

There's a whiff of luxury in this new pet accessory

Dolce & Gabbana unveils a fragrance mist for the most pampered of pups. **In Money**

Remembering Billy Bean, a true hero of baseball

This "ordinary" player was an extraordinary voice for equality, Mike Freeman writes. **In Sports**

Cate Blanchett's case of role whiplash

Video-game-inspired "Borderlands" is her latest surprise turn: "I like those crazy, random, out-of-the-box asks." **Interview in Life**

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OLYMPICS 2024



VICTOR MONTALVO BY JOSH MORGAN/USA TODAY

Elite athletics turned sideways

U.S. Olympic breakers describe how different forms of expression – dance, art, style, sport – can combine to put a new spin on competition. **Olympics coverage in Sports**

EPA bans pesticide harmful to fetuses

Emergency action taken to suspend use of DCPA

Adrianna Rodriguez
USA TODAY

For the first time in 40 years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has taken emergency action to suspend the use of a pesticide found to cause irreversible damage to fetuses when they're exposed in utero.

The pesticide, dimethyl tetrachloroterephthalate, also known as DCPA or Dacthal, has been linked to low birth weight babies who later in life have been shown to have decreased IQ and impaired brain development and motor skills.

"DCPA is so dangerous that it needs to be removed from the market immediately," Michal Freedhoff, assistant administrator for the EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, said in a statement Tuesday.

According to an EPA report, the pesticide was first introduced in 1958 to control weeds in agricultural and non-agricultural settings, primarily for crops like broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and onions. Pregnant women in many cases may not have known they were exposed, Freedhoff said.

The emergency action comes after the sole manufacturer of the pesticide, AMVAC Chemical Corporation, failed to provide sufficient data on DCPA and its health risks, according to the statement. The company did not immediately respond to USA TODAY's request for comment.

The EPA first identified this pesticide as potentially causing harm to the thyroid in the 1990s, according to the advocacy organization the Environmental Working Group. By then, the agency reported that 80% of DCPA use occurred on turf grass, like golf courses and private lawns.

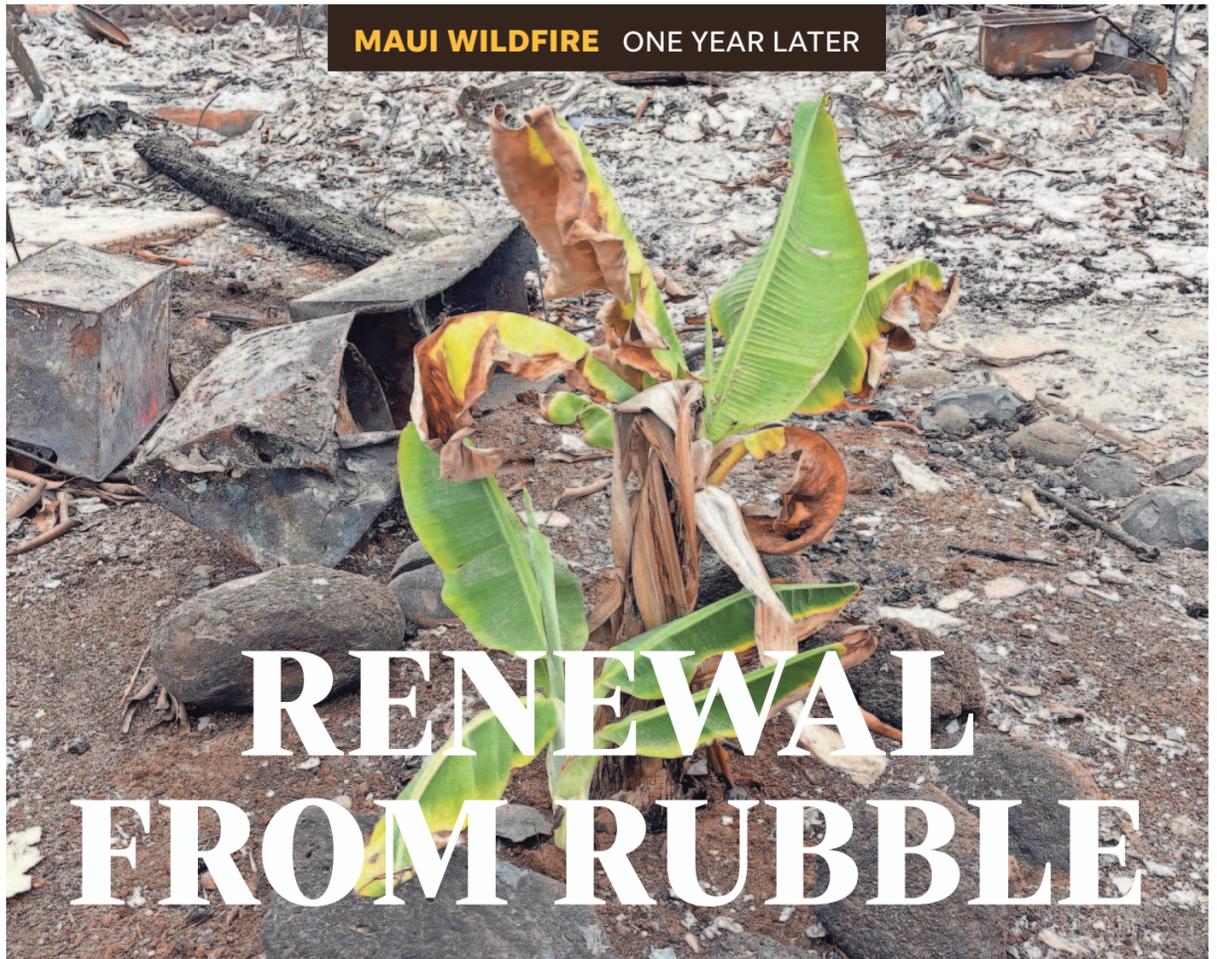
In 2023, the EPA released an

See **PESTICIDE**, Page 4A



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MAUI WILDFIRE ONE YEAR LATER



RENEWAL FROM RUBBLE

As scars heal, memories are still hard to get past

Ashley Poki'i Lewis
USA TODAY

Just a whiff of smoke is enough to transport Sue Brimeyer back to that day. To the acrid smell of charred homes as flaming debris rained down and fire raged through Lahaina, Hawaii. And to the earthshaking feeling her very heritage was going up in smoke.

"It was obvious people wouldn't survive – you can't outrun a fire like that," she said, recounting her escape from the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century, which swept through the Hawaiian island of Maui on Aug. 8, 2023.

The 77-year-old grandmother survived a harrowing night in the firestorm, her 10-year-old grandson in tow. But it scarred her in ways that make reliving it particularly painful, even now.

What the fire wrought marks a colossal loss for Hawaii, for Hawaiian families like Brimeyer's, and the world. The wildfire devastated a people and a way of life already under threat. From rampant

See **LAHAINA FIRES**, Page 2A



Sue Brimeyer, right, and Keely Hassett don protective suits to search through her fire-scorched Lahaina, Hawaii, home for belongings that survived. At top, a banana tree emerges amid the rubble of Kehaunani Ka'auwai's Lahaina home. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY KEELY HASSETT

Walz's unveiling caps full shake-up of the 2024 race

Harris debuts her pick at raucous rally in Philly

Joey Garrison
USA TODAY

PHILADELPHIA – It wasn't even three weeks ago when Trish Callahan, a Democrat from Philadelphia, said her co-workers had to check to see if she was OK.

Then President Joe Biden withdrew from the election on July 21, and Vice President Kamala took his place as the Democratic nominee.

"I was preparing myself for the worst," said Callahan, 63, who works in fundraising at Temple University.

"And as soon as Biden stepped down and endorsed Kamala, it was like I was resurrected from the dead. I donated. I volunteered."

It's been a night-and-day turnaround from the downward vibes of the Biden campaign to Harris' surge.

See **WALZ DEBUT**, Page 3A



"We have the momentum," Vice President Kamala Harris said Tuesday at her first rally with her new running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz. CHRIS LACHALL/USA TODAY NETWORK

ELECTION 2024

Why Josh Shapiro's bid fell short

The popular Pennsylvania governor looked good on the electoral map, but the war in Gaza and other political baggage were his undoing. **3A**

Bird flu is spreading, but locals seem unfazed

Trevor Hughes
USA TODAY

PLATTEVILLE, Colo. – The federal scientists in biohazard suits outside a massive – but virtually deserted – chicken farm don't need to say a word to indicate that something is very wrong.

On a normal day, the farm's driveway would be filled with trucks, some arriving with feed and others departing with cases and cartons of eggs destined for grocery stores and restaurants across the West.

But on a recent afternoon, all was quiet, except for a handful of workers drifting across the sprawling farm's complex, and the two white-suited experts with the federal government's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, their pant legs tucked in or taped carefully to their boots.

While the federal inspection workers can't say anything publicly, their presence signaled the increasing concern public health experts across the nation are displaying about an

See **BIRD FLU**, Page 4A

Gov. Pritzker wants sheriff to resign

Frustrated with response to Massey shooting death

Patrick M. Keck
USA TODAY

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker and Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton are formally calling for Sangamon County Sheriff Jack Campbell to resign, expressing frustration with how the sheriff has responded to the shooting death of Sonya Massey.

Much scrutiny has been placed on Campbell, who hired former Deputy Sean P. Grayson in May 2023 despite his two prior DUI convictions. Grayson has been charged by a grand jury with three counts of first-degree murder after shooting Massey in her own home on July 6.

Campbell “has failed to explain how he ended up hiring this deputy sheriff who has (resigned) from other departments,” the governor said at an unrelated news conference early Wednesday in Chicago. “He has failed to put forward reforms that clearly need to be made.”



Jay Nikhol is pictured holding up a sign during a protest in Springfield, Ill., after Sangamon County sheriff's deputy Sean P. Grayson shot and killed Sonya Massey.

THOMAS J. TURNEY/USA TODAY NETWORK

In a statement, Pritzker said he was calling for Campbell's resignation “so the Springfield and Sangamon County community can begin to rebuild and restore trust between the citizens and the

Pritzker said he was calling for Campbell's resignation “so the Springfield and Sangamon County community can begin to rebuild and restore trust between the citizens and the sheriff's department.”

sheriff's department.”

Pritzker said it was “outrageous” that Campbell had yet to meet with the Massey family in the month since the murder.

The sheriff, who has reiterated his intent to stay on the force, said in a statement that he has tried to meet with the family four times but was rejected each time.

Campbell said he would still like to have a meeting.

“The Sheriff's Office is willing to

modify our hiring practices in order to prevent an incident like this from occurring again. However, before changes can be made, it is important to identify the problem,” the sheriff said in the statement.

“We have used a process that we believe was consistent with statewide standards. If these standards are deficient, we would advocate a change at all necessary levels.

“I was overwhelmingly elected to lead the Sheriff's Office through both good times and bad. I am fully prepared to continue leading my office and serving the residents of Sangamon County through this difficult period, ensuring we learn from this tragedy and work toward a better future.”

Campbell also said he believes calls for his resignation are politically motivated.

“We need to unite and heal. The one responsible is in jail and will never work in law enforcement again. Calls for my resignation are nothing more than political maneuvering during a tragic event and only hurt the good citizens of Sangamon County.”

Lahaina fires

Continued from Page 1A

overdevelopment to soaring housing costs and from water shortages to the climate change that fueled the fire that day, Maui has long wrestled with a laundry list of crises.

The inferno took 102 lives, the most recent in March when 68-year-old Claudette Heermance succumbed to her injuries and brought an international spotlight to the island's struggles. A year later, there are signs of renewal emerging from the rubble, hints of Old Hawaii being reborn. But for Brimeyer, the memories are hard to get past.

She spent the night amid the embers, jumping from house to house to dodge the flames. When she found a safe spot for her grandson to rest, she assessed the remains of her burned-out neighborhood, where three generations of her family lived. Her own home, gone; her daughter's home – built on land granted to the family in the Great Mahele led by King Kamehameha III before the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy – torched.

“There was nothing left of it.”

‘There was no warning’: A scramble to escape the inferno

There was smoke in the sky earlier that day from a distant fire on the other side of town, but Brimeyer had assumed it was under control. Then it showed up on her doorstep.

“There was no warning, no sirens or anything like that,” she said. “I saw embers coming down outside the kitchen window. I went outside and I saw that the house across the street was on fire.”

That's when survival mode kicked in. A few blocks away, Brimeyer's daughter, Kehaunani Ka'auwai, was trapped as thick, black, smoke raced toward her home.

“It was a wall of smoke about six stories high,” she said.

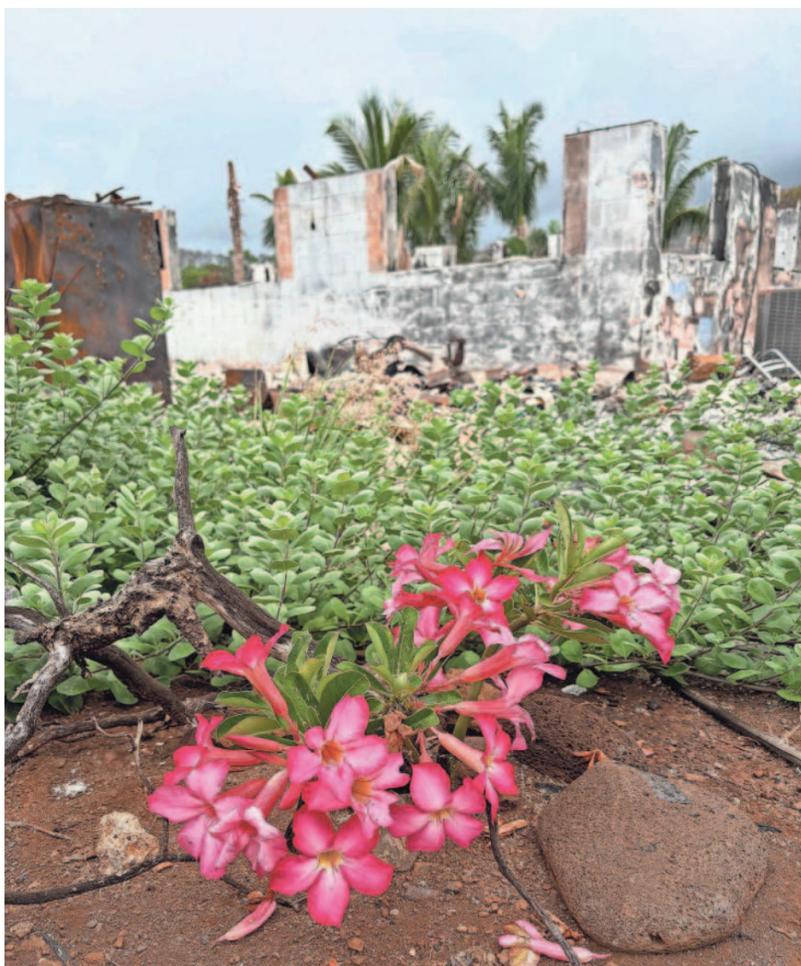
Ka'auwai needed to evacuate. She needed to find her mom. But she couldn't drive away. The power was out, and her electric fence wouldn't open. And she couldn't call for help – the phone lines were down, too, or spotty at best.

“People were running down the street in panic,” she said.

Among them was a student from the school where she teaches Hawaiian Studies, who stopped and helped force open the gate. She wanted desperately to find her mom, but the smoke was closing in. She was out of time. The traffic to get out of burning Lahaina was “jam-packed” and dangerous.

“Rocks and branches and debris were flying and hitting the cars trying to leave. Trees were in the street,” Ka'auwai recalled.

Not to mention the downed power lines and workers hastily trying to repair them while being pummeled by de-



Beauty returns to Sue Brimeyer's home around 6 months after a fire devastated Lahaina, Hawaii. PROVIDED BY SUE BRIMEYER

bris. But Ka'auwai pushed through and escaped the heart of the fire to safety further down the Maui coastline, sleeping on the beach as Lahaina burned in the distance.

‘You were just in survival mode’

Brimeyer, unable to contact her daughter, quickly put a shirt on her grandson Kaponu, who is nonverbal, and guided him from house to house, seeking shelter from the ash and smoke as fire consumed home after home around them.

When the winds died down, slowing the fire's spread, Brimeyer found a pocket of safety on the lawn outside the Lahaina Hongwanji Mission. As Kaponu rested, she looked across the street for her house.

Except it wasn't there.

“Everything was gone. All the houses were gone. All the churches were gone. As far as I could see, it was nothing. It was just gone,” Brimeyer said. “Saw most of my neighbors' homes burnt down and a body on the ground next to my neighbor's walkway.”

She didn't have time to mourn amid the ruins.

“It was kind of numbing. I couldn't react to it. You just couldn't react. You couldn't have emotions. You were just in

survival mode.”

It wasn't until the next morning that Brimeyer saw and waved down a county worker passing by in a truck. He was stunned to see the grandmother and grandson in the rubble. She soon reunited with her daughter outside the burn zone.

“She was crying and I was crying,” Brimeyer said. “She thought we had gone in the fire – she thought we were gone.”

Ka'auwai couldn't imagine enduring the night in the center of the inferno.

“I just thought she was amazing how she found pockets of safety for her and Kaponu – she just pushed through to find safety,” Ka'auwai said. “I am just so glad she didn't just say OK I'm done. It was unbelievable.”

\$6 billion in damage: Generations of Hawaiian history up in flames

The Lahaina inferno destroyed or damaged more than 2,200 structures and caused an estimated \$6 billion in damage.

Many historic Native Hawaiian sites and artifacts were destroyed. Among them, Waiola Church, the final resting place of Keopuolani, the highest-ranking wife of King Kamehameha the Great who united the Hawaiian Islands into

one kingdom. The church was known as the site of the start of Christianity in Hawaii in the early 1800s.

Ka'auwai said generations of homes were lost in an instant.

“My house went from a beautiful one-story family home to 5 inches of ash,” she said. “You can't fathom the thought that everything is gone.”

The hardest possessions for Ka'auwai to lose were deeply rooted in her Native Hawaiian culture.

A collection of rare Hawaiian books about Old Hawaii that belonged to her grandmother was lost in the flames. Hula implements she had since she was a child were gone. Her cherished poi board was burned to ashes.

Brimeyer was able to salvage a Hawaiian bracelet from the ashes of her home, a wedding gift from her late husband Gary whom she credits for her survival that day.

Optimism, history spring from the rubble in the Lahaina burn zone

Ka'auwai's son now patrols the burn zone every day, working with Truth Excavation to clear debris and restore the land he grew up on.

Like his mother and grandmother, Keoni Hassett lost his home in the fire. One of more than 3,000 displaced residents, he's been frustrated by a lack of government support and tedious requirements to get financial aid and housing. A recent survey published by the Hawaii State Rural Health Association found more than two-thirds of the survivors have struggled to buy groceries and housing stability remains an issue on the island.

“There's residents that are camping on the beach or living in their cars,” Hassett said.

But he's optimistic about the island's future as reconstruction gets underway and he sees life re-emerge. Charred plants are sprouting new growth, and signs are appearing of the wetlands endemic to the area before it was heavily developed.

“As we're pulling up concrete, all these springs with water – fresh water – are bubbling up that had foundations poured right on top of,” Hassett said. “We're going to have springs in Lahaina again like the 1800s.”

Hassett is grateful his grandmother survived the harrowing ordeal.

“The fire went right over them and they didn't get burned,” Hassett said. “It's baffling. She's got someone watching over her.”

Brimeyer purchased a home in Kihei after the fires but aims to soon return to Lahaina. Plans to rebuild her home are already in the works.

“Lahaina means a lot to us – my whole family,” she said. “I love Lahaina. It will always be my home.”

Ashley Lewis is a deputy managing editor at USA TODAY and is Native Hawaiian-born and raised on the island of Maui. She has known Brimeyer's family since childhood.

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How Shapiro's past shaped VP bid

Pa. governor had some baggage

Matthew Rink, Michael Collins and Joey Garrison
USA TODAY

PHILADELPHIA – Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro bounded onto the stage Tuesday evening, energetic, charismatic and clearly at home.

