	82	30	36	16	76	236
Columbus	82	27	43	12	66	237

Western Conference

	GP	W	LOT	Pts	GF	GA
y-Dallas	81	51	21	9	111	296
x-Vancouver	81	50	22	9	109	277
x-Winnipeg	81	51	24	6	108	255
x-Colorado	81	49	25	7	105	299
x-Edmonton	80	49	25	6	104	291
x-Nashville	82	47	30	5	99	269
x-Vegas	81	45	28	8	98	266
x-Los Angeles	81	43	27	11	97	251
St. Louis	81	43	33	5	91	238
Minnesota	81	39	33	9	87	248
Calgary	81	37	39	5	79	248
Seattle	81	33	35	13	79	213
Arizona	81	35	41	5	75	251
Anaheim	81	26	50	5	57	200
Chicago	81	23	53	5	51	175
San Jose	81	19	53	9	47	180

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division
z-clinched conference

Monday's games

N.Y. Islanders 4, New Jersey 1
Buffalo 4, Tampa Bay 2
Washington 2, Boston 0
Pittsburgh 4, Nashville 2
Detroit 5, Montreal 4, OT
N.Y. Rangers 4, Ottawa 0
Edmonton 9, San Jose 2
Minnesota 3, Los Angeles 1

Tuesday's games

Columbus 6, Carolina 3
Ottawa 3, Boston 1
Washington 2, Philadelphia 1
Detroit 5, Montreal 4, SO
Florida 5, Toronto 2
Winnipeg 4, Seattle 3
Vegas 3, Chicago 1
Vancouver 4, Calgary 1

Wednesday's games

Pittsburgh at N.Y. Islanders
Toronto at Tampa Bay
St. Louis at Dallas
Edmonton at Arizona

Thursday's games

Seattle at Minnesota
Vancouver at Winnipeg
San Jose at Calgary
Edmonton at Colorado
Anaheim at Vegas
Chicago at Los Angeles
End of regular season

NHL/OLYMPICS

Rampant: Rempe's brawling style excites players as well as fans

FROM PAGE 24

tentional injuries to a minimum.

"With this story about Rempe, it's kind of bringing it back a little bit," said Philadelphia's Nicolas Deslauriers, who fought Rempe in February and leads the league with 11 fights this season. "It's good for us. We try to keep this involved in the league. We all know it's going away. But I think it's strongly needed. I think it just settles people at the same time."

Commissioner Gary Bettman said he ran into Rempe at Madison Square Garden after punches from Deslauriers gave the 2020 sixth-round pick a couple of shiners. Bettman said Rempe seems like a nice young man.

"For whatever reason, either his size or reputation or the fact that people just want to challenge him, I think this is his introduction to the league," Bettman said. "Ultimately it's going to be how good a player he is."

Peter Laviolette, in his fifth job running a bench in the NHL and a Cup-winning coach before arriving in New York, is trying to put Rempe in position to succeed. Laviolette, a former player, said Rempe is "living his best life right now."

"We're just making sure that just because he hits hard — he hits people — he doesn't have to go and fight every single time," Laviolette said. "We want him to play the game. He's an effective player for us."

Answering the bell has earned him the respect of rivals around the league: Toronto enforcer Ryan

Reaves said Rempe is "going to be a menace in this league," New Jersey's Brendan Smith called him "a tough customer" and Rangers captain Jacob Trouba said, "He's not fearful of anyone and can hold his own."

Beyond his many admirers — one Rangers fan site sells "Rempe's Fight Club" shirts — there's concern from some corners of the game about all the punches he's taking after the deaths of retired enforcers like Derek Boogaard, Bob Probert and, as recently as last month, Chris Simon. Boogaard and Probert were found to have chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a degenerative brain disease that researchers have linked to concussions or repeated blows to the head.

"I have a brother that had over 200 fights," Maple Leafs coach Sheldon Keefe said. "Certainly see the safety side."

Ward, who racked up over 400 penalty minutes in the NHL during a rough-and-tumble era from 1993-2002, said he instead wonders if Rempe will become typecast as just a fighter.