It was a glimpse of what might have been.

Shapiro swallowed whatever disappointment he may have felt in losing out on becoming Vice President Kamala Harris' running mate. Instead he made himself the hype man for Democratic vice presidential nominee and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, whom Harris had asked just hours earlier to join her on the ticket.

"I love you, Philly – and you know what else I love? I love being your governor!" Shapiro said to deafening cheers.

For days, it had appeared that Shapiro would end up as Harris' running mate. The choice came down to him and Walz. Harris' decision stunned many given Shapiro's credentials: He's a popular governor of a state that could determine the election.

But Shapiro, 51, also carried considerable baggage that would have made him a risky choice.

Shapiro, who is Jewish, has been one of the most steadfast Democratic supporters of Israel in the war in the Gaza Strip. He argues that Israel has a right to defend itself against Hamas – infuriating the party's progressives as well as Arab Americans and Muslims.

Had Harris chosen him, Shapiro would have been the second practicing Jew to run for vice president, behind the late Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman. U.S. voters have never elected a Jewish president or vice president.

'Family and faith ground me'

Shapiro's faith has been central to his life and political career from an early age. He attended Jewish schools. As a child, with the help of his mother, Shapiro started a letter-writing program to raise awareness about "refuseniks," Soviet Jews who were refused permission to emigrate in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Shapiro's pen pal Avi traveled to America to attend Shapiro's bar mitzvah. Avi's family was granted asylum in Israel soon after.

During his 2022 gubernatorial bid, Shapiro didn't shy away from his faith –



Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro speaks during a rally held by Vice President Kamala Harris at Temple University in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

CHRIS LACHALL/USA TODAY NETWORK

and neither did his opponent, state Sen. Doug Mastriano, a self-described Christian nationalist. In his first campaign TV ad, Shapiro said that no matter where he starts his day, "I make it home Friday night for Sabbath dinner," which he celebrates with his wife and four children every week.

Mastriano, speaking to supporters, said Shapiro harbored "disdain for people like us," because he "grew up in a privileged neighborhood, attended one of the most privileged schools in the nation as a young man ... sending his four kids to the same privileged, exclusive, elite school."

Shapiro, however, turned Mastriano's extremist views against him, criticizing him for his ties to other Christian nationalists, including Andrew Torba, founder of the conservative social media platform Gab.

Israel's war with Hamas

Shapiro has been critical of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, calling him "one of the worst leaders of all time."

But he has also refrained from calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Gaza war. He made references to the Ku Klux Klan in discussing pro-Palestinian protesters and raised questions about his support for free speech in calling for the firing for the University of Pennsylvania president over anti-Israel campus protests.

Like Harris, Shapiro is a former state attorney general, but he has been governor for less than two years, has no experience on the federal level and lacks military bona fides.

Over the weekend, he was forced to defend an essay he wrote for his college newspaper in which he suggested that Palestinians were "too battle-minded" to achieve a two-state solution in the Middle East. Shapiro said his views have evolved in the three decades since; critics called the remarks racist.

Some Shapiro defenders have said that the governor's position on Israel differs little from that of other Democratic lawmakers and that criticism of him is antisemitic.

"There's a lot of important and constructive debate and criticism that should happen around his policies or anyone else's policies" around Israel or campus protests, said Amy Spitalnick, CEO of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. But "if it's only the Jewish candidate that is being singled out with terms like 'Genocide Josh,' then that is deeply problematic."

Other factors also may have kept

Shapiro off the presidential ticket.

"There may have been an experience factor," said Robert Speel, professor of political science at Penn State. Like Harris, Shapiro is a former state attorney general, but he has been governor for less than two years, has no experience on the federal level and lacks military bona fides.

Speel also cited Shapiro's support for school vouchers, which are not particularly popular with liberals.

In addition, haunting Shapiro were questions about what he knew and when he knew it about sexual harassment claims involving a longtime ally.

Last fall, Shapiro's office settled for \$295,000 a claim that Mike Vereb, his secretary of legislative affairs, had made numerous sexual advances toward a subordinate, as well as lewd comments about the subordinate, other female staffers and a female state senator, The Philadelphia Inquirer reported.

Vereb resigned weeks later. Shapiro has been peppered with questions about why Vereb was allowed to remain in his job for months after the allegations were lodged. The settlement included a nondisclosure agreement that prohibits parties from commenting.

A 'bittersweet' moment

At the campaign rally in Philadelphia, Marc Seide, a 34-year-old from Philadelphia, said he believes Walz "balances out" the ticket and that Shapiro's opposition from progressives might have posed too many challenges.

"I'm really excited to see how this goes," Seide said. "To see that energy out here in the crowd – it's tremendous."

Robin Reid, 63, of Philadelphia, said she had been rooting for Shapiro to become Harris' running mate "because he's from Pennsylvania, and he's just relatable. I've never heard of Tim Walz."

"But at the same time," she said, "we were afraid of losing Josh Shapiro, so it's kind of bittersweet."

From the stage, Shapiro heaped praise on Walz, calling him "a dear friend" and "a great patriot" and urging the crowd "to give him a whole lot of love."

He doubled down on defending his Jewish faith – and even appeared to be firing back at detractors who dubbed him "Genocide Josh."

"I lean on my family, and I lean on my faith, which calls me to serve," Shapiro said. "And I am proud of my faith."

Michael Collins and Joey Garrison report for USA TODAY. Matthew Rink reports for the Erie Times-News. Contributing: Riley Beggin, USA TODAY

Walz debut

Continued from Page 1A

And no scene captured the drastic shake-up as vividly as Harris' raucous rally in Philadelphia Tuesday night debuting her running-mate pick of Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz. Callahan was among the 14,000 supporters in attendance, the largest crowd of the still-young Harris campaign.

"It's been a bit of a whirlwind," Harris said after taking the stage, before informing the crowd that she officially secured the Democratic nomination Monday night after a virtual roll call vote of Democratic National Committee delegates.

"Now we have work to do. We need to move to the general election and win that. And we also need to level set," Harris added. "We are the underdogs in this race, but we have the momentum, and I know exactly what we are up against."

Waiting for Harris to come out, the boisterous crowd waved back and forth to rap songs and R&B classics like "Dancing in the Street" and "My Girl." When Harris and Walz finally arrived, the response was thunderous. It was nothing like the low-key Biden rallies of a month ago.

Harris ignited a roar from her fans when she told them that the United States won't return to the politics of former President Donald Trump.

"We're not going back!" the crowd chanted in response.

Walz rips into Trump

Harris has erased Trump's polling lead and raised a mountain of campaign cash since her candidacy began. Another \$20 million came in Tuesday following her announcement of Walz as her running-mate, the campaign said.

In picking Walz, Harris opted for a messenger for the middle class in the Midwest over the electoral-map consideration that made Pennsylvania Gov.

Josh Shapiro an appealing option. The Harris campaign thinks the plain-spoken, folksy Walz – who coined the "weird" attack line targeting Trump – can appeal to white working-class voters who have increasingly left the Democratic Party.

Introducing her running-mate, Harris repeatedly referred to "Coach Walz," a nod to his time as a high school social studies teacher and football coach. Walz is also a gun owner who supports gun restrictions, Harris noted, and a 24-year veteran of the National Guard.

"He's the kind of person who makes people feel like they belong, and then inspires them to dream big," Harris said. "And that's the kind of vice president he will be, and that's the kind of vice president America deserves."

Walz wasted little time in his remarks ripping into Trump, who he said "doesn't know the first thing about service." Of Trump's running mate JD Vance, Walz said, "I've got to tell you: I can't wait to debate the guy."

And in perhaps the biggest ovation of the night, Walz said: "Make no mistake, violent crime was up under Donald Trump. That's not even counting the crimes he committed."

The line was met with chants of, "Lock him up!"

A united front for Democrats

The site of Philadelphia as the first in a series of battleground stops this week for the Harris-Walz ticket made for what could have been an awkward moment with Shapiro introducing the new duo. Shapiro, who was also in the running for Harris' running mate, was passed over for Walz.

But Shapiro instead made an impassioned case for Harris and Walz and sought to make clear he will work to deliver Harris Pennsylvania and its 19 electoral votes.

"I'm going to be working my tail off to make sure we make Kamala Harris and Tim Walz the next leaders of the United States of America," Shapiro said, prais-



Vice President Kamala Harris and her running mate Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz react the crowd at Tuesday's campaign rally in Philadelphia, flanked by their spouses, Doug Emhoff and Gwen Walz. ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES

ing Walz's now-famous attack line.

"Tim Walz in his beautiful Midwestern, plain spoken way, he summed up JD Vance the best: He's a weirdo," Shapiro said, prompting the crowd to shout back, "He's a weirdo!"

The Jewish governor faced resistance from some progressives over his support for Israel in the Israel-Hamas war and his opposition to campus protesters calling for a cease-fire. He seemed to address the backlash in his remarks. "I lean on my family and I lean on my faith, which calls me to serve – and I am proud of my faith."

Getting to know him

Despite the unmistakable enthusiasm on display Tuesday, some Harris supporters in the crowd confessed they knew little about Walz, who served in Congress before becoming governor,

and had hoped Shapiro would be her pick.

"I actually don't know anything about her running mate, but I will be doing some research so that I can get ready to talk to people about making sure that we get Harris," said Terry Moragne-Macon, a 75-year-old retiree. "I'm looking forward to the first African American female president of the United States."

Other supporters appreciated the selection. Marc Seide, a 34-year-old web designer from Philadelphia, said he believes Walz "balances out" the ticket and believes Shapiro's opposition from progressives might have posed too many challenges.

"This is my first campaign event of the year, and I'm excited. I'm really excited to see how this goes," Seide said. "To go from Biden to Harris and to see that energy out here in the crowd – it's tremendous."

Mosquito season taking off as 7th person dies of West Nile

Eduardo Cuevas
USA TODAY

A Dallas woman has died from West Nile virus, local health officials announced.

Less than a week ago, a woman in her 50s was identified as Dallas County's sixth person with West Nile virus, Christian Grisales, spokesperson for the Dallas County Health and Human Services, told USA TODAY. On Tuesday, health officials announced she had become the county's first West Nile death this year, at the start of the season when cases begin appearing when people get bit by infected mosquitoes.

West Nile is the leading cause of mosquito-borne disease in the continental U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nationwide, preliminary reports submitted to the CDC show at least seven people have died from West Nile in 2024.

The Dallas woman, who had underlying health conditions, was diagnosed with West Nile neuroinvasive disease, a severe form of infection that can produce meningitis, encephalitis or paralysis, or a combination of these illnesses, county health officials said.

"This heartbreaking tragedy underscores the critical importance of safeguarding against mosquito bites, which can transmit several diseases including (West Nile virus)," Dr. Philip Huang, director of Dallas County Health and Human Services, said in a statement.

In Dallas County, the number of mosquito pools harboring West Nile is notably high this year, Grisales said. The woman died in North Dallas, where at least three people had been infected with West Nile, county data showed.



Since its introduction to the United States in 1999, the West Nile virus has infected more than 59,000 Americans and been responsible for more than 2,500 deaths. GETTY IMAGES

Texas health officials confirmed the region's first human case of West Nile in early July, and they worried that recent storms would create habitats of standing water for infected mosquitoes to thrive. As of Tuesday, officials said, two people in the state had died from West Nile this year. A California man and an Oklahoma resident also died from the virus in July.

Across the U.S., 103 people in 26 states have contracted West Nile virus this year, CDC data shows. Of those, 68 people have contracted the rare, neuroinvasive form of the disease. The seven reported deaths in the U.S. in 2024 are about on par with the number of reported deaths last summer at this time, Kate Fowlie, a CDC spokesperson, said in an email. Last year, 182 people died of the disease and more than 2,500 became infected with the virus.

Historic data from the CDC shows there have been more than 59,000 cases and nearly 3,000 deaths since 1999, when West Nile was first introduced in the U.S.

Fowlie added this is the season when

West Nile cases increase. Early cases generally appear in the summer, and deaths usually continue into fall.

West Nile symptoms, prevention

The incubation period after a person becomes infected with West Nile usually ranges from two days to two weeks. Though most people don't develop symptoms, about 1 in 5 infected people develop a fever and other symptoms, such as headache, body ache, vomiting, diarrhea and rash, the CDC said. About 1 in 150 people develop serious illness that can have long-term neurologic effects. About 10% of cases involving the neuroinvasive form of disease become fatal, according to the CDC. There is no vaccine against West Nile.

Case counts fluctuate in part because of periodic epidemics, the CDC said. Officials also project that a warming planet has fostered more environments for West Nile to fester as mosquitoes become infected and pass the disease on to people.

Dallas County health officials urged people to follow the "Four Ds" to protect themselves when outside.

- **DEET:** Use insect repellents with DEET or other ingredients approved by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- **Dress:** Wear long, loose and light-colored clothing to cover the skin.
- **Drain:** To prevent mosquito breeding, remove standing water around your home or work.
- **Dusk to dawn:** Limit time outdoors at peak mosquito hours.

Indoors, the CDC recommends using window screens or air conditioning whenever possible.

Pesticide

Continued from Page 1A

assessment of the pesticide, concluding it was linked to health risks, especially for pregnant women, even when people exposed to it were using personal protective equipment. The agency said pregnant women may have been exposed to levels of DCPA up to 20 times greater than the level the EPA estimates is safe for fetuses.

Although the manufacturer AMVAC proposed changes, the EPA said those changes did not "adequately address" the serious health risks for people who work with and around DCPA.

Mily Treviño Saucedo, executive director of Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, an organization representing women farmworkers, said the group is pleased to see the EPA make this historic decision as a "great first step" to protecting farmworkers.

"EPA knew that DCPA was harming farmworkers and their children, and we're glad that EPA recognized that that harm to this population group required immediate suspension or removal of this toxic pesticide," said Sylvia Wu, an attorney with the Center for Food Safety, which has advocated for the EPA to stop the use of DCPA.

"EPA knew that DCPA was harming farmworkers and their children, and we're glad that EPA recognized that that harm to this population group required immediate suspension or removal of this toxic pesticide."

Sylvia Wu
Attorney with the Center for Food Safety

Bird flu

Continued from Page 1A

outbreak of "Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza" – bird flu – in this rural farming community about 40 miles northeast of Denver.

Gov. Jared Polis has declared a disaster emergency and released \$3.5 million in funding for oversight, testing and safety equipment, federal officials have repeatedly briefed reporters, and workers have once again killed millions of chickens to slow the spread.

But while state and federal officials react with extreme caution to the virus and its dangerous potential, neighbors seem unconcerned.

"I know this all affects the farmers but it hasn't affected us," said Gail Balcom, 63, as she sat outside the Silver Spur bar, a few miles from one of the affected poultry farms.

Mostly, she was grateful that someone else was responsible for killing all those chickens. "I wouldn't want to do that job," she said.

The outbreak is having a local impact, though. The Southeast Weld County Fair, scheduled to start on Thursday, is switching to an online photo-only poultry competition, to avoid bringing lots of chickens together. State officials are encouraging other county fairs and livestock events to be extra vigilant in showing and mingling cows and other animals.

The state veterinarian has also restricted the movement of poultry and eggs in large portions of Weld County. Federal officials are also requiring any lactating cow being transported across state lines to be tested for avian flu unless they are headed directly to slaughter.

The situation echoes a similar outbreak in 2022, but this new strain appears to have infected Weld County poultry flocks after first infecting nearby dairy herds, along with 10 farmworkers. State officials said they don't yet know how it spread between the farms.

The risks to people

So far, the cows and people have gotten only mildly ill. The current version of the virus slows milk production in cows and gives people respiratory symptoms and/or pink eye.

Experts say the biggest risk is that a person infected with seasonal flu could also catch avian flu, with the two viruses exchanging genetic material and creating something newly terrifying.

"Bird flus in particular tend to make everybody a little more nervous," said Dr. Michelle Barron, UCHealth's senior medical director of infection prevention and control, and a professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. UCHealth serves Colorado, along with



A farm in rural Weld County, Colo., has seen an outbreak of avian flu in dairy cows, chickens and farmworkers. TREVOR HUGHES/USA TODAY

parts of Wyoming and Nebraska.

"Right now, it's pretty mild, but flu viruses in general love to mutate and change," Barron added. "There's no human-to-human spread that we know of, but that's the concern."

None of the sickened farmworkers required hospitalization, officials said. But federal and state experts are closely monitoring, and Polis last month ordered commercial dairies to test milk weekly for signs of the virus.

Neither the federal officials on-site nor state officials would discuss whether this specific chicken farm was affected by the outbreak, with state officials citing a Colorado law banning public dissemination of that information.

Colorado has more than 100 dairies and about 200,000 dairy cows, the vast majority concentrated in large operations in Weld County, which is also home to numerous poultry farms. The county is also an important habitat for migratory birds.

Federal officials say wild birds can carry a mild infection of the virus and pass it on to domesticated chickens and turkeys, where it can be 90% lethal. The infection has also killed bald eagles, foxes, skunks and at least one bear in Colorado. In an Aug. 2 announcement, Colorado officials said wild birds are not responsible for the current outbreak.

To help slow the spread, Colorado farmworkers this year have killed 3.5 million farm chickens, in addition to killing more than 6 million birds from 2022 to 2023 during what was then considered the largest foreign animal disease outbreak in state history. Typically, Colorado farms produce about 1.5 billion eggs annually, with about 5 million chickens statewide.

Because government officials are withholding the specific locations of the outbreaks, it's not possible to judge whether the same farms are being reinfected repeatedly or to examine the eco-

nomie impact the cullings and closures have on individual workers.

Weld County – physically bigger than the states of Delaware and Rhode Island combined – depends heavily on its agricultural production, along with oil and gas extraction.

In a written statement responding to USA TODAY, state agriculture officials said they are still trying to assess the economic impact of the outbreak. They said workers from 30 farms have been given protective equipment and said testing is available to anyone with symptoms who was exposed to either infected animals or people.

Federal public health experts say the majority of the Colorado farmworkers who got sick were likely infected when their protective gear slipped as they worked in 100-plus degree heat, grabbing and suffocating the chickens by stuffing them, a handful at a time, into enclosures that were then filled with carbon dioxide.

Why is bird flu in Colorado?

Nationally, bird flu infections in cattle have dropped significantly except in Colorado, where about 20 of the infected herds have been detected, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Federal officials say Colorado might be an outlier because it's testing more often than other states, but also suggest Weld County's "quirk of history and geography" may also be playing a role.

While Colorado has fewer dairy farms than other big milk-producing states, they're mostly clustered in Weld County, alongside the poultry farms and migratory bird pathways.

"They are all in very close proximity to one another, and so there is a lot of sharing of equipment, a lot of sharing of personnel and a lot of movement on and off farms to adjacent farms," Dr. Eric Deeble, the USDA's deputy under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs told reporters on a recent call.

Deeble, a veterinarian, said Colorado should be commended for the cooperation among producers, and state and federal regulators and health experts.

"We're seeing a relatively high rate of testing and getting really good answers and really good insight into the pattern of this disease," Deeble said.

Warning: Fumigated

At the Weld County chicken farm, a handful of workers occasionally crossed the graveled yard among the dozens of long, yellow single-story buildings where chickens are raised and lay eggs.

The ventilation fans were silent, and buildings bore newly added temporary signs in both English and Spanish, warning they had been fumigated with formaldehyde, a common poultry disinfectant.

The buildings lack windows so light

can be used to trick hens into thinking it's always springtime, making them lay more. A job posting for egg handlers at the farm offers pay of about \$20 an hour, with bilingual skills encouraged.

Barron, the infection control expert, said she hopes state and federal officials are working hard to ensure that farm workers and their families are being properly screened for the virus.

Clinicians might not test someone with mild respiratory symptoms if they lack direct contact with animals, she said, especially because there are no commercially available tests and everything has to be sent to a state lab. Positive results are then confirmed at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

Barron said the COVID-19 pandemic drove home for her the challenges of protecting workers who don't speak English well or who may not be legally employed, which can be the case at farms in Weld County. She said workers at risk of firing or deportation may be reluctant to speak up, especially if they don't feel particularly sick.