Adding fighting to his game — nine in the American Hockey League in 2022-23 and seven before his callup this season — helped Rempe get noticed. It's now a matter of making protecting teammates just part of his game, not the centerpiece.

"He did a good job of creating some buzz around himself," Ward said. "Now, how he handles that moving forward will determine how long it all lasts."



DERIK HAMILTON/AP

The New York Rangers' Matt Rempe celebrates after scoring against the Flyers during the third period Feb. 24 in Philadelphia.



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Los Angeles Lakers teammates Anthony Davis, left, and LeBron James were among the 12 players named to the USA Basketball roster Wednesday for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

USA Basketball announces men's team roster for Paris

BY TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

LeBron James is going back to the Olympics for the first time in 12 years. Stephen Curry is headed to the games for the first time. Kevin Durant will go there with his eyes on history.

And they're just part of a star-studded roster the Americans have assembled for the Paris Games.

USA Basketball announced its men's Olympic team for Paris on Wednesday — James, Curry, Durant, Bam Adebayo, Devin Booker, Joel Embiid, Jayson Tatum, Anthony Davis, Jrue Holiday, Tyrese Haliburton, Anthony Edwards and Kawhi Leonard the 12 names on the current roster.

"We're giving ourselves a chance to win with the talent we have," USA Basketball managing director Grant Hill said on NBC's "Today" show. "It'll be exciting. It'll be tough. It won't be easy. We have great respect for all the other teams. But certainly, this is going to be an iconic roster."

The group has seven players with 10 combined Olympic gold medals; Durant has three, James has two, while Adebayo, Booker, Holiday, Tatum and Booker each have one. Combined, the 12 players had averages of 24.2 points, 7.0 rebounds and 5.6 assists this season, shooting 39% from 3-point range.

"Obviously, it's a great honor to represent your country," Adebayo said. "But for me, to be in that room as part of those 12 players, part of

who they think are the 12 best players to represent the United States, it takes it to a different level."

The amount of talent on the U.S. roster is staggering. Of the 12 commits, seven finished the season ranked among the NBA's top 15 scorers per game. James is the league's all-time scoring leader, Curry the all-time leader in 3-pointers, Haliburton won the assist-per-game title this season and 10 were All-Stars this season as well.

"The goal is to win the gold," Hill said. "They know that."

The Americans have won the last four Olympic gold medals and remain ranked No. 1 in the world by FIBA even after failing to medal in the two most recent World Cups — finishing seventh at China in 2019 and fourth at Manila last summer.

They won gold at the Tokyo Games by topping France 87-82. A slew of other nations will expect to contend for gold in Paris — the host French, reigning World Cup champion Germany, Serbia and Canada among them — but the American roster has a depth of NBA stars that no other country can reach.

"Your hope is that they haven't played together before," Canada's Kelly Olynyk said when told this weekend of the U.S. roster, "other than the 12 last All-Star games."

Hill has led the task of assembling the roster for the past several months, and the plan all along was to put together the team well in advance of training camp starting at Las Vegas in early July. Tryouts

were never part of the plan for this team.

Durant has said since last year that he plans to play, which means he will pursue becoming the first men's player in Olympic history with four basketball gold medals. He and Carmelo Anthony are the only men's players with three Olympic golds; there are six women, all American, with at least four Olympic basketball golds. Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi each have five, while Teresa Edwards, Tamika Catchings, Sylvia Fowles and Lisa Leslie each won four.

Curry will play in the Olympics for the first time, as will Leonard and Embiid — who chose to play for the U.S. last year after becoming an American citizen. The Cameroon-born center also could have chosen to represent France at the Paris Games.

The other first-time Olympians on the current roster are Haliburton and Edwards, both of whom played for the U.S. team that finished fourth at the World Cup in Manila last year.

There were more than 40 players under consideration for this team, and getting the roster to 12 was far from easy.

"I think everybody understands that these Olympics are going to be maybe the most anticipated, given that it's Paris, in terms of players wanting to go, players' wives wanting to go, everybody wanting to go," U.S. coach Steve Kerr said. "It made for some really difficult decisions for us, for sure."

MLB

ROUNDUP

Wild pitch helps Detroit top Texas

Associated Press

DETROIT — Gio Urshela had an RBI single and Matt Vierling scored on a wild pitch in the eighth inning to put Detroit ahead, and the Tigers' pitchers continued their solid play to beat the Texas Rangers 4-2 on Tuesday.

Andrew Chafin (1-0) worked 1½ hitless innings with three strikeouts. Jason Foley retired pinch-hitter Adolis Garcia with two on in the ninth for his fifth save of the season.

Detroit's bullpen improved to 8-2 on the season with a 1.69 ERA.

"I do like that we are going to play our 27 outs," Tigers manager A.J. Hinch said. "And I do not mean that as a cliché, but as a competitiveness that we are never out of it, because this pitching staff is going to keep us close."

Casey Mize, making his first home start since April 9, 2022, went six innings, allowing two runs and five hits. Mize missed most of the 2022 season and all of the 2023 campaign after undergoing Tommy John surgery and a back operation.

"Left the game tied," Mize said. "Obviously, I'd always prefer to leave with a lead. Leaving it tied, I feel good about our bullpen against anybody."

Jose Urena (0-2) took the loss for the Rangers.

Phillies 5, Rockies 0: Ranger Suárez pitched a seven-hit shutout, Bryce Harper homered and host Philadelphia beat Colorado.

Suárez struck out eight and walked one in the majors' second complete game this season. It was the first shutout for a Philadelphia pitcher since Michael Lorenzen's no-hitter against Washington on Aug. 9.

Harper hit an RBI double in the sixth inning and a two-run shot in the eighth.

Orioles 11, Twins 3: Gunnar Henderson, Jordan Westburg and Ryan O'Hearn homered, Grayson Rodriguez pitched six solid innings and host Baltimore trounced Minnesota.

Colton Cowser had two more hits for the Orioles, who have taken the first two games of this series. Rodriguez (3-0) allowed two runs and four hits. He walked three and struck out six.

It was the fourth straight game Baltimore homered at least three times, the first time the team has had a streak that long since 2013.

Marlins 6, Giants 3: Ryan Weathers struck out a career-high 10 before departing because of cramps in his left hand, and host Miami beat San Francisco.

Weathers (2-1) allowed two runs and five hits in six innings. The left-hander warmed up for the seventh, but was replaced by



CARLOS OSORIO/AP

The Tigers' Matt Vierling scores from third on a wild pitch by Texas Rangers pitcher Jacob Latz, right, during the eighth inning Tuesday in Detroit. Vierling's run put the Tigers ahead to stay.

Burch Smith.

Luis Arraez had two hits and two RBIs for the Marlins, who improved to 4-14. Josh Bell also had two hits and scored a run.

Mets 3, Pirates 1: Jose Hernandez balked home the go-ahead run in the seventh inning, Jeff McNeil added an RBI double and host New York beat Pittsburgh.

Joey Wendle came off the bench and delivered a tying double in the seventh for the Mets, who have won nine of 12 following an 0-5 start to move over .500 for the first time since early June last year.

New York came back to beat the Pirates for the second consecutive night and has won four straight series after dropping its first two.

Blue Jays 5, Yankees 4: Vladimir Guerrero Jr. reached base four times and had two RBIs, Yusei Kikuchi won for the first time this season and host Toronto beat New York.

Bo Bichette hit an RBI single and Justin Turner added a sacrifice fly as the Blue Jays became the first opponent to win a series against the Yankees this year. New York had won its first five series for the third time in franchise history, matching its starts of 1926 and 2010.

Guerrero went 2-for-3.

Rays 7, Angels 6 (13): Amed Rosario drove in the winning run with an infield single and host Tampa Bay scored twice in the 13th inning to complete a late comeback and beat Los Angeles.

Each team scored once in the 10th and 11th innings and the Angels moved ahead in the top of the 13th.

Richie Palacios got the Rays even at 6 with a two-out double in the bottom half of the inning against Carson Fulmer (0-1). Rosario then had a bases-loaded hit down the third-base line that scored Palacios and won it.