Health authorities must also ensure that they are properly explaining to workers what's going on, she said, such as how cows could be infected with bird flu, or why federal officials are wearing protective garments but farmworkers aren't.

"They don't ask because they don't want to be in trouble," Barron said. "You think about it differently when you don't have much money or security in that position."

In a statement, state agriculture officials said a bilingual outreach employee has spoken with 46 farmworkers and does not collect personal information from those workers. The state also declined to say whether any farms have refused to participate in the testing and monitoring, other than to say it has received "good" compliance.

"Close coordination and communication between all partners is critical for effective response to complex outbreaks," the statement from the Colorado Department of Agriculture said. The department said no one was available for an interview over a week.

Outside the Silver Spur bar, Balcom and her friends chatted as cigarette smoke drifted into the sky. The group said they know several workers from farms with infections, but no one seemed to be talking about it much. They bemoaned the loss of fundraising egg sales for the high school's Future Farmers of America, and worried about what the chicken cull might do to egg prices again.

Still, they said there's little concern around the county.

"I don't see anybody glowing or anything like that," Katrina Windhorst, 61, said with a laugh. The authorities, she said, "are making a mountain out of a molehill."

Bush 2nd 'Squad' member to lose

Race was 2nd-most expensive in US history

Karissa Waddick
USA TODAY

Rep. Cori Bush, D-Mo., suffered a bruising defeat in her St. Louis district on Tuesday night, becoming the second member of the progressive group of House lawmakers known as "the Squad" to lose a Democratic primary to a more moderate opponent this year.

Bush, a second-term lawmaker, was bested in the Democratic race for Missouri's 1st District by St. Louis prosecuting attorney Wesley Bell, who was backed by a major pro-Israel group.

The race was the second-most expensive House primary in U.S. history, taking a back seat only to the contest earlier this year for Rep. Jamaal Bowman's Bronx-area seat, according to the group AdImpact.

Bell sought to frame Bush as out of touch with her constituents throughout the monthslong race and highlighted the multiple investigations into her campaign finances. But Bush's criticism of the Israeli government, more than any other factor, came to define the campaign.

A registered nurse and activist, Bush was the first member of Congress to call for a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, nine days after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel. Since then, she has remained a steadfast critic of Israel's handling of the war and has accused Israeli officials of committing genocide.

The United Democracy Project, a super PAC aligned with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, poured more than \$8 million into the contest to boost Bell's campaign to replace Bush in the halls of Congress.

Justice Democrats, a PAC that has opposed U.S. aid to Israel, meanwhile, said it spent more than \$2 million in support of Bush.

The St. Louis primary isn't the first race in which AIPAC has played a role in 2024. The group has put its weight behind an array of candidates challenging some of the most vocal Democratic lawmakers criticizing Israel's handling of the war in Gaza.

In July, Bowman, Bush's fellow Squad member, lost the Democratic primary in his district to a more moderate candidate whose campaign was aided by outside funding. The United Democracy Project spent more than \$7 million in that race.

Bowman, in a fundraising call Monday night, told Bush that he knew exactly what she was experiencing and said she was a "powerful truth teller."

Several other members of the Squad — the group of progressive lawmakers who came to prominence during former President Donald Trump's term — have managed to fend off similar challenges this year. Among them: Rep. Summer Lee, D-Pa., and Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich.

Others in the group still have a difficult race ahead this year. Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., faces a tough primary challenge from former Minneapolis City Council member Don Samuels next week.



Congresswoman Cori Bush, D-Mo., along with union members call for a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas while at a news conference at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 14, 2023.

JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY NETWORK

More than 200 aftershocks reported in Southern Calif.

Charles Ventura, James Ward and Elizabeth Weise
USA TODAY

LOS ANGELES — There have been more than 277 aftershocks to Tuesday's magnitude 5.2 earthquake in Southern California, two with a magnitude 4.0 or greater — but the likelihood of another, larger shock is still low, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

"Seeing a lot of these smaller events that slow over time is very normal," said Ole Kaven, a research geophysicist with USGS.

A magnitude 5.2 earthquake and a swarm of aftershocks in farmland almost 90 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles didn't do much damage but did send the Los Angeles Fire Department's 106 stations into earthquake mode, triggering a land, sea and air survey.

The first quake struck at 9:09 p.m. PDT Tuesday as the Los Angeles Dodgers game was in its seventh inning. While many people reported feeling the earthquake there was no panic and no significant concern, despite the initial shake being followed by several dozen smaller aftershocks that rocked the San Joaquin Valley, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

The swarm of earthquakes was on an unknown fault that's about 20 to 30 miles west of the San Andreas fault, Kaven said. "It's a known area for earthquakes."

The temblor was enough to set off the state's Earthquake Warning system several seconds before the earthquake hit, sending a loud, strident warning tone to people who had installed the MyShake app on their phones.

While a magnitude 5.2 earthquake might sound big, quakes between 2.5 and 5.4 typically result in minor or no damage, as did this one.

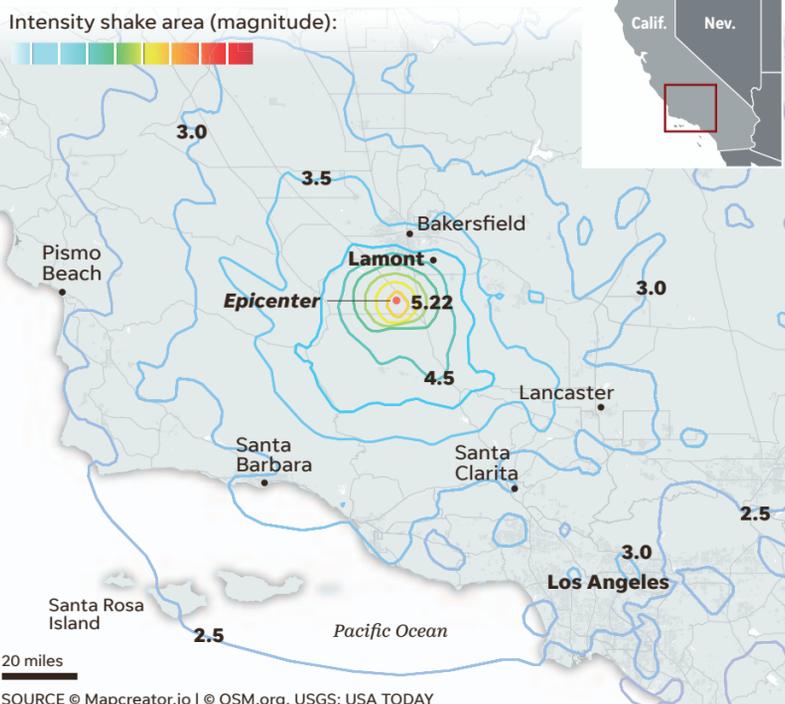
Renowned seismologist Dr. Lucy Jones, who changed how people prepare for earthquakes, took to social media late Tuesday and said that the quake's epicenter was near the White Wolf fault that produced the enormous 1952 rattler but that "it did not appear to be on that fault."

The biggest earthquakes in recorded California history

California's largest recorded earthquakes since 1800, ranked by magnitude, according to the California Department of Conservation.

- **7.9:** Jan. 9, 1857, in Fort Tejon. Two killed; created a 220-mile surface scar.
- **7.8:** April 18, 1906, in San Francisco.

Epicenter of California earthquake



Possibly 3,000 killed; 225,000 displaced.

- **7.4:** March 26, 1872, in Owens Valley. 27 killed; three aftershocks of greater than magnitude 6.

- **7.4:** Nov. 8, 1980, just west of Eureka. Injured 6; \$2 million in damage.

- **7.3:** July 21, 1952, in Kern County. 12 killed; three magnitude 6-plus aftershocks in five days.

- **7.3:** June 28, 1992, in Landers. One killed; 400 injured; \$9.1 million in damage.

- **7.2:** Jan. 22, 1923, in Mendocino. Damaged homes in several towns.

- **7.2:** April 25, 1992, in Cape Mendocino. 356 injuries; \$48.3 million in damage.

- **7.1:** Nov. 4, 1927, southwest of Lompoc. No major injuries, slight damage in two counties.

- **7.1:** Oct. 16, 1999, in Ludlow. Minimal damage due to remote location.

What am I supposed to do during an earthquake?

It depends on where you are during the event.

Here's what to do in the following situations, according to Ready.gov:

- Turn your face down and cover your head and neck with a pillow if you're in bed.
- If you are outside, stay outdoors

and away from buildings.

- If you are inside, stay. Avoid doorways and do not run outside.

To protect yourself during an earthquake, drop down to your hands and knees and hold onto something sturdy. Cover your head and neck with your arms and crawl underneath a sturdy table or desk to shelter.

If that's not available to you, crawl next to an interior wall to get away from windows. If you are under a table or desk, hold onto it with one hand so that if it moves, you can move with it.

What if I'm driving?

Slow down and pull over as soon as it's safe, according to the California Highway Patrol. Remain in the vehicle with your seat belt fastened, engine off, and parking brake set. Once the shaking stops, check your vehicle for damage and its occupants for injuries. Only begin driving when it is safe to do so. Once you can start moving again, do so slowly and cautiously, avoiding any areas of the road that appear to be damaged or obstructed, and continue to avoid bridges and ramps.

Contributing: Olivia Munson and Paris Barraza, USA TODAY.

Charles Ventura and Elizabeth Weise report for USA TODAY; James Ward reports for the Palm Springs Desert Sun.

Ancient 'hobbits' smaller than first thought

Elizabeth Weise
USA TODAY

Scientists studying ancient cousins of humans have big news: A hobbit-like species was even smaller than previously thought.

Fossils of Homo floresiensis (dubbed "hobbits" for their resemblance to the fictional Middle-earth dwellers in the "Lord of the Rings" books) were first discovered in 2003. Those fossils showed they lived 50,000 to 100,000 years ago on the Indonesian island of Flores, east of Bali.

Now, even older fossils from 700,000 years ago show that an early human species was likely about 2½ inches smaller than their later ancestors. Both are believed to have evolved from an older, taller species called Homo erectus.

The archaic humans, a now-extinct cousin to modern humans, were slightly shorter than the average human 4-year-old. The later hobbits were believed to be about 3 feet 6 inches tall. The older fossils show their predecessors could have been as short as 3 feet 3 inches.

"With this discovery, we found they were even smaller than we thought, so it was quite shocking to me," said Yousuke Kaifu, a professor of anthropology at the University of Tokyo and first author of the paper, published Tuesday in the journal Nature Communications.

The original research, from a team of Indonesian and Australian archeologists, was first published in 2004 and stunned the world. It was led by renowned Australian archeologist Michael John Morwood.

Those first fossils were found in Liang Bua cave. The much older fossils Kaifu and others have studied came from another site on the island called

Mata Menge and help confirm research first published in 2016 showing the older hobbits could have been even shorter than the later ones.

This week's paper is based on fragments of an upper arm bone and teeth from the same areas of Mata Menge, which Kaifu's Japanese-Australian team has been studying carefully ever since.

"It took a long time to have data that was convincing," he said.

'Strange evolution' created hobbits

Kaifu and others believe this particular species of human evolved from Homo erectus, another extinct human species that lived about 2 million years ago. Homo erectus means "upright human" because the species walked upright.

"We know Homo erectus was on the island of Java 1.1 million years ago. Somehow they crossed the ocean and reached these islands and became isolated — and then they experienced a strange evolution," Kaifu said.

Sometime between 1.1 million years ago and 600,000 years ago, the Homo erectus people on the island of Flores evolved into hobbits. Then they maintained their body size and survived for at least 500,000 years.

The nearest island is about 6 miles across treacherous seas, so how they got there isn't known.

As to where they went, no one knows. They seem to have vanished from the island about 50,000 years ago. That might or might not, have been around the time modern-day humans first arrived.

One thing that isn't mysterious: why the early cousins of humans shrunk as they inhabited the island of Flores.

It's well-documented that animals on islands lacking predators can very quickly evolve much smaller forms, a process called phyletic dwarfism. It has been known to happen with deer, cattle, elephants, hippopotami and other species. It can also happen quickly.

In one example that started in 1871, feral cattle on Amsterdam Island in the southern Indian Ocean shrank to about three-quarters of their original body size in slightly more than a century.

In the case of the hobbits, Kaifu believes they quickly evolved to be smaller because there was nothing on the island that would have specifically hunted them.

"Without predators, there's no advantage to being large because you don't have to fight anything off," he said. "To maintain a larger body size you have to eat a lot; it takes more time to grow and produce offspring. So smaller body size is more productive."

Though the hobbits didn't face predators, they still had to deal with the island's Komodo dragons and giant stork-like birds that stood almost 6 feet tall. "These were a big stress for them — they must have been intelligent," Kaifu said.

Small-brained as they were, the hobbits used stone tools and appear to have hunted some of the other dwarf animals on the island, including a mini elephant species called dwarf stegodons about the size of modern buffalo. The hobbits may also have used fire.

The hobbits aren't the only now-extinct tiny cousins to humans. In 2019, archeologists announced the discovery of another diminutive human species whose fossils were found in Callao Cave on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. Called Homo luzonensis, the species lived on the island 50,000 to 76,000 years ago.

Mitchell died after held down, beaten

Four Hyatt Regency workers face charges

Chris Ramirez

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK

MILWAUKEE – Four Hyatt Regency workers face charges in the death of D’Vontaye Mitchell, a Black man who was punched and beaten with a broom during a confrontation with the four men, a criminal complaint says.

Milwaukee County prosecutors on Tuesday filed charges against four men who they believe played a role in the incident.

Todd Alan Erickson, 60; Brandon La-Daniel Turner, 35; and Herbert T. Williamson, 52, all of Milwaukee, and Devin W. Johnson-Carson, 23, of South Milwaukee, each face a charge of felony murder.

The 43-year-old Mitchell died during a deadly June 30 confrontation with security at the downtown hotel, where he was held down for about nine minutes. The incident drew comparisons to the murder of George Floyd, a Black man who was killed by Minneapolis police in 2020.

“Finally,” attorney Benjamin Crump, who represents Mitchell’s family, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. “The legal team and the family are relieved the district attorney is filing charges. But we can’t be satisfied until we get a conviction.

“We’re going to keep fighting until we get full justice for this family. And we’re going to keep showing up...to make sure they don’t just get a slap on the wrist.”

Erickson and Turner were employed by the hotel as security guards. Williamson worked at the Hyatt as a bell driver door attendant. Johnson-Carson was a front desk agent. Arrest warrants were issued for them Tuesday. As of Tuesday night, none appeared to be in custody at the Milwaukee County Jail.

Mitchell’s death touched off days of protests and demonstrations during which members of Mitchell’s family and other supporters pressured Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm to bring criminal charges against the



Nayisha Mitchell, left, the sister of D’Vontaye Mitchell, and Latrisa Giles, Mitchell’s first cousin, hold a photo of Mitchell outside Brenda Giles, D’Vontaye Mitchell’s mother’s home in Milwaukee on July 24. D’Vontaye Mitchell, 43, died last month after being held facedown on the ground outside the Hyatt Regency in Milwaukee.

MIKE DE SISTI/USA TODAY NETWORK

men involved in the encounter.

One demonstration took place during the Republican National Convention outside the Hyatt, which served as a main venue for the political event.

Here’s what prosecutors believe happened that afternoon

Detectives and prosecutors have been aided in their investigation by surveillance video shot inside the hotel that recorded the incident.

According to the criminal complaint, the incident began as Mitchell ran across the lobby of the Hyatt Regency and “in what appears to be a frantic manner” into the gift shop and subsequently into a women’s bathroom. He attempted to lock himself inside with two women who were already in the bathroom.

Seconds later, a woman is seen emerging from the lavatory “in what appears to be a hurry,” the complaint said.

As she exits, Turner entered the bathroom and pulled Mitchell out, grabbing him by the shirt and escorting him down a hallway toward the Kilbourn entrance.

The struggle between Turner and Mitchell made its way into the main lob-

by. It’s there that Turner at one point backed away and punched Mitchell, knocking him to the floor, the complaint alleged.

A hotel guest, identified in the complaint only as SB, jumped in to help Turner. Turner and SB escorted and later dragged Mitchell through a set of sliding doors.

Another hotel employee, identified as TB in the complaint, is seen in the video striking Mitchell in the legs with a broom, forcing him to his knees. The complaint says Turner then punched Mitchell about six times. Some of the blows came while Mitchell was down, the document says.

Mitchell managed to get back on his feet and appeared in the video to be trying to reenter the hotel. That’s when SB, Turner, Johnson-Carson and Williamson surrounded him, blocking his way back in, according to the complaint.

Erickson arrived, then all four men tackled Mitchell in the hotel driveway, the complaint says.

Prosecutors allege Turner and Johnson-Carson punched Mitchell while taking him to the ground, and that Erickson tried to strike Mitchell with his fist, but instead kicked him in the torso.

Mitchell was held down, force was placed on his back

The complaint says the video shows Mitchell laying on the ground on his left side, holding his right arm up to guard himself from more blows. Erickson and Turner are seen trying to flip Mitchell onto his stomach, but Mitchell appears to resist.

It appears in the video Williamson and Johnson-Carter try to help Erickson and Turner in forcing Mitchell to his stomach, while also holding him down.

Investigators said in the document Turner, Erickson and Williamson put varying amounts of force on Mitchell’s back, shoulders and arms as they held him down.

They held Mitchell in that position for roughly eight or nine minutes until police and emergency responders arrived.

Mitchell apparently tried to break free from the defendants’ restraint mul-

iple times, the criminal complaint said. But by then, Mitchell had stopped showing movement or resistance or other signs of life.

A detective described Mitchell’s behavior that day in the complaint as “erratic and confusing,” and that he engaged in “continuous physical resistance against the men.” He also noted, in the video, Mitchell “does not instigate any violence or display any obviously aggressive or threatening behavior while on the hotel premises.”

Charges come ‘36 days too late’ for Mitchell’s family

The Milwaukee County Medical Examiner recently determined Mitchell had drugs in his system and that he died from restraint asphyxia.

A metal pipe, consistent with inhaling cocaine base, was found after the confrontation in Mitchell’s left shoe, the complaint said. A medical examiner found Mitchell possessed a similar pipe made of glass, according to the document.

A copper chore boy, a cleaning pad, was located in Mitchell’s pocket. He had no cash or a wallet.

Members of Mitchell’s family said while the outpouring of support from many in the community has been a comfort, coping with losing their loved one continues to be a struggle.

“It’s about 36 days too late,” said Rendell Giles, one of Mitchell’s brothers. “There’s video. This should have happened within 24 hours.”

Still, Nayisha Mitchell said news of arrests in her brother’s death has given the family some measure of hope.

“This is a move in the right direction,” she said. “We’re going to keep standing, keep pushing and keep moving until we get what we’re looking for. And that’s for all these individuals to be convicted.”

Chisholm issued a statement late Tuesday saying the charges resulted after “an extensive review of the evidence collected by the Milwaukee Police Department, the autopsy conducted and the report produced by the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office, and information received from members of the community.”

Carolinas brace for 2nd landfall of Debby

Tropical storm gets stronger along coast

Christopher Cann

USA TODAY

As Tropical Storm Debby strengthened along the Atlantic coast on Wednesday, millions in the Carolinas braced for the system to make a second landfall, further inundating rain-soaked communities and extending widespread flooding through the Mid-Atlantic region.

Debby, which forecasters say could be the wettest landfalling hurricane ever, has drenched Florida and South Carolina in over a foot of rain, while Georgia has seen over 10 inches. The rain and flash floods forced evacuations, overwhelmed drainage systems and breached a dam in South Carolina. At least six deaths have been tied to the storm.

After pushing off the coast of Georgia on Tuesday, Debby was projected to strengthen before moving ashore along the central coast of South Carolina by Thursday morning, according to the National Weather Service. Debby could dump an additional 3 to 9 inches of rainfall – and local amounts could range as high as 25 inches in South Carolina and 15 inches in North Carolina through Friday.

“People should be prepared to seek higher ground and to know of an evacuation route and have a plan in place,” AccuWeather Meteorologist Brandon Buckingham said.

Millions of people from southeastern Georgia to eastern Virginia were under flood advisories Wednesday, while travel advisories and flood watches were in place across New York City after a night of heavy rain.

New York City, Philadelphia and Newark were soaked in 1.5 to 4 inches of rain, and there were reports of flooding in low-lying areas.

On Friday and into the weekend, Debby is expected to gain speed and push through the Northeast, dumping more rain in the region and likely leading to “considerable flash and urban flooding as well as river flooding,” the weather service said. “Debby has been meandering at a snail’s pace, but it will



Tropical storm warning signs are up along U.S. 74/76 as Tropical Storm Debby continues to move up the southeastern coast of North Carolina on Wednesday.

KEN BLEVINS/USA TODAY NETWORK

blast to the Northeast like a rocket later this week,” AccuWeather meteorologist Bernie Rayno said.

Debby made landfall as a Category 1 hurricane in the Big Bend region of Florida’s Gulf Coast on Monday morning, dumping 8 to 16 inches of rain in parts of central Florida, according to local reports. The storm has been blamed for five deaths in Florida and one near Valdosta, Georgia, Reuters reports.

North Carolina counties, towns issue voluntary evacuations

Local officials in North Carolina on Wednesday issued voluntary evacuation orders for low-lying and coastal areas as conditions from Tropical Storm Debby began picking up.

Multiple counties and beach communities, including North Carolina’s Brunswick County and Ocean Isle Beach, near the South Carolina border, have urged residents to evacuate, citing heavy rains and dangerous storm surge.

“Don’t take this storm for granted simply because it is labeled a tropical storm – there will be severe weather impacts throughout the week,” said Randy Thompson, chairman of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners, in a news release.

From Folly Beach, South Carolina, to

the coasts of North Carolina’s Ocracoke Inlet, storm surge from Debby could reach 1-3 feet if it coincides with peak high tide, according to the National Hurricane Center.

At a news conference Wednesday morning, North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said the emergency operations center was focusing on preparations for any potentially severe flooding impacts. Steps included activating 17 swift-water rescue teams and staging them along the coast and deploying more than 350 members of the North Carolina National Guard.

Streets underwater after dams breached in Georgia

The record-breaking rainfall from Tropical Storm Debby caused the breach of several dams in northern Georgia.

On Tuesday morning, local officials in Georgia’s Bulloch County, about 50 miles northwest of Savannah, urged residents near or downstream from two man-made dams to leave the area and avoid a nearby highway. The immense flooding led to evacuations in Statesboro, a city of 34,000 in Bulloch County, as over a dozen roads were closed and others were completely underwater, according to the Bulloch County Public

Safety.

Hours after dams at Simmons Pond burst, the dam at Oglesby Pond was breached, according to Bulloch County Public Safety, which warned that rushing water would cross a nearby highway and wash into neighboring ponds and lakes.

Meanwhile, in Colleton County, South Carolina, local officials warned on Tuesday afternoon that the McGrady Dam had “the potential to fail” and issued evacuation notices to residents downstream. Hours later, the county’s fire rescue department said there was “substantial flooding in the area of the dam and creek,” but that the structure was holding.

Nearly 40,000 without power in Florida amid heat advisories

Swaths of northern Florida were still without power Wednesday as intense heat bakes parts of the South.

Across the Big Bend region, over 36,000 homes and businesses were in the dark as of Wednesday morning, according to Poweroutage.us. At its peak, more than 250,000 utility customers had no power as the storm’s winds knocked over utility poles and uprooted trees.

Heat advisories were active across the Big Bend as well as South Florida, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi. In northern Florida, heat index temperatures were expected to reach 109 degrees, according to the National Weather Service, which urged people to stay out of the sun and seek out air-conditioning.

Charleston lifts curfew as Debby lingers offshore

The city of Charleston, South Carolina, on Wednesday lifted a curfew that had been in place since Monday night, when Debby first began inundating the state with torrential rain.

On Tuesday, downtown Charleston received 3.56 inches of rain, breaking the previous record of 3.46 that was set in 1992, according to the National Weather Service.

Surrounding areas in Charleston County were drenched in up to 10.5 inches of rain since Monday.

OPINION

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Why do we give Harris a pass as VP?



Ingrid Jacques
USA TODAY

I hate to admit it, but I'm kind of impressed.

The effort between Democrats and the news media to create a political star out of Kamala Harris has gone shockingly well.

After President Joe Biden finally threw in the towel last month on his presidential bid, the refurbishing campaign began in earnest.

In a couple of weeks, Harris has gone from a generally disliked, ineffective flop of a vice president to a progressive champion who has miraculously united and excited her Democratic Party just ahead of its national convention in Chicago later this month.

The momentum of her campaign increased Tuesday when she announced her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz — one person's socialism is another person's neighborliness" Walz.

(Yes, Walz really said that last week on the "White Dudes for Harris" fundraiser call.)

'What can be, unburdened by what has been'

Harris' choice of Walz indicates that she's confident enough to go with a far-left progressive from a state that's not really in play.

She has also managed to steal the spotlight from former President Donald Trump, who just weeks ago survived an assassination attempt that's become old news rather quickly.

One of Harris' favorite refrains is the phrase, "What can be, unburdened by what has been."

Perhaps she repeated it enough that it came true. The vice president sudden-



Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris enters the stage with her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, at a campaign rally in Philadelphia on Tuesday.
CHRIS LACHALL/USA TODAY NETWORK

ly seems completely unburdened by the negativity that has overshadowed her tenure in the White House.

How'd Harris pull this off?

With a lot of help.

Harris' ability to completely redefine herself in a matter of weeks seems tied to her teleprompter. Her campaign team has not let her go far from it. And for good reason.

A brief unscripted response to reporters at last week's prisoner swap celebration between the United States and Russia, that finally led to the homecoming of Americans like journalist Evan Gershkovich, is a great example.

In what should have been a simple answer to deliver, Harris said in part the following: "This is just an extraordinary testament to the importance of having a president who understands the power of diplomacy, and understands the strength that rests in understanding the significance of diplomacy and strengthening alliances."

This harkens back to what Harris is known for doing when she's off teleprompter — stringing together nonsensical word salads.

And it's why Harris has so far limited her appearances to rallies and events where she's safely on script and can control the narrative.

In a couple of weeks, Harris has gone from a generally disliked, ineffective flop of a vice president to a progressive champion.

Since becoming the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee on July 21, Harris has not held formal news conferences or interviews where she could face tough questions. And the news media hasn't put any pressure on her to do so.

Harris even skipped the National Association of Black Journalists convention last week, although she — the first Black woman and first Asian American presidential nominee of a major party — had been invited.

Criticize him all you want, but Trump also was invited and actually showed up, even though he certainly knew it wouldn't be a friendly audience (it wasn't).

Harris' limited public appearances and friendly media coverage have allowed her to create a new persona.

The vice president's unfavorability rating had spiked for much of the past year and a half (with a 17-point gap as of early July between those who had an unfavorable and favorable opinion of her). That gap has miraculously shrunk by more than 10 points since Biden dropped out.

Can Harris' honeymoon with the media last until Election Day?

I have to wonder if she can keep it up. Can the honeymoon last until Election Day? Won't voters remember what she's really like?

Ari Fleischer, former press secretary for President George W. Bush, thinks the mainstream media's distaste for Trump will push them to keep painting Harris in a positive light.

"I've been around the MSM for a long time and I've never seen them so passive," he recently observed on X. "If you thought they were in the tank for Pres. Obama, it's nothing compared now to their desire to defeat Trump and help Harris. They should be roasting Harris for hiding and refusing to do interviews. Instead, they're in on it. If it helps her win, it's more than fine with the MSM."

It wasn't that long ago that Biden finally came out of hiding and showed himself to the world at the debate with Trump in June. That didn't go so well for him, but it was revealing to say the least.

Harris was able to avoid the primaries and the vetting that comes with that process. She owes it to the American people to let us see for ourselves who she really is.

And the media should do their job and make sure she does.

Ingrid Jacques is a columnist at USA TODAY. You can contact her at ijacques@usatoday.com or on X, formerly Twitter: @Ingrid_Jacques

Walz shows 'progressive' isn't a scary word



Rex Huppke
USA TODAY

The moment that Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris chose Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz — every American's new Midwestern dad — as her running mate, MAGA began hollering: PROGRESSIVE!

It's a word that the right wields as a political slur, but the 60-year-old Walz — a military veteran and former Minnesota high school teacher and football coach — seems like the kind of person who knows bunk when he sees it.

The belief that progressive ideas are somehow outside the mainstream is simply false.

Polling has shown that when you present American voters with specific progressive policies, with no politician's name attached, those policies are broadly supported.

Specific progressive policies that American voters support

As a Data for Progress poll from March found:

- 78% of likely voters support taxing billionaires to increase Social Security benefits.
- 77% support rental and mortgage assistance for families.
- 75% support investing in clean energy technology.
- 73% support a public option that would let people buy into government-run health care.
- 71% support capping child care expenses at 7% of a family's yearly income.

These attitudes aren't new.

Going back to 2019, a CNBC survey found 75% support for government funding for child care, 60% support for raising the minimum wage, and 57% support for free state or public college tuition.

Here's another example: Republicans



Supporters cheer Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz at Tuesday's campaign rally in Philadelphia.

ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES

demonized the Affordable Care Act and declared it the dawn of socialist tyranny — and then people found out about what it actually does, and now it has an overall 60% favorability rating.

Maybe, just maybe, progressive policies are good, and people like them because they generally involve making life better and more fair for people.

Democratic VP nominee's record as governor of Minnesota

As governor, Walz made Minnesota one of the first states to protect abortion rights after Roe v. Wade was struck down; started a state-run program that gives families paid sick, medical and family leave; and signed a bill providing universal free school meals.

The popular two-term governor is wholly unapologetic of his liberal record, telling CNN:

"My kids are gonna eat here, and you're gonna have a chance to go to college, and you're going to have an opportunity to live where we're working on re-

ducing carbon commission.

"Oh, and by the way, you're going to have personal incomes that are higher, and you're going to have health insurance. So, if that's what they want to label me, I'm more than happy to take the label."

How does Minnesota rank for quality of life?

WalletHub recently ranked Minnesota the best state in the country for health care. And in June, the London-based Institute for Quality of Life named Minneapolis the happiest city in America.

Last month, CNBC rated Minnesota the sixth-best state in the country for business. So something appears to be working in the scary progressive hell-scape Walz has created.

Or, as GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump put it in a fundraising scare-email Tuesday, Walz as vice president will "unleash HELL ON EARTH."

For too long, Democrats have strug-

gled to fend off the negatives Republicans managed to attach to the "progressive" label.

But with Walz as Harris' vice presidential pick, they have a communicator who will help folks see through the fear-mongering rhetoric.

As the governor was introduced to the nation Tuesday evening at a rally with Harris in Philadelphia, Walz talked about reproductive rights with Midwestern earnestness:

"In Minnesota, we respect our neighbors and their personal choices that they make.

"Even if we wouldn't make the same choice for ourselves, there's a golden rule — mind your own damn business."

The newly minted Democratic vice presidential nominee delivered daggers to convicted felon Trump with a cheerful dad-joke vibe:

"Violent crime was up under Trump. That's not even counting the crimes he committed."

Walz, a radical? Good luck with labeling him that.

Harris served in the Army National Guard for 24 years, posts videos talking about quick-and-easy car repairs and, in one viral photo, looks like the happiest man on earth while holding a piglet at the Minnesota State Fair.

Good luck making this guy out to be a radical leftist monster. Walz is an avatar for regular Americans, people who just want to live their lives, see everyone get a fair shake and get along with their neighbors, even if they don't agree on everything.

As such, he's a perfect example of what those progressive policies are all about. They're about trying to help people, trying to make the world a slightly better place for everyone.

That's not scary. And neither is Tim Walz. He's the Midwestern dad we didn't know we needed.

Follow USA TODAY columnist Rex Huppke on X, formerly Twitter, @Rex-Huppke and Facebook [facebook.com/RexIsAJerk](https://www.facebook.com/RexIsAJerk)

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Judith Abrams
Regional Sr. Vice President

If you're considering a family trip to Europe, try these tips to ease your vacation stress. **Page 3B**

We survey and compile the top news stories from all 50 states plus Washington, D.C. **Page 4B**

MONEYLINE



LEONHARD FOEGER/REUTERS

DOLCE & GABBANA LAUNCHES MIST FOR DOGS

Dolce & Gabbana fragrances are not just for humans anymore as the luxury brand introduced an "alcohol-free scented mist" for dogs. Inspired by founder Domenico Dolce's "unconditional love for his loyal dog Fefé," the fragrance named after the designer's pup "blends fresh and delicate notes of Ylang Ylang, Musk, and Sandalwood," according to the brand's website. Dog owners can preorder the "Fefé" fragrance mist for 99 euros, which equates to \$108.13, and receive it by Aug. 16. How do dog owners use the Fefé fragrance mist? Dolce & Gabbana recommends dog owners spray Fefé on their hands or a brush and then rub or brush their pup's fur from the middle of the body toward the tail, according to the brand's website.

EXPERTS WARN ABOUT WINDOWS WEAK SPOTS

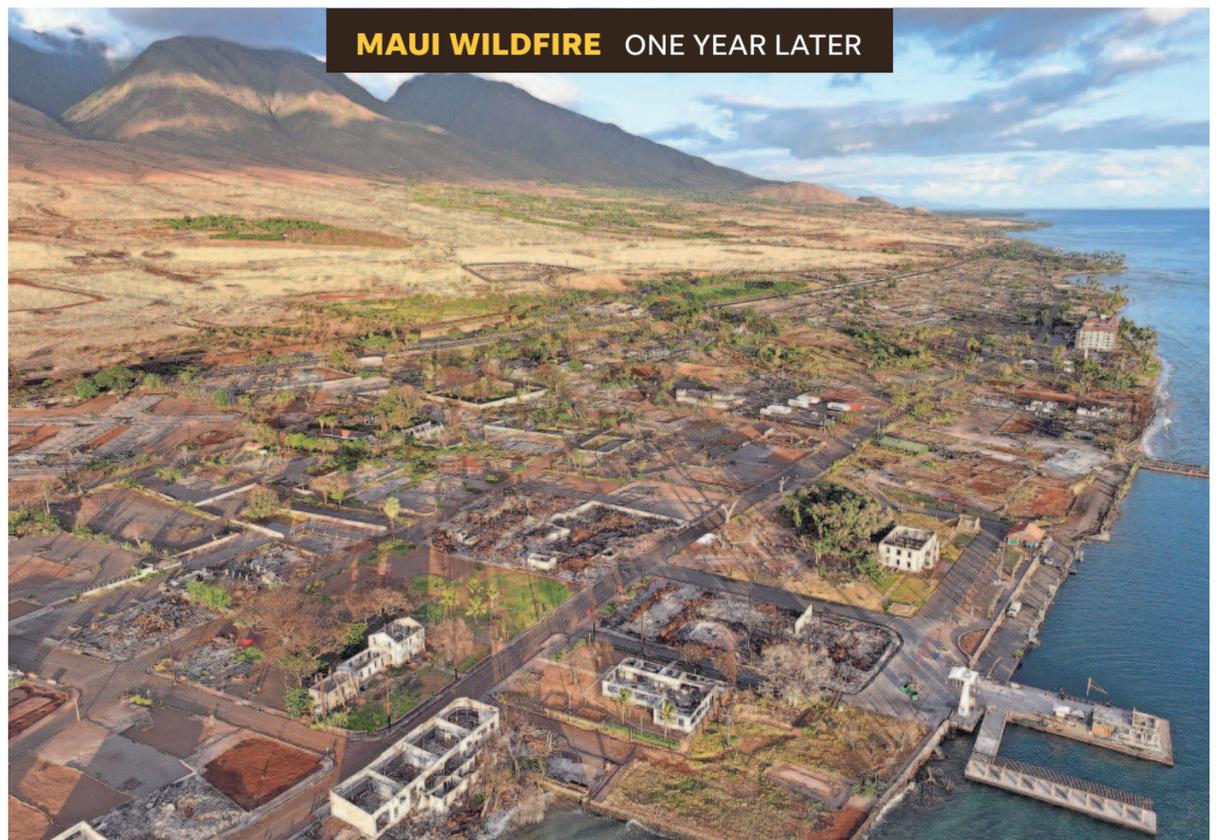
The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency added a vulnerability in Microsoft's Windows 10 software to a list of exploited security weak spots. CISA said that "Microsoft COM for Windows contains a deserialization of untrusted data vulnerability that allows for privilege escalation and remote code execution," in a listing added to the agency's Known Exploited Vulnerability Catalog on Monday. The listing advised users to stop using software or utilize a patch through Windows. CISA said that it did not know if the vulnerability, titled CVE-2018-0824, had been used in a ransomware campaign but a CISCO Talos report released Thursday said that a Chinese hacking group utilized the vulnerability in an attack on a Taiwanese government research center. The report said the center was, "likely compromised."



PROVIDED BY THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

AVOCADO GREEN RECALLS 55,000 MATTRESS PADS

If you sleep on a mattress pad, you may want to check where you're putting your head tonight. Avocado Green Mattress is recalling 55,480 of its organic cotton mattress pad protectors over a fire hazard, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recall report issued on Thursday. "The recalled mattress pads violate the mandatory federal flammability regulation for mattress pads, posing a fire hazard," the safety commission says. Avocado Green Mattress said in a recall report that there haven't been any injuries reported but "out of an abundance of caution, please stop using your Avocado Cotton Mattress Pad Protector." The recall affects anyone who bought quilted ivory-color mattress pads between Jan. 17, 2019 and March 11, 2024, the home products company said. To obtain a replacement, customers should cut the mattress pad in two and write the date and initial the law label attached to the mattress pad. A law label, or "Do Not Remove" label, is typically found on bedding, furniture and other products that describes what materials the item is made out of, the American Law Label explains. After doing that customers should take a photo of the mattress pad and upload to www.avocadogreenmattress.com/pages/recall.



MAUI WILDFIRE ONE YEAR LATER

An aerial view of vegetation regrowth amid areas destroyed or damaged by the Lahaina wildfire, including the iconic banyan tree (right, center), on Aug. 4 in Lahaina, Hawaii. Thursday marks the one-year anniversary of the Maui wildfires which killed 102 people and devastated the historic community of Lahaina in West Maui.

How Maui is coping one year after the fires

Many questions remain unanswered for residents

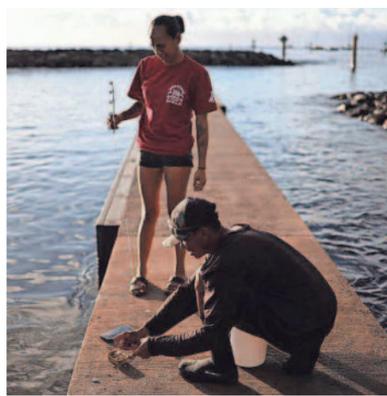
Kathleen Wong
USA TODAY

MAUI, Hawaii – For Shannon I'i, the entire month of August stirs difficult emotions. Grief. Mistrust. Pending doom. Uncertainty.

"Lately, it's not so much the date itself but the coming toward that date," she told USA TODAY of the Maui wildfire anniversary. "For me, this past month has been a lot more triggering, a lot more emotional."

To I'i and her family, Lahaina is their home – it has been and will be. She and her family have spent the past year navigating chaos and adjusting to a new normal following the wildfires. After their three-bedroom house burned down, the family moved into a small studio on her great-aunt's property in Lahaina.

I'i said she feels blessed to still live in her hometown, even if it's in the



Lahaina residents fish for bait fish, which they said they will use to catch larger fish, on Aug. 4 in Lahaina, Hawaii.

PHOTOS BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

"You lost the community, not just losing your home."

Shannon I'i
Lahaina resident

trauma-laced burn zone. Her home will be rebuilt by Habitat for Humanity, but she said not everyone else is so lucky.

Her parents, who are retired, also lost their house in what was the deadliest wildfire in recent U.S. history and will have to move to a different island, Oahu. Now they must pay rent after making mortgage payments. When they can return to Maui is up in the air for now.