Padres 6, Brewers 3: Dylan Cease pitched six strong innings, Ha-Seong Kim hit a three-run homer and visiting San Diego beat Milwaukee.

Fernando Tatis Jr. had three hits and scored twice as the Padres handed the Brewers their first series loss of the season. San Diego will try to complete a three-game sweep Wednesday afternoon.

Guardians 10, Red Sox 7 (11): José Ramírez hit a tiebreaking RBI single in the 11th inning, and visiting Cleveland beat Boston.

With no outs and runners on first and second, Ramírez hit a low liner back up the middle against Josh Winckowski (1-1). After Brayan Rocchio sacrificed and Bo Naylor was walked intentionally, Estevan Florial added a two-run single.

Braves 6, Astros 2: Reynaldo López struck out seven over six scoreless innings, Orlando Arcia homered and visiting Atlanta beat Houston.

López (2-0) allowed four hits and walked one in his third straight sterling outing to start the season. He has given up one run in 18 innings for an ERA of 0.50.

Cardinals 3, Athletics 2: Lance Lynn earned his first win for visiting St. Louis in seven years with a victory over Oakland.

Lynn (1-0) allowed two runs —

one earned — and five hits in seven innings, lowering his ERA to 2.18 in four starts. The 36-year-old right-hander went 72-47 for the Cardinals from 2011-17. After pitching for five other teams, he returned to St. Louis during the offseason for an \$11 million, one-year contract.

Mariners 3, Reds 1: Logan Gilbert allowed three hits in 6⅓ innings of one-run ball, Julio Rodriguez made two highlight defensive plays in the seventh inning to preserve his team's lead, and host Seattle beat Cincinnati.

Jonatan Clase had an RBI double in his second major league game and Mitch Haniger added a key two-out RBI single. But Gilbert was overpowering for most of the night and got help from Rodriguez in the field.

Dodgers 6, Nationals 2: Mookie Betts tied his career high with five hits, doubling twice and driving in two runs to lead host Los Angeles over Washington.

Betts raised his average to a major league-leading .388. It was the third five-hit game of Betts' big league career, the first since Aug. 23 against Cleveland.

Diamondbacks 12, Cubs 11 (10): Ketel Marte hit a tying solo homer with two outs in the ninth, and Randal Grichuk won it with a pinch-hit RBI double in the 10th, lifting host Arizona to a wild victory over Chicago.

Grichuk ripped the second pitch he saw from Drew Smyly (2-2) into the left-center gap, easily scoring Christian Walker from second as D-backs players poured onto the field to celebrate.

Scoreboard

American League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	12	6	.667	—
Baltimore	11	6	.647	½
Tampa Bay	10	8	.556	2
Toronto	10	8	.556	2
Boston	9	9	.500	3

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	12	5	.706	—
Kansas City	11	6	.647	1
Detroit	10	7	.588	2
Minnesota	6	10	.375	5½
Chicago	2	14	.125	9½

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	9	9	.500	—
Los Angeles	8	9	.471	½
Seattle	8	10	.444	1
Oakland	7	11	.389	2
Houston	6	13	.316	3½

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	11	5	.688	—
Philadelphia	10	8	.556	2
New York	9	8	.529	2½
Washington	7	10	.412	4½
Miami	4	14	.222	8

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	10	6	.625	—
Pittsburgh	11	7	.611	—
Chicago	10	7	.588	½
Cincinnati	9	8	.529	1½
St. Louis	9	9	.500	2

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	12	8	.600	—
San Diego	11	9	.550	1
Arizona	9	9	.500	2
San Francisco	7	11	.389	4
Colorado	4	14	.222	7

Tuesday's games

Detroit 4, Texas 2
Philadelphia 5, Colorado 0
Baltimore 11, Minnesota 3
Miami 6, San Francisco 3
N.Y. Mets 3, Pittsburgh 1
Toronto 5, N.Y. Yankees 4
Tampa Bay 7, L.A. Angels 6, 13 innings
San Diego 6, Milwaukee 3
Cleveland 10, Boston 7, 11 innings
Atlanta 6, Houston 2
St. Louis 3, Oakland 2
Seattle 3, Cincinnati 1
L.A. Dodgers 6, Washington 2
Arizona 12, Chicago Cubs 11, 10 innings
Kansas City at Chicago White Sox, p.pd.

Wednesday's games

San Francisco at Miami
Minnesota at Baltimore
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Mets
Texas at Detroit
San Diego at Milwaukee
Kansas City at Chicago White Sox (2)
Atlanta at Houston
N.Y. Yankees at Toronto
Washington at L.A. Dodgers
St. Louis at Oakland
Chicago Cubs at Arizona
Cincinnati at Seattle
Colorado at Philadelphia
L.A. Angels at Tampa Bay
Cleveland at Boston

Thursday's games

L.A. Angels (Canning 0-2) at Tampa Bay (Peipot 1-2)
Texas (Leiter 0-0) at Detroit (Maeda 0-1)
Cleveland (Carrasco 0-1) at Boston (TBD)
Miami (TBD) at Chicago Cubs (Tailon 0-0)
Arizona (TBD) at San Francisco (Webb 1-1)

Friday's games

Miami at Chicago Cubs
Chicago White Sox at Philadelphia
L.A. Angels at Cincinnati
Boston at Pittsburgh
Houston at Washington
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Yankees
Oakland at Cleveland
Texas at Atlanta
Baltimore at Kansas City
Detroit at Minnesota
Milwaukee at St. Louis
Seattle at Colorado
Toronto at San Diego
N.Y. Mets at L.A. Dodgers
Arizona at San Francisco

Calendar

April 27-28 — MLB World Tour: Houston vs. Colorado at Mexico City.
June 8-9 — MLB World Tour: N.Y. Mets vs. Philadelphia at London.

NBA



GODOFREDO A. VÁSQUEZ/AP

Kings guard De'Aaron Fox drives against Warriors forward Andrew Wiggins on Tuesday. Sacramento advanced in the play-in tournament.

Kings get revenge, eliminate Warriors

By JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The chants of “Light the Beam!” started midway through the fourth quarter as the Sacramento Kings kept piling on the Golden State Warriors.

A year after having their season ended by their neighbors, the Kings dealt the Warriors a bit of payback in emphatic fashion with a victory that might have signaled the end of a dynasty.

Keegan Murray scored 32 points, De'Aaron Fox added 24 and the Kings stayed alive in the play-in tournament, eliminating the Warriors with a 118-94 victory on Tuesday night.

“We knew what was on the line,” Fox said. “This was just another obstacle in our way. We have to get over this hump. Obviously, losing to this team last year and obviously facing this team now, it’s like, of course we have to face this team.”

Sacramento advanced to play at New Orleans on Friday night with a chance to return to the playoffs as the eighth seed in the Western Conference after snapping an NBA-record 16-year playoff drought last season.

The Kings avenged a Game 7 loss at home to Golden State in last year’s first round by playing cleaner and being quicker to loose balls against the older Warriors in what was one of the most consequential wins for the franchise in two decades.

The loss kept Golden State out of the playoffs for the third time in the past five seasons, including two eliminations in the play-in tournament. The Warriors committed 16 turnovers, gave up 15 offensive rebounds and way too many open 3-pointers, looking nothing like the

dynastic team that won four titles from 2015-22.

“I was a sophomore in high school watching them win championships,” Fox said. “We’ve been watching this team for a long time. If it is the end, it is what it is. I’m glad we’re able to beat this team at this at this moment but, they definitely had a hell of a run.”

Klay Thompson missed all 10 shots from the field in what could have been his final game with the Warriors as he heads to unrestricted free agency this summer and a potential breakup of the championship trio of Thompson, Stephen Curry and Draymond Green.

“We need Klay back. I know he had a tough night tonight,” coach Steve Kerr said. “I know I speak for everyone in the organization, we want him back. Obviously there’s business at hand and that has to be addressed. ... But what Klay has meant to this franchise, as good as he is, we definitely want him back.”

With Thompson struggling, Curry didn’t get nearly enough help. Curry finished with 22 points but was hounded for much of the game by Keon Ellis.