"Everybody's lifestyle has changed," she said. "My parents are going through a time where they worked their whole lives for their home, the home burned and where do you go from there?"

I'i and her family are not alone in their feelings. Thursday marks the anniversary of the wildfires that ravaged historic Lahaina Town, which killed over 100 people and destroyed homes, cultural sites, and businesses alike. As the Lahaina community continues to work toward recovery – both emotionally and logistically – many questions remain unanswered.

Struggling financially alongside the

See MAUI, Page 2B



New Hyundai cars are displayed on the sales lot at San Leandro Hyundai on May 30, 2023, in San Leandro, Calif. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Kia, Hyundai theft claims elevated despite change

Software's protection had deterred thieves

Bailey Schulz
USA TODAY

Kia and Hyundai's anti-theft software upgrades have deterred car thieves, but theft claims remain elevated for the brands even after new software is installed, according to a new report.

After car thefts began to ramp up during the COVID-19 pandemic, the

two automakers in early 2023 rolled out a free software update to make it harder to start the vehicle when the owner's key is not in the ignition.

The software has helped, according to a new report from the Highway Loss Data Institute, an organization that analyzes insurance data. The report says cars with the software upgrade had 53% lower theft claim frequencies than those without. That includes all theft claims, from vehicle part or content theft to whole vehicle theft.

See CAR THEFT, Page 2B

Why Walz, Vance have endorsed Diet Mountain Dew

Jessica Guynn
USA TODAY

Call it the bipartisan bubbly. In a bitterly divisive election cycle, the Republican and Democratic tickets have united around a single issue. Donald Trump and Kamala Harris' running mates JD Vance and Tim Walz are both fans of the same fizzy beverage.

Their swill of choice? Ice cold cans of the bright neon yellow, nose-tickling, super-citrusy, highly caffeinated Diet Mountain Dew, a popular cooler staple in backyards and on backroads.

Soft drinks often become associated with certain demographics, but Mountain Dew more than most. It has deep roots in rural America – what analysts call the "Mountain Dew Belt." "Mountain Dew" is old-timey Appalachian slang for moonshine. Its Tennessee creators Barney and Ally Hartman originally crafted Mountain Dew as a mixer for whiskey in the 1940s. Its slogan was: "Yahoo, Mountain Dew. It'll Tickle Yore Innards!"

Mountain Dew was sold to PepsiCo in 1964 but never quite shook that hill-billy image. In the 1980s, it was mar-

See SOFT DRINK, Page 2B

Maui

Continued from Page 1B

emotional burden, nearly half of the fire survivors have said they are “very seriously” or “somewhat seriously” thinking about leaving the island. Research from the Maui Together Wildfire Assessment found that one-third of the family members of survivors have already left.

The anniversary also serves as a reminder of the deep love and sense of community that Lahaina residents have for their town, the former capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom. This is where many find hope at the chance to rebuild their home, refusing to give up on a new, brighter future for Lahaina, even if it will be years down the line.

“I love Lahaina so much,” I’i said. “That’s it for me.”

The biggest loss was community

Baby Beach was once a beloved local spot in Lahaina, a place where “everybody would go” to play in its gentle waters and relax on the sand, according to I’i. Now, I’i thinks of loss when she sees the beach, of the people who had to jump over the rock wall to escape the inferno. “You see that and it’s that heavy feeling,” she said. “I think of things such as *pilina*, or connectedness, our beaches being full of people, and it’s really hard to move on.”

I’i misses running into her neighbors in the grocery store. “You lost the community, not just losing your home,” she said. “Being away from each other has been the biggest loss.”

Despite how sprawling Maui is – the second-largest island in Hawaii – its community is close-knit.

In the face of a challenging year, the Maui community has shown remarkable resilience, with grassroots organizations, local restaurants, and citizens stepping up to provide disaster relief when they felt government support fell short.

Since the fires, I’i has been heavily involved in community meetings and mental health outreach. In the immediate aftermath, she went from hotel to hotel to check on those who were displaced to let them know of resources to help them cope with the grief. Sometimes they just talked about what they went through to “have that shared experience,” she said. Speaking with another local rather than emergency responders who arrived on the island, people were “way more open.”

Now she is working with the Department of Health to establish the Ke Ola Hou Resiliency Center which will serve as a space for the Lahaina community to get mental and physical health and other social services. It’s a critical resource as 64% of those impacted by the fires said their mental health has worsened, according to a recent assessment of over 1,000 fire survivors by the Hawaii State Rural Health Association.

“Being involved, being able to help other people really helps me,” she said. “I get to see people in my community. It’s familiar, it’s hopeful.”

‘Just not knowing’

Before the tragedy, life in Maui wasn’t only paradise. The island was already facing challenges such as a high cost of living and a housing crisis. In 2021, Maui had the most expensive median rent in the state, according to the 2023 Hawaii Housing Factbook. Housing affordability has been equally difficult for Maui locals, with the median single-family home costing \$1 million.

The devastating fires only exacerbated these concerns for those impacted by the fires, according to the Hawaii State Rural Health Association’s assessment. Sixty-nine percent say they’re now worse off financially, cutting back on groceries and medical insurance. On



Debris removal continues at a former apartment building in the Lahaina wildfire impact zone on Aug. 2, in Lahaina, Hawaii. Plaintiffs involved in the Lahaina wildfire lawsuits against the government and utilities have reached a \$4 billion global settlement of claims. MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

“Some of the problems as a business operator is we can’t hire help because there’s no places to live.”

Peter Merriman

Owner of Merriman’s Kapalua, just north of Lahaina

Friday, Maui County expanded its Homeowner Assistance Fund on Friday to a total of \$21 million for owners to receive up to \$60,000 for housing-related expenses like mortgage payments.

On Maui, short-term rentals account for 15% of the total housing supply, a number that Maui County Mayor Richard Bissen wants to reduce. In May, he proposed a bill to convert over 7,000 of those into long-term rentals by 2026 – approximately 2,200 are in West Maui.

“Some of the problems as a business operator is we can’t hire help because there’s no places to live,” said Peter Merriman, owner of Merriman’s Kapalua, just north of Lahaina. “Everybody who works there has to commute from other parts of the island.”

Most families are living in limbo due to lengthy insurance processes and awaiting payments from the recent \$4 billion settlement agreement from the lawsuit against Hawaiian Electric, which some say was responsible for the fire.

Peter Longhi is also grieving the loss of his family home. “I didn’t lose where we were living but I lost everything from my childhood,” he said. “It’s just gone, it’s really sad.” He’s not quite sure yet if he’ll be able to rebuild his house. “We’re planning to, we’re hoping to.”

Longhi inherited Longhi’s, a namesake Italian restaurant located on Kaanapali Beach in the Marriott Ocean Club, from his father. Many of his employees lost their homes and had been living in the hotels. “Dealing with that emotionally, it’s been terrible,” he said. “Coming up on a year, it still gets you at random times.”

For Longhi, the hardest part of recovery is the uncertainty. What will become of Front Street, once the most patronized part of Maui? Will there be enough jobs or housing in the rebuilding of Lahaina? How much will it cost to rebuild his home?

“Nobody knows the answer, and that’s what I think is frustrating and saddening to everybody is just not knowing,” he said.

A new Lahaina

One year later, there are rays of hope.

- Banana trees are sprouting, offering specks of vibrant green life among the ashes.

- Due to careful nurturing, the historic banyan tree is also thriving, regrowing its leaves and tendrils.

- Nearly 98% of Lahaina’s residential properties have now been cleared of debris.

Many look toward the past to inform Lahaina’s future – the town was built upon a wetland called Moku’ula and a royal fishpond known as Mokuhinia. It was once so abundant it was called the “Venice of the Pacific.” Breadfruit trees and others were planted around the sacred resource, offering shade and food. Freed from infrastructure and given the space and time to breathe, the groundwater and streams have begun to reflow.

Hawaii Gov. Josh Green and other officials are coordinating with Native Hawaiian-led Lahaina nonprofits like Na Aikane o Maui to restore the cultural site. This regeneration offers renewed strength to Lahaina residents.

“I never thought it would happen in my lifetime,” I’i said. “Instead of having a bunch of tourist drops on Front Street and catering to tourism, I hope there is cultural preservation from the beginning of Moku’ula.”

Rebuilding Lahaina not only offers an opportunity to honor its cultural history but also reshape the town with improved, more resilient infrastructure.

As the deadly flames raged, many people were unable to get out because of downed power lines and locked gates, according to a recent report, commissioned by the Hawaii attorney general and published by the Fire Safety Research Institute. Failed pipes meant water couldn’t flow from the fire hydrants.

Unfortunately, rebuilding the town will take years, with some architects estimating seven to eight years. Heartbreakingly, some of the *kupuna* (elders) may not see their revitalized Lahaina.

Still, construction is already underway for a handful of Lahaina homes and more permits are applied for each day. New houses are slated to be outfitted with roofing and other materials to better withstand high winds and wildfires. It will be a long way to go, but those who call Lahaina home push forward.

“I don’t want to just survive here, I want to be able to thrive here,” I’i said.

Kathleen Wong is a travel reporter based in Hawaii.

You can reach her at kwong@usatoday.com.

Car theft

Continued from Page 1B

The frequency of whole vehicle theft saw an even more dramatic drop after the upgrade at 64%.

While the software isn’t able to prevent all theft, the institute’s senior vice president Matt Moore said the numbers are significant enough to make it clear that eligible drivers should take the time to get the software upgrade.

“A very optimistic person would look at this problem and this software update and say, well, we’d love to see 100% reduction (in theft claim frequencies),” Moore told USA TODAY. “I don’t know that that’s realistic. A 64% reduction is a big number.”

Why are Hyundai and Kia cars being stolen?

Kia and Hyundai thefts began to spike in 2021 after instructional videos detailing how to steal vehicles without electronic immobilizers took off on social media.

Compared to other car manufacturers, Kia and Hyundai vehicles were late to the game in making electronic immobilizers standard on new vehicles. The device – which prevents a car engine from starting unless the correct key is present – was standard on only 17% of 2011 Hyundai and Kia models compared to 92% of other models that year. By model year 2022, Hyundai and Kia were standard on 84% of models compared to 96% of the competition, according to the institute.

That vulnerability led to a spike in thefts, even in the wake of the anti-theft software rollout. By the second half of 2023, theft claims for 2003-2023 Hyundai and Kia models were 11 times that of claims in the first half of 2020, according to the Highway Loss Data Institute report.

Theft is still an issue, in part, because not every Kia or Hyundai model has installed the software upgrade. Some vehicles are not eligible for the software, and as of mid-July, roughly 40% of eligible models have yet to install the upgrade, according to the institute’s report.

But theft claim frequency for Hyundai and Kia vehicles remains elevated “even for models with the new software,” according to the report.

No ‘perfect’ fix?

Jonathon Miller, 32 of Las Vegas, was one of the unlucky Hyundai owners who had his car stolen after installing the software upgrade.

Miller said he had been using a steering wheel lock to protect his 2015 Hyundai Elantra from thieves but “got a little comfortable” after the 2023 software upgrade and stopped using the lock. Still, he said he made sure to lock his car every night with his key fob.

In early June, Miller woke up to discover his car had been stolen. He said the thieves took the car for a joy ride and inflicted about \$7,000 worth of damage, totaling his car. He now drives a Nissan. Miller isn’t the only driver who has experienced theft issues after the software update, according to Michael Brooks, executive director of the Center for Auto Safety, a nonprofit advocacy group.

“It doesn’t appear to be a perfect software fix,” Brooks told Arizona’s Family, a Phoenix television station, in May, telling the station that it’s unclear why certain cars were still susceptible to theft.

“It could be thieves are finding other ways to steal these cars,” he told the station. “It could also be that sometimes consumers have aftermarket software or their own security system that might be interfering with the Hyundai and Kia software, but that’s something that Kia and Hyundai really need to take a look at.”

The institute’s report said theft claims may still be elevated for car models with the new software because the software-based immobilizer activates only if the key fob is used to lock the vehicle; if the driver uses the switch on the door handle, the anti-theft software is ineffective.

There’s also the threat of lesser crimes. Thieves may still steal other items from inside the vehicle when they can’t get the vehicle started. The institute found a 61% increase in vandalism claim frequency in vehicles that had the software update compared to those that hadn’t been upgraded – nearly equivalent to the decrease in whole theft claims.

“Based on these trends, we expect claim rates for Hyundai and Kia vehicles to gradually drop back in line with those of other brands, as thieves learn they’re no longer so easy to steal and the fad gets stale,” Moore said in the report.

Soft drink

Continued from Page 1B

keted as “Dew It Country Cool.”

Indra Nooyi, the former CEO of Mountain Dew owner PepsiCo, told BuzzFeed News in 2015 that Mountain Dew is “an attitude. It’s a fantastic attitude in a bottle.”

Now that Walz and Vance have added Diet Dew to their political bonafides, the nation’s fifth-most-popular soda is having a moment.

And, as the old slogan goes, don’t underestimate the power of Dew, especially in an election year. Walz and Vance are sending a clear message to voters: This is not the La Croix-and-latte crowd.

Kamala Harris picked Minnesota’s governor as her running mate on Tuesday, catapulting the outspoken Midwestern statesman into the national spotlight, from his close ties to orga-

nized labor to his dog Scout.

Soon, his tonic of choice was the talk of social media. Walz was pulled over in 1995 for going 96 mph in a 55 mph zone after watching college football with friends. He failed a sobriety test and a breath test and pleaded guilty to reckless driving.

Diet Mountain Dew lifted his spirits after he quit drinking. He once joked he would happily guzzle a 52-ounce can of the stuff for breakfast.

“At times, it seems to fuel Walz’s dizzying conversational style, as he moves from education policy to football, words tumbling out like coins from a slot machine,” the Star Tribune wrote in 2018.

Diet Mountain Dew is Vance’s fave, too. He has made headlines for hyping the Dew on the campaign trail.

“This is the good stuff here,” Vance said during an appearance on the conservative broadcast network NewsCast. “High caffeine, low calorie.”

At a recent campaign rally, he joked

that Democrats would probably say he was racist for his Diet Dew habit. “I had a Diet Mountain Dew yesterday and one today, and I’m sure they’re going to call that racist too,” he said, adding, “But it’s good.”

The Harris campaign posted an edited video of Vance’s viral remarks about Diet Mountain Dew and racism, with the caption “It’s getting weird...”. After criticizing Vance for “weird” comments about Diet Mountain Dew, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear said to CNN: “Who drinks Diet Mountain Dew?” Then he apologized... to Diet Mountain Dew.

“Folks, I’ve been a person that when sometimes I’ve gone over the line, I’ve wanted to make sure that I set the record straight, so, I do owe an apology to Diet Mountain Dew,” Beshear, also a Harris VP contender, said at a press conference. “So if you enjoy Diet Mountain Dew, you be you, we wanna support you.”

Mom's tips for perfect European vacation

Allison Tibaldi

FamilyVacationist.com

Considering a European vacation with your kids? Ever since mine were babies, I've traveled with them to Europe at least twice a year. With jet lag and interrupted routines, it wasn't always smooth sailing, but their looks of wonder the first time they saw the Swiss Alps and the Eiffel Tower far outweighed the pitfalls.

Exposing them to the European people, languages, and ideas has sparked a curiosity that remains intact now that they're young adults. After dozens of transatlantic trips, I finally got the routine down. So, if you're considering a family trip to Europe, try these tips to ease your vacation stress.

1. To skip the lines, be an early bird

There's no getting around the fact that high season in major European cities equals crowds. Starting our day bright and early in capitals from London to Rome has been a simple yet effective way to beat the queues. We're the first to arrive at popular attractions and almost always find manageable lines.

2. Weigh the pros and cons of furnished apartments

Renting a furnished apartment, such as an Airbnb or VRBO, offers space and simulates local life way better than staying at a hotel. Having a kitchen or kitchenette makes it easy to prepare money-saving snacks and meals. Do your research as several European cities have banned or are considering banning Airbnb.

For some families, someone else making your bed is a fundamental part of a vacation. If you choose to stay in a hotel, location should be top of mind. I always prioritize residential neighborhoods near a park, for fresh air and tranquility before or after sightseeing.

3. You can't beat jet lag, but you can diminish its effects

Crossing multiple time zones is exhausting for travelers of all ages. If I had a dollar for every time my kids woke up wide awake at 3:00 a.m. after a long-haul flight, I'd be rich. Most flights to Europe from the East Coast depart at night. I always had my kids brush their teeth and put on their pajamas in an attempt to encourage them to sleep for at least a few hours of the flight. It *sometimes* worked.

While there's no magic wand, sunlight can help reset your body clock. I found it helpful to look for a park on our



Getting an early start to the day is the easiest way to beat the crowds in Europe's most popular destinations. PROVIDED BY CHRISTINE SARKIS

arrival day. After sitting on an airplane for so many hours, fresh air is important, even if it doesn't make jet lag totally disappear.

4. Consider midsize cities when choosing your destination

Is there anyone who enjoys navigating big crowds with little kids? For a cultural experience that isn't super hectic, consider a midsize European city. Dupes are all the rage, so think Rotterdam, with its cube houses and bustling port, instead of Amsterdam. With an array of cultural attractions, urban parks, and the same language, Dublin feels like a scaled-down version of London.

5. Don't overlook the simple appeal of the European countryside

With slower rhythms, small towns can be just right for kids. When my children were tweens, we spent several weeks in Bonnieux, a village in Provence. As there was hardly any traffic and everyone seemed to know each other, I allowed them way more freedom than I did in our hometown, NYC. Walking independently to the boulangerie and playground broadened their horizon in a completely different way than a city holiday.

6. Whenever possible, choose to travel in the less-crowded season

With sparse crowds and lower prices, low-season travel is trending. When my kids were preschoolers, we saved a bundle by traveling in late fall, winter, and early spring. Unfortunately, low-season travel doesn't mesh with the scholastic calendar. Once my kids were in elementary school, we started planning trips for Thanksgiving week. It's not a holi-

day in Europe and airfares from the U.S. to many European destinations often cost less than flying domestically.

7. Let the kids take an active role in trip planning

Ask for your children's input and weave their interests into the itinerary and they'll be more invested in your European vacation.

My kids love ice cream; when they were in middle school, they researched the highest-rated gelato shops in Rome. We sampled luscious cones as we soaked in the Colosseum and Roman Forum for a gelato crawl of a lifetime.

8. Resist the temptation to cram too much into your schedule

It's normal to want to see as much as possible but try and avoid packing your schedule. Over-stimulation practically guarantees cranky moods and meltdowns, particularly during the first few days, when jet lag is at its peak.

A slower pace allows you to savor the moment. Delve into one museum as opposed to three and you'll get a deeper impression, rather than a Reader's Digest version.

9. You will never regret prioritizing downtime

Unstructured time can be a potent anecdote to over-stimulation; punctuate attractions with respites at the playground or freewheeling strolls.

10. Appreciate the little things

Take time to enjoy the little things that make each culture unique. Buying a freshly baked croissant in Paris may make a more lasting impact on your child than seeing the Mona Lisa.

11. Take advantage of public transportation

Riding public transportation is an inexpensive way to sightsee. My kids enjoyed spending hours riding the old-fashioned trams that crisscross Milan.

12. Pack totable toys

Packing a few compact toys takes up minimal space and helps keep boredom at bay. I always went the nostalgic route with a yo-yo and Silly Putty.

13. Prioritize picnics

Leisurely meals are standard in much of Europe. When my kids were little, their tiny French and Italian cousins sat patiently at the table for multicourse meals while my kids were fidgety after five minutes. My European dream itinerary includes multiple meals at Michelin-star restaurants, but with kids in tow, picnics are a winner.

Purchasing provisions at a market is an economical dip into local life. If you visit a supermarket, your kids may be surprised to learn that in many European countries, customers are expected to bag their own groceries and a coin is required to borrow a shopping cart.

14. Learn to find cheap flights

Several newer airlines offer competitive prices to Europe. Discount airline French bee jets to Paris nonstop from NYC, Florida, and San Francisco, for example, while low-priced Play flies from Stewart Airport outside of NYC to Reykjavik, Iceland, where you can connect to flights throughout Europe.

Before you book a connecting flight, remember that boarding and disembarking multiple times, crossing busy airports searching for your gate, and the possibility of missing your connecting flight, are some of the drawbacks.

15. Preorder a kid's meal

Major airlines all serve meals on flights to Europe. Consider preordering a children's meal. Special meals are served first, limiting the chance of getting hangry.

16. Pack a stroller for younger kids

Even if your child hasn't sat in a stroller for a year, consider packing a lightweight, foldable stroller. It's excellent for maneuvering around crowded airports and is the perfect perch for naps.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of USA TODAY.

Warm-weather expedition cruise has its advantages

Nathan Diller

USA TODAY

At first, all I could see was what looked like a light gray stick.

But as our Zodiac boat slowly approached a mud bank in Western Australia's Kimberley region, a thick, scaly tail and a mouth that appeared to be curled in a jagged smirk came into view. "Ladies and gentlemen, we have a crocodile," said Robin West, general manager and vice president of Expedition Operations and Planning for Seabourn, who was driving.

The reptile was the first of six or seven saltwater crocodiles we saw during a tour of Hunter River and Porosus Creek in late June (there was some debate about the final tally among my companions). The area, also home to mangroves, mudskippers and other wildlife was one of the stops on our 10-day trip through the Kimberley aboard Seabourn Pursuit, the cruise line's newest expedition vessel. After about two hours in the roughly 90-degree heat, I was beat by the time we got back to the ship. I took a cue from some of the crocodiles we'd seen lounging in the sun and spent much of the rest of the day reading and admiring the view from the vessel's shaded open decks.

Cold-weather destinations like Antarctica and the Arctic get a lot of love among expedition cruises, but there are perks to exploring a warmer locale.

Expedition plus pleasure cruise

My Kimberley itinerary combined the kinds of educational and immersive activities nature lovers expect from an expedition with elements that felt like a pleasure cruise.

"It can definitely be very relaxing," said Claire Maguire, a travel agent and franchise owner at Cruise Planners.

The temperatures hovered between 80 and 90 degrees during my trip, with



Guests could relax and admire the views on the ship's open decks. PROVIDED BY SEABOURN

sunshine nearly every day. As a result, when I wasn't in a Zodiac or exploring various ports on foot, I often sat on my suite balcony or ate meals at outdoor tables by the ship's infinity pool, surrounded by sandstone peaks and turquoise water. By contrast, when I took an Antarctica cruise in December, the temperatures were milder than I expected but still too chilly to comfortably spend much time on the outer decks.

"It does feel more like a vacation, I think," Maguire said. "Sometimes the cold weather can seem a little bit more like work. This one is a little bit more laid back, it's slow-paced, it's relaxed." On my cruise, we only disembarked once a day most of the time, giving guests time to attend lectures about the region from expedition team members, visit the spa or gym, or just laze around.

The luxury line also pampered guests in a way that made the adventure more cushy.

One afternoon, after venturing to see the Horizontal Falls in Talbot Bay – a sideways waterfall effect caused by water squeezing through cliff passages – we

cruised toward another Zodiac that our guide said may have broken down. But as we approached the boat, occupied by other members of the expedition team and crew, they presented us with Champagne and popsicles (that wouldn't be the last time either).

What are the other benefits of warm-weather expeditions?

Different destinations mean different gear, and with warm weather, you can leave long underwear and parkas at home. "You obviously have to pack a lot less specific clothing," said Maguire. "That's another advantage. You don't have to take a lot of heavy layers or anything like that, which is nice."

Getting in and out of Zodiacs felt less of a production than in Antarctica, for instance, where I had to dress in base layers, waterproof pants, boots, a hat, and more every time I disembarked.

There are some essentials travelers should have, though, including sunscreen, sunglasses and a sun hat. I forgot that last one and would have likely

burned were it not for the kindness of other folks onboard with extras. Seabourn and many other operators have packing lists for reference, as well.

Maguire also recommended wearing long sleeves, particularly if you plan to swim. Warm-weather destinations generally make getting in the water easier and more pleasant (no disrespect to the polar plunge). We even did so in the Kimberley, where swimming is only possible in select places due to crocodiles.

One morning, we went snorkeling at Ashmore Reef in water that had been hovering around the high 70s. Roughly 45 minutes of swimming among coral, fish and blue sea stars passed in what felt like 10. And if penguins and polar bears are the faces of Antarctic and Arctic expeditions, respectively, crocodiles may hold that distinction in the Kimberley. But there's plenty more for wildlife enthusiasts to watch for, from brahminy kites to nurse sharks.

How much does an expedition in Kimberley cost?

Prices vary by operator, sailing date, room category and other factors, but a 10-day Kimberley expedition with Seabourn departing on June 27, 2025, starts at \$10,999 per person based on double occupancy. The fare includes meals, wines and spirits, Wi-Fi and more.

Where else can I take a warm-weather expedition?

The Kimberley's not the only option if the cold isn't your thing. Cruise operators offer itineraries in the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador, and Indonesian islands like Bali and the Raja Ampat archipelago, which Maguire noted "is an amazing location for snorkeling and diving."

The reporter on this story received access to this event from Seabourn.

50★States

News from across the USA

ALABAMA Prattville: Police in Prattville are investigating a Sunday night shooting near downtown where 56 spent shell casings were recovered. No one was injured, Police Chief Mark Thompson said.

ALASKA Homer: A family of four, including two children, from Texas went missing after their boat capsized off the coast of Alaska over the weekend.

ARIZONA Tucson: Arizona nonprofits that provide asylum seekers shelter and services have started to see the effects of President Joe Biden's executive order over the last month that limited the number of people processed at the U.S.-Mexico border. The number of individuals and families seeking asylum arriving in Pima County in June was at its lowest this year at 7,456 from 21,854 the month prior in May.

ARKANSAS Little Rock: New woodland fire suppression kits will be distributed to 85 rural fire departments in the state next year, the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported.

CALIFORNIA Sacramento: COVID-19 cases in California are on the rise again. When looking at the state's wastewater data, this summer's levels are approaching those seen in the summer of 2022.

COLORADO Denver: A citizen-initiated ballot measure to ban mountain lion hunting has garnered enough valid signatures to be placed on the November ballot in Colorado.

CONNECTICUT Hartford: The latest annual point-in-time count found that the population of people experiencing homelessness in the state increased for the third year in a row, the CT Mirror reported.

DELAWARE Rehoboth Beach: For the second time in three months, on Monday, a whale beached itself at Delaware Seashore State Park on the north side of the Indian River Inlet. The Lewes-based nonprofit Marine Education, Research and Rehabilitation Institute removed the whale from the beach that afternoon. Executive Director Suzanne Thurman identified it as a pilot whale but has been unavailable to provide further information. Coast TV reports the whale has since died.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington: A Florida attorney pleaded guilty to attempting to set off a backpack of explosives outside the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. Investigators say they found the lawyer's DNA on the bag of explosives.

FLORIDA Belle Glade: The National Transportation Safety Board said it is opening an investigation after an SUV in Belle Glade drove into a canal late on Monday resulting in at least nine deaths, including six children.

GEORGIA Atlanta: Georgia lawmakers are having second thoughts after switching the University System of Georgia from a quarter to a semester system back in 1999, Capitol Beat News Service reported. A state House study committee will begin meeting soon to take a fresh look at whether both the university system and the Technical College System of Georgia — which moved to semesters in 2011 — should switch back to quarters, according to the news outlet.

HAWAII Honolulu: City officials said trash pick-up delays could continue through 2025, KHON2 reported.

IDAHO Boise: Police in Idaho said they had recovered a body believed to be that of a missing autistic 5-year-old boy who disappeared from his birthday party earlier this week.

ILLINOIS Chicago: A spike in bargain-basement crop sales by U.S. farmers needing to make room in storage bins for autumn harvests could boost profitability at grain handlers such as Archer-Daniels-Midland. Eight farmers in the key Midwestern crop-growing states of Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio told Reuters they are emptying storage bins of corn and soybeans harvested in 2023 after holding tight to supplies all year, as favorable weather for crop development finally dashes their hopes for higher prices.

INDIANA Indianapolis: Half a century after the goal was first conceived, Indianapolis and Evansville are now officially connected via an interstate highway. The opening of the interchange of Interstates 69 and 465 at the southwestern tip of Marion County on Tuesday completes the final link from Kentucky to Michigan and ultimately from Mexico to Canada.

HIGHLIGHT: SOUTH CAROLINA



Bottomland forests are particularly effective at sequestering carbon. PROVIDED BY THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston: An environmental organization aims to enhance the pollution-absorbing capacity of bottomland forests in coastal South Carolina with the help of \$39 million in federal funding. The Savannah River Basin, which supplies drinking water for more than a half-million residents, is among the potential areas that will be considered for "natural climate solutions," said Sarah Hartman, assistant director at The Nature Conservancy in South Carolina. Trees pull heat-trapping pollution from the atmosphere by sequestering carbon in new growth every year. As a tree gets bigger, it stores more carbon in its tissue. That makes forests a prime protector against climate change. With the funding, TNC aims to identify and protect 18,000 acres of carbon-rich forest in the state.

IOWA Des Moines: A man was arrested after video showed him running naked through the streets of downtown Des Moines and hijacking a car Tuesday.

KANSAS Marion: A former Kansas police chief who made news last year when he raided a local weekly newspaper will be charged with interfering in the judicial process, two special prosecutors said.

KENTUCKY Louisville: In an effort to address significant shortages in some Jefferson County Public Schools, district leaders say they'll likely have to transfer teachers from schools where they start their first day. Superintendent Marty Pollio said after enrollment counts are official in mid-August, teachers at schools that are under-enrolled could be moved to schools that are over-enrolled.

LOUISIANA Baton Rouge: Louisiana students and teachers will begin the school year with a cell phone ban and LGBTQ+ restrictions among the new laws taking effect this month. No new law will have a more widespread impact than Republican Sen. Beth Mizell's cell phone ban requiring devices be stowed away for the entire school day, including the lunch hour, unless a student has secured an exemption for health reasons, such as a diabetes monitor.

MAINE York: Storm damage has severely wiped away much of the historic Cliff Walk, and the Selectboard is now considering a repair plan that could cost more than half a million dollars. The Cliff Walk, stretching north along the coast from York Harbor's Reading Room, has endured storm damage in the past. However, the Selectboard learned the two consecutive storms in January caused unprecedented damage to the path.

MARYLAND Baltimore: The death of a Baltimore sanitation worker who died while working last Friday was caused by extreme heat.

MASSACHUSETTS Boston: Gov. Maura Healey said in a statement the bill she just signed into law will help people get paid fairly through wage transparency. This new bill will require employers to disclose salary ranges and protecting an employee's right to ask for salary ranges, according to the news release issued by Healey's office on the bill.

MICHIGAN Lansing: With a study into a proposed paid family and medical leave program in Michigan now in hand, advocates for the policy to give workers time off from their jobs to tend to a newborn or dying family member say it's time for state lawmakers to advance the legislation that has stalled amid pushback from businesses and questions about the cost.

MINNESOTA Duluth: Lake Superior Zoo officials said a beloved red panda named Pip died suddenly last week, KARE11 reported.

MISSISSIPPI Jackson: Three new, multimedia art installations have been designed and completed at the Margaret Walker Alexander Library in West Jackson, the first of what is hoped to be many artworks across the city's libraries.

MISSOURI Springfield: Missouri State University set a record for research funding during the past academic year with faculty and staff receiving \$63.2 million. The funding awards for research, education and service projects jumped from \$45.1 million the prior year, which had been a record.

MONTANA Great Falls: The owner of a gun store and shooting range in Great Falls that was raided by federal agents last summer, causing concerns and some outrage among Montana's federal delegation, was indicted by a federal grand jury for allegedly submitting false tax returns and failing to report about \$1.4 million in sales to the Internal Revenue Service, The Daily Montanan reported.

NEBRASKA Omaha: WK Kellogg plans to completely shutdown its Omaha plant by the end of 2026 under a reorganization that will also reduce the cereal maker's headcount by more than 17%, it said, as it streamlines its production.

NEVADA Reno: A resolution the Reno City Council approved on NV Energy's planned \$28 increase to its basic service charge removed all references from an earlier version to the council opposing the increase, leaving the final version "watered down," council member Jenny Brekhus said.

NEW HAMPSHIRE Concord: Six years after approving a "bail reform" bill supported by defendants' rights groups, Gov. Chris Sununu signed a follow-up bill that is set to overhaul the state's bail system once more, New Hampshire Bulletin reported. Representatives of both parties have applauded the bill, but the New Hampshire Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers has a more mixed reaction, according to the news outlet.

NEW JERSEY Trenton: State Attorney General Matthew Platkin released the 2023 major discipline report, enumerating incidents of law-enforcement officers across the state who faced reprimand for a litany of violations following probes by presiding internal affairs units. The report lists 539 incidents of major discipline last year across 543 agencies in New Jersey.

NEW MEXICO Santa Fe: A New Mexico water board member with ties to the oil and gas industry announced she will abstain from a final vote on statewide rules developing additional uses of oil and gas wastewater.

NEW YORK Albany: Supporters of a statewide vote on adding abortion and LGBTQ+ rights to New York's constitution have sued to force New York to use plainer wording on the Nov. 5 ballot.

NORTH CAROLINA Shelby: A man recently pleaded guilty to federal charges of defrauding cattle markets in Cleveland County and beyond by writing bad checks.

NORTH DAKOTA Bismarck: The state Agriculture Department said nearly \$1 million in state grants were provided to 10 agriculture-related projects across the state in the second quarter of the year, the Bismarck Tribune reported.

OHIO Columbus: An Ohio judge upheld a Republican-backed state law banning gender-affirming care such as puberty blockers and hormones for transgender minors, rebuffing a challenge by families of transgender adolescents.

OKLAHOMA Washington County: The Washington County Commissioners voted unanimously to include a measure in the Nov. 5 general election that seeks to modernize a 40-year-old liquor regulation. Currently, Washington County bars can serve alcohol from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m., with more restrictive hours on Sundays, when sales are limited to noon to midnight. The proposed update would extend serving hours to 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. daily, aligning with counties like Tulsa.

OREGON Marion County: The number of measles cases reported in Marion County since mid-June has increased to 14, according to the Oregon Health Authority's dashboard. The total number of cases in the state has risen to 23.

PENNSYLVANIA Erie: Erie County has reported its first case of mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, in nearly two years. At least one case of the viral illness was identified by the Erie County Department of Health between April and June.

RHODE ISLAND Woonsocket: The City Council voted unanimously to forward an independent report about last year's secret land deal involving former Mayor Lisa Baldelli-Hunt to law enforcement for possible investigation.

SOUTH DAKOTA Pierre: The South Dakota Supreme Court reversed a circuit judge's dismissal of a lawsuit filed by an anti-abortion group seeking to keep an abortion rights amendment from reaching the November ballot, South Dakota News Watch reported. That means Life Defense Fund will have another chance to plead its case in front of Circuit Court Judge John Pekas in Minnehaha County, according to the news outlet.

TENNESSEE Nashville: Statewide voter participation in last week's primary elections was the lowest in decades, with fewer than 14% of Tennessee's registered voters voting early, absentee or on election day. While voter registration has increased steadily in recent years, fewer registered voters are actually participating in elections.

TEXAS Bastrop: SpaceX and Tesla CEO Elon Musk is opening a Montessori-style school program in Bastrop this fall, according to the school's website.

UTAH Weber County: Authorities said Weber County sheriff's deputies fatally shot a man who was holding two children hostage during a standoff at an apartment complex, KUTV reported.

VERMONT Montpelier: As the Aug. 13 Primary and Nov. 5 General elections draw nearer, Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas is seeking to lay to rest any residual fears. To do so, her office released an eight-minute video detailing how Vermont maintains the integrity of its elections.

VIRGINIA Charlottesville: A Virginia man has been arrested and charged with threatening to kill Vice President Kamala Harris six days after she launched her presidential campaign authorities say.

WASHINGTON Spokane: The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife announced that the state's first case of Chronic Wasting Disease was found in a deer in Fairwood, KIRO7 reported.

WEST VIRGINIA Charleston: The U.S. Department of Justice recently announced arrests regarding two drug trafficking operations in West Virginia, including one with ties to the Sinaloa drug cartel.

WISCONSIN Green Bay: Wisconsin Public Service Corp. and We Energies have sued a contractor installing fiber optic cable across the Green Bay and Appleton areas for damages to the electric and natural gas utilities' equipment.

WYOMING Cody: Wyoming Game and Fish Department officials announced that a grizzly bear that was frequenting developed areas on private lands in Wilson as been relocated north of Cody, the Casper Star-Tribune reported.

From USA TODAY Network and wire reports

Billy Bean was an advocate and a hero



Mike Freeman
Columnist
USA TODAY

In 2018, a man named Bryan Ruby wrote a letter to Billy Bean.

Bean wrote back. It would be something that Ruby would never forget.

Three years after that exchange, and while a member of the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes, Ruby became the only active

professional baseball player at any level to be publicly out as gay. When Ruby told his remarkable story to USA TODAY Sports, he thought back to Bean and that letter, and how much it meant to him.

Bean helped clear the path for Ruby's historic and important decision. He'd provide support and advice and kindness. Bean even gave Ruby a pair of cleats.

"I didn't even put my last name or address" on the letter, said Ruby in 2021, recounting his interactions with Bean.

"He's someone who sits right next to the MLB commissioner and he has my back. I've worn his cleats everywhere I've played – on three different continents. I look down at them, and know I have support. I didn't think about the symbolic meaning until recently, of me wearing his shoes and what I'm doing (going public)."

"The beauty of it for Bryan is that he's not playing to only become a big leaguer," Bean said at the time. "He's playing because he loves the game. I imagine he'll be proud of himself when he's 40

years old in his country music career knowing what he's doing for baseball. I couldn't be prouder, and I definitely think Bryan's story is a steppingstone in the right direction."

Bean added that the decision of a closeted player to come out is "not as simple as people want to make it. There are so many considerations."

Bean would have known. He played for three MLB teams in the 1980s and 1990s. He came out as gay publicly in

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Artist or athlete?

Victor Montalvo, "B-boy Victor," will compete for the USA in breaking in the Paris Olympics. JOSH MORGAN/USA TODAY NETWORK

In newest Olympic sport breaking, 'it's both'

Chris Bumbaca
USA TODAY

PARIS – Sport as an expression of art seems like an abstract concept. But take a well-designed goal in soccer or hockey, for example – the angles involved, the creativity required. Suddenly, the two opposites are bridged.

After all, sport, like art, is entertainment. And the newest Olympic sport, breaking, is an ideal example of how two forms of expression, dancing and athletics, are not as dichotomous as people may think.

USA TODAY Sports asked the U.S. Olympic breakers, along with those who have been involved around breaking for decades, whether they saw themselves more as athletes or artists. The easy answer is "both." The truth lies somewhere along that bridge.

"How do you blend them?" asked Victor Montalvo, "B-boy Victor," about art and sport. "I don't know. I have no problem blending both."

Arguably the most important factor judges base their scores on in breaking is creativity. Copying another person's moves – called "biting" in the breaking world – is sacrilegious.

Style is an inherent part of breaking, from the way one comports him or herself before and after battling to the competitor's wardrobe.

"The culture aspect of breaking, it's always to me, it's always about style and originality first," said Jeffrey Louis, B-boy Jeffro, of Team USA. "Even in a sports sense, I still have to have my own style and originality."

For Sunny Choi, aka B-girl Sunny, "there's no doubt in my mind this is a sport."

But that's not all.

"Dance, art, sport – all together," she said.

The original breakers, the "OGs" as they are called, sometimes look down on the current generation of breakers for stretching, Montalvo said. He feels that breaking has emerged from the "culture side" of society and into the sports section.

"We're learning a lot, and we're training more like athletes," he said.

Some of the knowledge they have gained since becoming Olympians has ranged from nutrition to strength and conditioning and mental health. Going under the umbrella of Team USA has been helpful.