The undrafted Ellis, who was on a two-way contract until February, added 15 points to go with his strong defense. Harrison Barnes scored 17 and Domantas Sabonis had 16 points and 12 rebounds for Sacramento.

“For the most part, they just took it to us the whole game,” Curry said. “There’s really no way around it.”

The meeting between the Northern California rivals separated by less than 100 miles was a rematch of last year’s series won by Golden State. Curry scored 50 points in the seventh game.

Lakers overcome Pelicans, earn rematch with Nuggets

By BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — LeBron James, Anthony Davis and their supporting cast have the Los Angeles Lakers looking like a tougher out in the playoffs than they appeared to be just a few weeks earlier.

The New Orleans Pelicans, meanwhile, find themselves on the brink of elimination and wondering about the health of star power forward Zion Williamson, whose dominant NBA postseason debut was cut short by an injury in the final minutes of a tight game.

James had 23 points, nine assists and nine rebounds, and the Lakers secured a playoff berth with a 110-106 victory over the Pelicans in the Western Conference play-in tournament on Tuesday night.

“Tonight we showcased what we were able to do both offensively and defensively,” said James, whose team enters the playoffs having won 12 of 15 games. “We’ve got a good group going right now, good rotation, good plan and guys are coming in ready to go.”

Williamson had 40 points and 11 rebounds. But shortly after tying the game at 95 on a driving layup with 3:19 to go, Williamson went to the locker room, throwing a towel to the floor in disgust as he walked into the tunnel with an apparent injury.

After the game, Pelicans coach Willie Green said Williamson had “left leg soreness.”

“He’s going to have some imaging on it tomorrow and we’ll figure out more,” Green said.

Soon after Williamson went out, James hit a jumper, Davis dunked Austin Reaves’ alley-oop lob, DeAngelo Russell hit a 3 and Davis grabbed a crucial offensive rebound, after which he hit two free throws to help the Lakers hold on.

The Pelicans “threw some heavy blows at us,” Lakers coach Darvin Ham said. “They kept swinging. We kept fighting back.”

“It revealed a lot about us and what we’re made of,” he added.

Davis finished with 20 points and 15 rebounds. Russell scored 21, hitting five times from deep. James was 10-for-10 on free throws and Davis 8-for-10.

The Lakers advance to face defending champion Denver in the first round in a rematch of last season’s Western Conference finals, a sweep by the Nuggets. Game 1 is Saturday night.

The Pelicans will host Sacramento on Friday, with the winner earning the No. 8 seed in the West. The Kings eliminated Golden State in the later play-in game on Wednesday night.



GERALD HERBERT/AP

Lakers forward Anthony Davis shoots over Pelicans center Jonas Valanciunas in Tuesday’s play-in tournament to secure a playoff spot.

Scoreboard

Play-in tournament

Tuesday, April 16
Western Conference

LA Lakers 110, New Orleans 106
Sacramento 118, Golden State 94

Wednesday, April 17
Eastern Conference

Miami at Philadelphia
Atlanta at Chicago

Friday, April 19
Eastern Conference

Atlanta/Chicago winner at Miami/Philadelphia loser. **AFN-Sports, 1:30 a.m. Saturday CET, 8:30 a.m. Saturday JKT**

Sacramento at New Orleans. **AFN-Sports, 4 a.m. Saturday CET, 11 a.m. Saturday JKT**

“Obviously a tough loss for us,” said Green, whose team could have secured the sixth seed in the playoffs on Sunday but lost at home to the Lakers, 124-108, setting up the rematch in the play-in. “We’ve got to feel this one tonight and regroup and get ready for another one.”

Williamson, Green said, was “fantastic.”

“He settled into the game. He just continued to attack. He found seams. He rebounded the ball. He played fast,” Green continued. “(If) we have him for a few more minutes, maybe we have a chance to pull this thing out.”

The Lakers went 14-for-35 from 3-point range. The Pelicans hit 9 of 29 from deep and Williamson didn’t get a lot of help from the Pelicans’ usual high scorers. Brandon

Ingram — in his second game back from a 12-game absence because of a knee injury — missed 8 of 12 shots and finished with 11 points after spending the final few minutes on the bench.