"Because a couple years ago, maybe five, 10 years ago, we weren't on that,"

See BREAKING, Page 4C

PARIS OLYMPICS

Quincy Hall, 26, wins 400 for gold

Tyler Dragon
USA TODAY

SAINT-DENIS, France – United States runner Quincy Hall won the gold medal in the men's 400 meters Wednesday – besting Great Britain's Matthew Hudson-Smith and Zambia's Muzuala Samukonga and posting a time of 43.40 to set a personal best.

Hall trailed early but a spectacular straightaway dash allowed him to catch Hudson-Smith steps before the finish line.

The Raytown, Missouri, native took third in the event at last year's world championships. He was also part of the mixed 4x400-meter relay team that won gold at that meet.

– Chris Bumbaca

Noah Lyles reaches 200 finals

SAINT-DENIS, France – As expected, Noah Lyles advanced to the Olympic final in the men's 200 meters. However, he took second in the semifinals.

In semifinal heat two, Lyles ran out of lane six and sped around the turn, but he was behind Letsile Tebogo of Botswana. Lyles attempted to catch Tebogo but the Botswanan sprinter was too far in front as he crossed the line a stride ahead of Lyles.

Tebogo's winning time was 19.96. Lyles came in second at 20.08 to get the second automatic qualifying spot.

Lyles is trying to become the first American to win the Olympic sprint double (100 and 200) in 40 years. He won gold in the 100 in a photo finish.

US wrestler Sarah Hildebrandt adds gold to career haul

PARIS – Over the past four years, Sarah Hildebrandt has established herself as one of the best wrestlers in the world in her weight class. She won a bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021. Then silver at the 2021 world championships. Then another bronze, at worlds. Then another.

On Wednesday, Hildebrandt wasn't one of the best. She was *the* best.

And the Olympic gold medal draped around her neck was proof.

Hildebrandt gave Team USA its second wrestling gold medal in two nights (following Amit Elor) at the Paris Olympics, defeating Yusneylys Guzmán of Cuba 3-0 in the 50-kilogram final at Champ-de-Mars Arena. It is the 30-year-old's first senior title at the

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Quincy Hall celebrates after winning the men's 400 meters Wednesday.

ANDREW NELLES/USA TODAY SPORTS

Last chance to qualify for Playoffs

Adam Schupak
Golfweek | USA TODAY NETWORK

As the final tournament of the FedExCup regular season, the Wyndham Championship usually attracts a handful of big names looking for one last chance to salvage a season or secure a playoff run that will pave the way for future glory.

The biggest name to sign up for a week in Greensboro, North Carolina, this year is none other than three-time major champ Jordan Spieth, who at No. 62 in the season-long FedExCup standings has work to do if he plans to make a deep playoff run and also needs to improve his world rank, which has dipped to No. 39. Spieth lost a playoff to Patrick Reed at tournament host Sedgefield Country Club in 2013 but has played the tournament only sporadically, and not since 2020.

“Whether it’s the Playoffs or people making moves for eligibility, there’s a lot at stake at this event,” Spieth said. “There’s going to be a tournament to win and that will be a focus, but you almost get to have double the excitement on some of the things, guys making the playoffs, guys kind of getting in the Top 125 or making a big push to where they can get their jobs back through the rest of the fall.”

Spieth’s job is secure but he may need to write for sponsor invites to play in some of his favorite events next season such as the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am if he doesn’t work his way into the top 50 and qualify for the second leg of the playoffs at the BMW Championship, which secures a berth in the signature events after next week’s playoff event in Memphis.

Spieth isn’t the only marquee name who may be gripping an umbrella with Tropical Storm Debby expected to dump several inches of rain on the course during the first two rounds.

Sungjae Im, who is ninth in the FedExCup, and Shane Lowry at 10th, are both looking to protect their status in the Comcast Business Top 10, which doubled the bonus pot this season to \$40 million awarded to the top 10 in the season-long points race after the Wyndham Championship.

“I’ve come into this tournament many years needing to do something, but I didn’t get into the FedExCup, so it’s nice to be up this end and playing for something like that,” Lowry said.



Jordan Spieth hits from the eighth tee box during the final round of the U.S. Open. KATIE GOODALE/USA TODAY SPORTS

Akshay Bhatia, ranked 15th in the FedExCup, Scot Robert MacIntyre at No. 17, Brian Harman at No. 21 and Christiaan Bezuidenhout at No. 22 still are mathematically alive to collect from that bonus pool with a big week.

U.S. Ryder Cup captain Keegan Bradley, No. 43 in the season-long points race, Wake Forest University grad Cameron Young, 35th, as well as Billy Horschel, 27th, are prominent figures who aren’t stressing about their playoff position but still angling to improve their chances of finishing in the top 30 and a spot in the Tour Championship season finale at East Lake.

Finishing in the top 50 has never been a bigger deal and that has the likes of another Wake product, Will Zalatoris, No. 45 in the FedExCup, Harris English, No. 48, Austin Eckroat, No. 49, Nick Taylor, No. 50, Patrick Rodgers, No. 51, and Justin Rose, who catapulted to No. 52 with his runner-up finish at the British Open a few weeks ago, all trying to scoot in or hang on for dear life to a spot in the top 50 – which will be determined next week in Memphis.

The most important number at the Wyndham is 70 – that’s how many players will advance into the first of the three playoffs events. France’s Victor Perez is one of 21 players coming from the Olympics in Paris to battle the top-70 bubble. Perez, who closed in 63 on Sunday and just missed out on a medal, is the current “Bubble Boy” at No. 70 after the tour removed the late Grayson Murray from the standings. In all, 40 of the current top 70 are in the field.

“Whether I’m the last guy in, first guy out, you still have to play well anyway,” Perez said. “I think even the guys in 67, 66 probably don’t feel too comfortable, either. We’re kind of all in the same bucket. It’s about trying to put on a good performance and see how it goes.”

That worked last year for Lucas Glover, who entered the week at No. 112 before he won the title to back-door his way into the playoffs. This time he’s No. 75 in the FedExCup and again still has work to do if he’s going to defend the following week at the FedEx St. Jude Championship.

“The goal the next three days is to get in the position to have that matter to make that scenario that you need to be aware of,” Glover said Wednesday during his pre-tournament press conference. “I always want to know where I stand. I never saw Bill Belichick coaching the fourth quarter without knowing the score. I like knowing where I stand.”

In the case of Matt Kuchar, who is the only player to qualify for all 17 editions of the playoffs, his bubble may finally burst. He enters the Wyndham Championship at 111th.

There are others who not only have playoffs to consider but also Presidents Cup hopes. The biennial event between the U.S. and the International Team will be held in late September and the window for qualifying on points or to make a good impression for a captain’s pick is winding down. No matter where a player in the field of 156 stands in the FedExCup, there’s something to play for at the 35th and final regular-season tour stop.

Wyndham Championship

Stat
85 That’s the anniversary being celebrated by the Wyndham Championship. The tournament has been included in the PGA Tour schedule since 1938, the seventh-longest running tour event excluding the majors.

Keep an eye on ...

● **Matt Kuchar.** Coming off his best result, a T-3 at the 3M Open, of an otherwise lackluster season. He will need another top finish in the top 70 and qualify for the FedExCup playoffs. He’s the only player to qualify for all 17 editions since the playoffs began in 2007.

● **Shane Lowry.** He won for the first time in five years with Rory McIlroy at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans but still is seeking his first win as an individual on the PGA Tour since the 2019 British Open. Lowry, who enters the week at No. 10, has never qualified for the Tour Championship, which is limited to the top 30 in the standings.

Tee times

Golf Channel’s coverage on Thursday (3-6 p.m. EDT) will highlight the following groupings: Billy Horschel, Robert MacIntyre and Brian Harman (12:43); then defending Wyndham Championship winner Lucas Glover and U.S. Ryder Cup captain Keegan Bradley will tee it up with past champion Si Woo Kim (12:54).

On Friday (3-6 p.m. EDT), Golf Channel will feature Jordan Spieth, Will Zalatoris and Justin Rose (12:43) and Shane Lowry, Sungjae Im and Akshay Bhatia (12:54).

FedExCup

Two weeks ago, at the 3M Open, Jhonattan Vegas earned 500 points in the season-long standings with his first win in nearly seven years. The FedExCup consists of 38 events – 35 in the regular season and three in the FedExCup Playoffs, which culminates Aug. 29-Sept. 1 at the Tour Championship at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta. Viktor Hovland is the defending champion.

Top Five

1. Scottie Scheffler 5,993
2. Xander Schauffele 4,057
3. Rory McIlroy 2,545
4. Collin Morikawa 2,456
5. Wyndham Clark 2,154

MEDALS STANDINGS

Nation	G	S	B	Total
United States	27	35	32	94
Peoples Republic of China	25	23	17	65
France	13	16	21	50
Great Britain	12	17	20	49
Australia	18	12	11	41
Japan	12	6	13	31
Republic of Korea	12	8	7	27
Italy	9	10	8	27
Netherlands	9	5	6	20
Canada	6	4	9	19
Germany	8	5	5	18
Brazil	2	5	7	14
Spain	2	3	6	11
New Zealand	3	6	1	10
Romania	3	4	1	8
Hungary	3	3	2	8
Sweden	3	3	2	8
Ireland	4	0	3	7
Ukraine	2	2	3	7
Switzerland	1	2	4	7
Greece	1	1	5	7
Croatia	2	1	3	6
Israel	1	4	1	6
Kazakhstan	1	2	3	6
Poland	1	1	4	6
Belgium	2	0	3	5
Jamaica	1	3	1	5
Thailand	1	2	2	5
Kenya	1	1	3	5
Chinese Taipei	1	0	4	5
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	0	2	3	5
Hong Kong, China	2	0	2	4
Philippines	2	0	2	4
Georgia	1	2	1	4
Cuba	1	1	2	4
South Africa	1	1	2	4
Kyrgyzstan	0	1	3	4
Turkiye	0	1	3	4
Azerbaijan	2	1	0	3
Denmark	1	2	0	3
Individual Neutral Athletes	1	2	0	3
Islamic Republic of Iran	1	0	2	3
Uzbekistan	1	0	2	3
Armenia	0	2	1	3
Mexico	0	2	1	3
Lithuania	0	1	2	3
India	0	0	3	3
Tajikistan	0	0	3	3
Serbia	2	0	0	2
Chile	1	1	0	2
Ecuador	1	1	0	2
Saint Lucia	1	1	0	2
Uganda	1	1	0	2
Czechia	1	0	1	2
Guatemala	1	0	1	2
Norway	1	0	1	2
Ethiopia	0	2	0	2
Kosovo	0	1	1	2
Tunisia	0	1	1	2
Dominican Republic	0	0	2	2
Malaysia	0	0	2	2
Republic of Moldova	0	0	2	2
Algeria	1	0	0	1
Argentina	1	0	0	1
Bahrain	1	0	0	1
Dominica	1	0	0	1
Morocco	1	0	0	1
Slovenia	1	0	0	1
Colombia	0	1	0	1
Cyprus	0	1	0	1
Fiji	0	1	0	1
Mongolia	0	1	0	1
Austria	0	0	1	1
Cabo Verde	0	0	1	1
Egypt	0	0	1	1
Grenada	0	0	1	1
Indonesia	0	0	1	1
Peru	0	0	1	1
Portugal	0	0	1	1
Slovakia	0	0	1	1
Zambia	0	0	1	1

PARIS OLYMPICS WOMEN'S GOLF

Korda looks to regain podium form

Gentry Estes

USA TODAY

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France – The more celebrated Nelly Korda becomes a golfer, the more noticeable it is when she seeks to experience life as something else.

It’s all amplified for her. The tournaments in which she doesn’t play. The interviews she doesn’t give. This idea that it’s her responsibility, more than any other peer, to expand the LPGA tour’s popularity.

She may be a reluctant sports star at times, but she’s the biggest one going in the women’s game. And it’s not that the world’s No. 1 player is burned out on golf, she explained after Wednesday’s opening round at the Paris Olympics. It’s that she doesn’t want to become burned out.

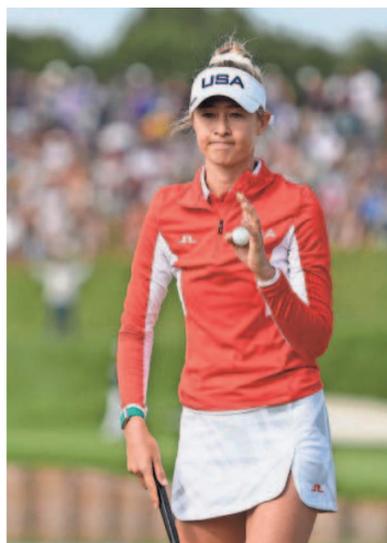
“As important as it is to sometimes grind it out,” Korda said, “it’s also important to just put your clubs away and just be a regular human being. ... It feels nice when you’re in a groove, but when you play under pressure and you’re in the final group and you feel the emotions that you do, it takes a toll on you mentally.”

The 26-year-old Korda is back representing the United States at the Olympics, an event where she’s the reigning gold medalist. She shot an even-par 72 in the first round, leaving her well behind leader Celine Boutier of France, who delighted a large home crowd with a 7 under 65 to jump to a three-shot lead on the field.

Lilia Vu of the U.S. is tied for third at 2 under. Korda and fellow American Rose Zhang (also at even par) are tied for 13th, while Boutier’s round was the story of the first round at Le Golf National.

“Really fun for me,” said Vu, who played in Boutier’s threesome. “They’re cheering for me, too. So I’m trying to keep up with Celine.”

Korda, too, will be trying to keep up and extend her country’s dominance in Olympic golf. Counting her victory at the Tokyo Games, Americans have won the last three gold medals in golf, including Xander Schauffele in 2021 and Scottie Scheffler this past weekend.



Nelly Korda shot even-par 72 Wednesday in the first round at the Olympics. KATIE GOODALE/USA TODAY SPORTS

This week’s tournament, however, oddly finds Korda at a low point in a year full of remarkable highs.

When she won the Mizuho Americas Open in May, it was her sixth tournament title in seven starts. She won five in a row at one point, becoming only the third LPGA player in history to achieve that.

But then Korda missed the cut at the U.S. Women’s Open. Then she missed two more cuts. In the six weeks since, she played in only the Evian Championship, finishing tied for 26th.

“Golf is a funny game,” Korda told reporters this week. “Sometimes you feel on top of the world, and in a matter of a couple seconds, you just feel like you’re on the bottom of the sea. So it definitely makes you appreciate the good golf that you play.”

Wednesday’s first round at the Olympics wasn’t her best. But it wasn’t terrible. If anything, perhaps a step in the right direction. Korda opened 3 over on the first eight holes. After a birdie on the ninth hole, she drove into the deep

rough on No. 10 and chunked her second shot well short of the green. “In like the really thick stuff,” she said later. “I could barely see my ball.”

Nonetheless, Korda was able to convert a difficult up-and-down for par, sinking a 15-foot putt that was her longest of the day. It seemed a turning point. Korda played the back nine in 2 under and “got into that groove,” an encouraging development heading into Thursday’s second round.

Because we know what Korda can do in that groove.

She has the game, and she has the star potential. Korda has nearly a million followers on Instagram. As the Olympic tournament started, an article about her was published by Vogue Magazine.

She has the pedigree, too. She’s part of a sporting family. Her father, Petr Korda, was a pro tennis star for the Czech Republic, winning the 1998 Australian Open. Her mother, Regina Kordova, played pro tennis, as does her brother Sebastian. Her older sister Jessica has played on the LPGA tour.

Entering this week, Korda has played in 12 LPGA events this year. Compare that to men’s No. 1 Scheffler, whose gold medal came in his 17th tournament in 2024.

It’s a choice for her well-being, she said.

“For me,” Korda said, “it was like I finally realized that everything that I did at the start of the year, I kind of enjoyed it a little bit more with my family and realized how big of an accomplishment that is. That life and golf and everything is such a roller coaster, it’s good to just step away and appreciate the whole journey.”

She’s appreciating it this week in France, enjoying an “amazing experience” and a tournament with crowded galleries.

“The atmosphere was insane,” Korda said. “I can’t even imagine what it is like in Celine’s group. I’ve heard a couple of the roars. ... I saw the crowds for the men, and to see similar crowds for women is just kind of, for me, mind-blowing.”

Gabby Thomas a late bloomer champ



Lindsay Schnell
USA TODAY

PARIS – Here in the land of French fries, American sprinter Gabby Thomas has some strong opinions on the snack locally known as “frites.”

She knows it might be unconventional, but Thomas first needs to share that a sneaky good French fry distributor is Jack in the Box. Don’t knock the curly fries until you’ve tried them, she told USA TODAY Sports.

But when it comes to the classic, got-to-have-it style, Thomas said there’s no competition: It’s McDonald’s all the way.

She admits some bias: Thomas, the 200-meter specialist who won gold on Tuesday at the Paris Olympics, used to work at McDonald’s.

That revelation about Thomas gives off a decidedly “stars, they’re just like us!” vibe. But study her résumé closer, and you’ll begin to understand why Thomas is not, in fact, like the average American. Consider:

- She’s competing in her second consecutive Olympics and is the defending bronze medalist in her event. She’s run the fastest 200 time (21.78 seconds) in the world this year.

- She went to Harvard to study neurobiology.

- She has her master’s degree in public health with a concentration in epidemiology, and, when not training, volunteers at an Austin, Texas, health clinic.

Now, she’s added gold medalist to that list. Talk about being unrelatable.

What is relatable? Thomas, 27, is the definition of a late bloomer. And it’s a label she wears proudly.

She wound up at Harvard, not exactly known as an athletics powerhouse, not only because her mom, Jennifer Randall, stressed the importance of academics growing up but because “in high school, I was not a standout athlete. I wasn’t recruited heavily by track schools and track programs.” The Olympics were never a goal. She wanted to be a doctor and figured Harvard was the perfect place to take the first step.

The lessons she learned at home and Harvard continue to drive her.

‘It’s really easy to fall in love with running’

Randall raised Thomas and her twin brother Andrew – he’s “only older by a few seconds,” Thomas stressed – as a single mom. Though Randall didn’t have “two pennies to scrub together,” as Thomas has previously said, she never used it as an excuse. She urged her children to chase their passions. While Andrew gravitated toward art and graphic design, Gabby fell hard for track.



Gabby Thomas cruised to victory Tuesday in the women’s 200 meters final at Stade de France in Paris. CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

“It’s really easy to fall in love with running,” Thomas said. “It can be painful at times, but it’s such a beautiful sport. You set goals and go after them in the purest form – and when you achieve those goals, it’s such an addicting feeling.”

It helped, she said, that her mom never pressured or forced her into sport. She only encouraged it.

Thomas got into track initially because her mom loved and admired Allyson Felix, the most decorated female U.S. track athlete of all time. Thomas grew to idolize Felix, too, a fact she better appreciates now because younger USATF athletes like McKenzie Long, who finished third at trials and joined Thomas in Paris, idolize her.

“I’ve always wanted to run like her,” Long said after that race, adding that she was “fangirling so bad” being in the lane next to Thomas, “but it’s just really cool to have her as a teammate.”

(Also of note: At the ESPYs, Felix told USA TODAY Sports she was most excited in Paris to watch the women’s 200, her favorite event, partially because “Gabby’s been looking really good.”)

In second Olympics, Thomas is still ‘so fresh and excited about the sport’

When it was time to pick a college, Harvard felt fitting. Thomas said it was the perfect place to balance celebrating your achievements (you got into Harvard!) while staying humble (everyone else here is doing something amazing too!)

A 22-time Ivy League champion, she decided to forgo her senior year of eligibility to turn pro, moving to Austin to train full time.

She’s still quite nerdy, and happy to admit it. Most pro track athletes focus on their sport, but Thomas finds that working in public health helps her mental balance. Her clinic work – she runs a hypertension intervention program, working with patients who are hypertensive, or have high blood pressure – gives her room to “act like a normal person,” and a connection to her community.

Many of her patients have no idea that the first time they talk to her, they’re chatting with a world-class athlete. And she’s just fine with that.