“I just like the group that was on the floor at that time,” Green said. “BI is still getting back, he’s still finding his rhythm. So, I didn’t want to force the issue.”

CJ McCollum missed 11 of 15 shots and scored nine points.

Trey Murphy III scored 12, hitting two 3s from beyond 28 feet in the second half to help New Orleans come back from an 18-point second-half deficit to tie it.

The Lakers led 75-57 after Rui Hachimura’s layup in the third quarter. But New Orleans got back in the game by outscoring Los Angeles 19-8 during the final 5:31 of the period.

Williamson sparked the surge with a pair of layups. Murphy pulled up for a 31-foot 3-pointer in the final minute of the quarter and Williamson’s free throw made it 83-76 at the end of the period.

The Pelicans finally tied it when Williamson slammed down Jose Alvarado’s alley-oop lob in transition to make it 93-all with 3:53 to go.

Los Angeles surged into the lead by outscoring New Orleans 34-16 in the second quarter, leading by as many as 14 after James, who had 15 first-half points, hit two free throws to make it 58-44.

SPORTS



Moving on

Lakers advance, Kings stay alive with play-in victories » **NBA, Page 23**

NHL

Rempemania runs rampant

Rangers rookie has become cult hero in New York with fists, imposing size

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

On his very first shift in the NHL, Matt Rempe dropped the gloves and fought veteran Matt Martin. Since then, he has taken photos with adoring fans at a Cheesecake Factory and has had his name printed on custom T-shirts and chanted at Madison Square Garden, whether he is in the game or not.

Rempemania is in full bloom for the New York Rangers and their 6-foot-8, 241-pound rookie, who has become something of a hero. This is almost solely due to his five fights in his first two months on the job, including the central role in an unusual 5-on-5 line brawl and a four-game suspension for a hit to the head. He is just 21.

Rempe's popularity underscores the NHL's complicated relationship with fighting. Tough guys and fighting have both faded in the league amid concerns about safety and an increased emphasis on skillful play, but it is clear fans — a lot of them — love the brawls just as much now as they did during the blood-and-broken teeth days of decades past.

Rempe, then, is something like a warm memory, at least for now. He will quickly need to figure out how to balance pugilism and physicality with playing well enough to stay on the ice for the Stanley Cup-contending Rangers this season — and beyond.

"What happened the first two, three, four weeks of his career up there is not long-term sustainability," said Dixon Ward, who coached Rempe as a teenager in Okanagan, British Columbia, and

a veteran of 599 NHL games. "You've got to establish yourself and then you've got to pick your spots, but you also have to show that you can play. And the only way you can show you can actually play is to stay in the game."

Rempe has skated 84 minutes on the ice, spent 69 in the penalty box or the locker room, and recorded one goal and one assist since the Rangers called him up in February. Still, his jersey was featured in the front window of the NHL Store in New York, and "We want Rempe! We want Rempe!" is a familiar refrain from Rangers fans if their team is losing or being pushed around.

In and out of the lineup down the stretch, Rempe — who didn't fight much in the junior Western Hockey League known for toughness — wants to prove he can stick around for more than just fisticuffs.

"I want to show the coaching staff that I can be a really effective player in the playoffs," he said as the regular season winds down. "I don't want to be a guy who just fights. I want to be known as tough but I want to be known as a guy who's a very effective bottom-six forward who can skate, be a really good checker, can be physical, be good defensively."

The current NHL game has no place for one-dimensional fighters like the days of yesteryear, a product of the salary cap and rule changes that have minimized the instances of bare-knuckle boxing on skates. Rempe is a welcome throwback for those who contend fighting allows players to police the game themselves and keep in-

SEE RAMPANT ON PAGE 21

INSIDE

Capitals clinch final playoff position; Panthers win Atlantic Division title
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SETH WENG/AP

The New York Rangers' Matt Rempe, top, fights with the New York Islanders' Matt Martin during the first period of a Stadium Series game in East Rutherford, N.J., on Feb. 18.

Michigan hit with probation for 3 years » College football, Page 19