Track will end some day, and she wants the transition to her next chapter to be as seamless as possible. Her end goal is to be the CEO of a hospital. She knows she’s on an unconventional path, one unlike most Olympians. She wouldn’t have it any other way.

“I do think that in a way getting a later start has been helpful because it just keeps me so fresh and excited about the sport,” said Thomas, who also owns a silver medal in the 4x100 relay. “And I know that I’m still working up to my potential and there’s still so much room for me to peak.”

Why she isn’t attempting the 200 and 400 double

Many thought Thomas would try for a 200-400 double at the U.S. track and field trials in Eugene, Oregon, setting her up to win multiple individual medals in Paris. Instead, she opted to focus on the 200, though she admitted that during the 400 trials final she felt a pang of jealousy.

“I think it’s really easy to get carried away and swept up in these medal counts, doing everything and showing the world what you can do, showing off,

all of that,” she said before the Paris Olympics. “Part of it was I wanted to show the world, hey I can double. It took a lot of discipline to sit down and say no, my personal goal is to get a gold medal in the 200 meter at the Paris Olympics – what can we do to get there?”

Thomas won the 200 at trials by nearly a tenth of a second (her 21.78, the fastest time in the world this season, came in the semis) and if she’d doubled, she’s not sure that extra tenth would have been there.

This summer’s trials were a stark difference from three years ago, she recalled with a laugh, when “I was here to have a good time.” Qualifying for the trials in that year, she said, was her “personal Olympics.” Everything after that, including making Team USA and winning bronze, was gravy.

But it was noticeably different this year.

“As a new athlete, you really don’t know how to handle the rounds (at trials),” Thomas said. “Every round is kind of like a final and you have to run it really hard. Having that experience really helps. ... This year, there were higher expectations: People were looking up to me, people were expecting me to do big things and make the team.”

And yet, she faced her own obstacle on her way to 2024 that threatened to derail her dream. A significant hamstring pull kept her out of the 2022 World Championships, an especially heartbreaking and frustrating injury because it meant she would miss out on the first World Championship meet held on U.S. soil. On the calendar, it might seem like it happened long ago. But to Thomas, it feels more recent.

“Coming back from an injury, it’s a tough thing to do for an athlete because not only are you coming back from the physical aspect and having to heal and recover, but emotionally it’s really hard to gain that confidence back ... to where you’re on the (starting) line and feel like you’re in control,” Thomas said. “You have to trust yourself again, and that’s a whole process.”

When she ran her 21.78 in the trials semis, she said it surprised her because she “didn’t expect to run that fast feeling that good.” Each meet, she feels a little more in control, and a little more like herself. It bodes well for what she can do in Paris.

Thomas hopes to do more than just win gold in her specialty, though. She also wants to inspire people to chase what they want in life, even if it seems impossible because they started after everyone else. She wants to make sure they understand it’s OK to be different, and take a different journey.

“I think I’m a testament to, if you find joy and feel like you want to pursue something, you can do just that,” she said. “It doesn’t matter when you start or how you start, it just matters that you do it.”

Cole Hocker led 1500 at most opportune time

Austin Curtright
and Chase Goodbread
USA TODAY NETWORK

U.S. track and field runner Cole Hocker only led for a few strides in the 1,500-meter run on Tuesday at the 2024 Paris Olympics, but it was when it mattered most.

Hocker, who took home the gold medal in the event, turned on the jets at the final stretch to secure his first Olympic medal. His time of 3:27.65, nearly three seconds faster than his personal best, set an Olympic record along the way.

“It’s an unbelievable feeling,” Hocker said after the race. “I just felt like I was getting carried by the stadium and God. My body just kind of did it for me. My mind was all there and I saw that finish line.”

The 23-year-old from Indianapolis also helped the United States podium two athletes for the first time in the modern Games, as Yared Nuguse took the bronze medal. United Kingdom’s Josh Kerr took the silver medal.

In a stunning win, Hocker came from behind with a blistering pace over the final stretch to overtake Kerr and break the Olympic record of 3:28.32 previously set at the Tokyo Games in 2021 by Norway’s Jakob Ingebrigtsen.

“With 100 meters to go, I knew I had enough,” Hocker said. “I haven’t seen the race replay or anything, but I saw Jakob, I feel like he was thinking about Kerr and started drifting out, and I thought I’d take advantage of that and try to punch that inside, which I’ve been able to do a couple times in my career.

“He’s a smart enough racer where he



Cole Hocker celebrates after winning the men’s 1500-meter final Tuesday at the 2024 Paris Olympics. JAMES LANG/USA TODAY SPORTS

closed that down immediately, so I had to reassess.

“It was special to be able to attack not only once, but twice.”

Hocker is just the fourth American to win an Olympic gold medal in the 1,500.

The race had been billed as a showdown between Kerr and the confidently outspoken Ingebrigtsen, who not only saw his Olympic record fall but was overtaken late in the race by Nuguse for the bronze and faded to fourth.

It was Hocker, however, who overtook them all.

“I was staying relaxed, and with 150 (meters) to go, I’ve never heard a crowd like that. At that point I really didn’t feel

anything and I just went,” Hocker added.

“It felt like another race in terms of kicking by people. I’ve done it, I feel like, countless times in my career so far.

“And this time it just happened to be against the Olympic champion (Ingebrigtsen) and the world champion (Kerr).”

Ingebrigtsen opened an early lead and held it through the first 1,200 meters.

That’s when Hocker, who was in fourth place with just 300 meters left, made his big move for the upset and historic Olympic glory.

“(Kerr and Ingebrigtsen) have had all

the added pressure and all the added noise,” Hocker added. “I think that’s part of this job is blocking out that noise, and it gets harder and harder the more you excel, and I’m sure that’ll change after today. ...

“I’ve been able to fly under the radar for this meet, but I’m sure I won’t anymore.”

Here’s everything to know about Hocker, the latest American to earn a gold medal in Paris:

Gold medalist background

An Indianapolis native, he is competing in his second Olympics, as he also qualified for the Tokyo Olympics (where he placed sixth in the 1,500 in 2021).

The gold medal is his first ever at the Olympics. Hocker ran the 1,500 race at the U.S. Olympic trials in late June, winning with a time of 3:30.59 to qualify for the Paris Games. He smashed his personal best with a 3:27.65 to win gold on Tuesday.

Hocker turned pro in 2021 after running collegiately at Oregon from 2019 to 2021.

At Oregon he won three national championships, winning the indoor mile and 3,000-meter run in 2021 before winning the 1,500-meter outdoor run later that season, his last before turning pro. Hocker fended off Nuguse in the 1,500-meter championship, with the two eventually landing on the 1,500-meter podium at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Hocker turned pro in 2021, qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics.

Goodbread reported from Saint-Denis, France

Breakers emphasize core to fuel moves

Chris Bumbaca

USA TODAY

Six-packs weren't a requirement to qualify for the first-ever breaking competition at the 2024 Paris Olympics. But having one would certainly be beneficial.

For breakers, the key is the core.

In a sport that requires balance, twists, suspensions, freezes and holds, with moves that have names such as windmills and headspins, the center of the human body is the engine.

"I just do a bunch of random core workouts," said Victor Montalvo, aka B-boy Victor.

The more common core exercises Montalvo does are leg raises, "a lot of" crunches and toe touches.

"There's also other core workouts that I don't know the name of, but I just do," he said. "My coach gives them to me and I'm like, 'All right, this looks hard. Let me try.'"

Jeffrey Louis, B-boy Jeffro, said that targeting the lower core toward the hip flexors — areas not hit by the traditional crunch — is essential.

"Nobody's really exercising that lower abdomen area," he said. "For breaking, we use that stuff a lot."

Always passionate about fitness and nutrition, Louis created a program

called "FitBreak" that infuses breaking and traditional exercises.

"So that I'm able to break and work out those muscles that I activate when I'm breaking but in a less impactful way," he said, "so I'm not beating up my body."

To be technically sound and pull off the most complex of moves, the athletes need a high level of mobility and strength in the shoulders as well.

Louis trains that by practicing vertical reaches, "Y-T" shoulder movements (making the shape of those letters with his arms) and "90-90." Most of these are body-weight exercises, although he does throw in some weights.

Sunny Choi, B-girl Sunny, said she sees a strength coach multiple times per week and goes to a massage therapist.

Montalvo took up Muay Thai a couple of years ago mostly because he was simply interested in the martial arts form. Because of the general brutality of combat sport training, it helped his stamina.

But he works out a lot anyway so that way he doesn't have to monitor his diet too closely — a goal to which many humans aspire.

"I work out a lot. I run, I train, so I'm active 24/7," he said. "It's a lifestyle. So for me, I can overeat if I want and I can be pretty flexible."

Olympics

Continued from Page 1C

Olympics or world championships.
— Tom Schad

Team USA snares elusive gold in women's team pursuit

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France — The U.S. finally has its elusive gold medal in women's team pursuit.

The team of Kristen Faulkner, Chloe Dygert, Lily Williams and Jennifer Valente beat New Zealand in the gold medal match of the cycling race Wednesday at the National Velodrome, finishing in 4:04.306.

New Zealand was about 6/10ths of a second behind in 4:04.927, while Great Britain beat Italy for the bronze.

Dygert also won Olympic bronze in the time trial in road cycling this year, while Faulkner heads home with two golds in her first Summer Games after winning the road race on Sunday.

— Dave Birkett

Team USA wins artistic swimming medal for first time in 20 years

SAINT-DENIS, France — Team USA artistic swimmers won their first Olympic medal in the team competition in 20 years, winning silver behind China with gold (996.1389) and ahead of Spain with bronze (900.7319). They entered Wednesday night's team acrobatic routine and overall final ranked second behind the gold medalists and held on to finish second with a total score of 914.3421. Team USA's most recent Olympic medal in the team competition was bronze at the 2004 Athens Games.

— Michelle R. Martinelli

Kenneth Rooks wins silver in 3,000 steeplechase

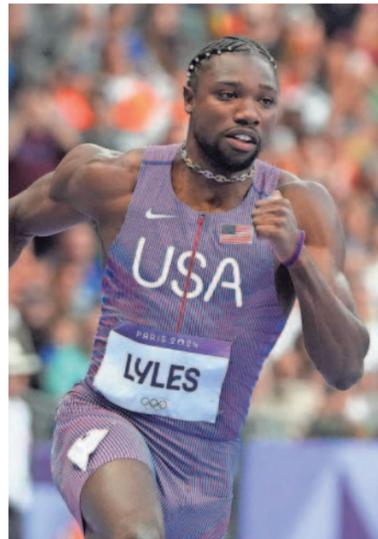
SAINT-DENIS, France — American Kenneth Rooks, ranked 24th in the world in the men's 3,000-meter steeplechase, shocked the field with a silver medal Wednesday, clocking a personal-best 8:06.41. After 1,000 meters, Rooks trailed 11 racers, and was running just ninth after 2,000 meters. From there, however, Rooks found another gear and passed the entire field to take the lead with a few hundred meters remaining.

He was overtaken by gold medalist Soufiane El Bakkali of Morocco (8:06.05), and Rooks barely beat bronze medalist Abraham Kibiwot of Kenya (8:06.47). Rooks, the only American in the race, earned Team USA's first men's steeplechase medal since Evan Jager won silver in the 2016 Rio Games.

— Chase Goodbread

Team USA men's volleyball misses out on gold medal match again

PARIS — A gold medal escaped the



Noah Lyles runs in the men's 200 meters semifinals Wednesday.

KIRBY LEE/USA TODAY SPORTS

U.S. men's volleyball team again.

After taking a 2-1 set lead against world No. 1 Poland in the semifinals, the U.S. dropped the final two sets and Poland advanced to the gold medal game with a 25-23, 25-27, 14-25, 25-23, 15-13. The U.S. will play for bronze.

USA adds skateboarding park silver medal

PARIS — American Tom Schaar can add Olympic medalist to his long list of skateboarding accomplishments.

The youngest-ever X Games gold medalist and the first skateboarder to successfully pull off a trick with 1080 degrees of rotation in competition, Schaar took silver at the men's park competition on Wednesday.

Though he had two successful runs, he slightly trailed Australia's Keegan Palmer. With one more chance to post the best score, Schaar upped the ante but came off the board toward the end of his run.

Palmer's winning run was scored 93.11, just barely ahead of Schaar's 92.23. Brazil's Augusto Akio took the bronze medal.

Hampton Morris secures men's weightlifting medal

PARIS — For the first time in 40 years, an American man has won an Olympic medal in weightlifting.

Hampton Morris, a 20-year-old, ended the decadeslong drought by winning bronze on Wednesday. He was in fifth place after his snatch but he leapfrogged into medal position thanks to the second lift of competition, clean and jerk, where he is the reigning world record holder in his weight class. Between the two lifts, the 135-pound Morris hoisted a combined weight of about 657 pounds.

— Tom Schad



Jeffrey Louis, known as B-Boy Jeffro, trains at the Centre International de Haute Performance du Val d'Oise. GEOFFROY VAN DER HASSELT/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Breaking

Continued from Page 1C

he said. "So we were our own nutritionist. We were our own strength and conditioning coaches. And we didn't know what we were doing. So now that we get those resources, it's really helpful."

Breaking battles at the Olympic level can last from 30 seconds to a minute, depending on the track and the competitor's moves. Each Olympian will go at least six rounds in the round-robin first part of the tournament. Then it moves into a best-of-three knockout setup.

Performing dynamic movements for that long requires a professional level of physical fitness, Louis said. At the same time, breakers are creating.

"This is hip-hop," he said. "You have to have your own style. You have to have your own flavor. How do you do that? By being artistic."

For London Reyes, a member of the New York City Breakers during the 1980s, breaking culture reminds him of basketball culture — and the former Nike entertainment executive within the basketball division would know.

"Why can't breaking be a sport and a culture as well?" Reyes asked. "So that's what it is. It could be two things at once — you can walk and chew gum at the same time."

The physical element is why the Olympics deemed it worthy of inclusion in Paris, even if it was left off the 2028 Los Angeles Games program. "You have to eat well, you have to train, you have to stretch, you have to take care of your body," Reyes said. "You

have to be strong mentally, physically, spiritually.

"Everything is about the competition, and it's no different than the dance, and that's the beauty of it."

How far breaking has come physically, artistically

Where can breaking go from a technical standpoint in the next 20 years? Reyes isn't sure.

"They would have to fly, I guess," he said.

In all seriousness, he thinks the ability to perform all moves both clockwise and counterclockwise will be essential. He can also see a difficulty system similar to gymnastics being ingrained in the judging.

Back in the day, Reyes said, when the "OGs" did headspins, they were just called "one-shots" or "pencils" because they only did one rotation. Now the headspins are "continuous."

"Now they bring their legs in, they bring them out, they go reach over, they grab their leg," Reyes said. "It's just different variations of it. It's just incredible what they do today."

The same thing applies to footwork. What started as simple steps is done with speed, agility and flexibility in the present day.

"So they just keep elevating and keep just doing different creative things out of it," Reyes said.

And for anybody who says it's not a sport?

"I would tell them, 'Try to do a tenth of what we do.' That's what I would say," Louis said.

"And you would see how much athleticism, how much creativity, artistry, style, that goes into it."

Freeman

Continued from Page 1C

1999, and after his playing days were over, he'd go on to become one of the most important figures in the history of the sport as a fighter for LGBTQ rights.

No, he wasn't a ferocious hitter. He wasn't known for his speed. He was barely known for his ability as a player. Instead, Bean would achieve more off the field, becoming a symbol of inclusion and empathy, in a sport that didn't (and still doesn't) always have large quantities of either. He'd rise to become MLB's senior vice president for DEI and special assistant to the commissioner.

Bean did something simple but powerful: He changed lives. It's possible he also saved them.

Bean, the longtime LGBTQ advocate, has died at the age of 60, the league said Tuesday. His legacy is deep and multifaceted because he impacted people



Billy Bean played for three MLB teams in the 1980s and 1990s.

JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA/USA TODAY SPORTS

Billy Bean, one of the kindest and most respected individuals I have ever known," MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement. "Billy was a friend to countless people across our game, and he made a difference through his constant dedication to others. He made Baseball a better institution, both on and off the field, by the power of his example, his empathy, his communication skills, his deep relationships inside and outside our sport, and his commitment to doing the right thing. We are forever grateful for the enduring impact that Billy made on the game he loved, and we will never forget him."

Baseball, and sports overall, needed Bean. Someone who pushed for change, and was greatly respected, but also a voice on the phone, or a hand on the shoulder, to players who were making the same extremely personal decisions he did. That Ruby did.

Bean isn't a hero who made a great play in the World Series. In many ways, he's bigger than that.

such as Ruby in a more public way, but it's believed he also counseled closeted players. We may never know just how many lives he positively changed for the

better. The good he did could be incalculable.

"Our hearts are broken today as we mourn our dear friend and colleague,

Wrestling's 'young GOAT' Amit Elor golden

Tom Schad
USA TODAY

MANHEIM, Pa. – It is not normal, the way that people in the women's wrestling community talk about Amit Elor, who won gold at the Paris Olympics. The 20-year-old is often described as a prodigy, sure. A wunderkind. A phenomenon. But in some corners of the sport, her ascent is talked about almost like it's a rare meteorological event – a 50-year comet, flashing across the sky.

Terry Steiner, the head coach of the U.S. women's wrestling team since 2002, calls her "a generational talent" and doesn't think Team USA has ever had anyone like her, at least not since he's been around. Iowa women's wrestling coach Clarissa Chun describes her as "a young GOAT" who is destined for the Hall of Fame. "I believe that," Chun said. "As long as she stays healthy."

Their reasons for optimism are clear. In each of the past two seasons, Elor has won under-20, under-23 and senior world championships, dominating opponents at each of the three age divisions she is eligible to enter. She has not lost an international match since 2019. And in the 37 matches since that loss, according to United World Wrestling statistics, she has outscored her opponents by a margin of 322-16.

"We don't come around these athletes very often," Steiner said. "She's special."

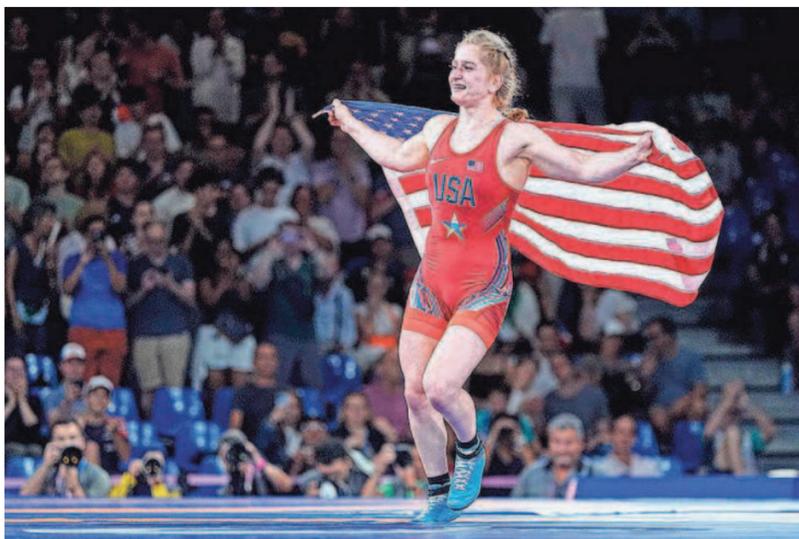
Even if she might not always feel that way. "Sometimes I'm like, 'Why is everybody so interested in me?'" said Elor, who became the youngest U.S. wrestler to win an Olympic gold medal. "I don't know. I just feel after everything I've been through, I don't feel any different."

Just because Elor has been successful on the mat doesn't mean her journey has been an easy one. In 2018, she mourned the death of her older brother Oshry, killed at his house during an attempted robbery. Then in 2022, her father, Yair, died suddenly under heart-wrenching circumstances in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Monday, her first day of competition in these Games, would have been his 67th birthday. "It just happened to be that way," Elor said. "And I really hope that I can make the finals for him."

Start in wrestling

Elor started wrestling when she was



"I still feel like that little kid who just started wrestling," Amit Elor said Tuesday. "But currently, I just became an Olympic champion." SARAH PHIPPS/USA TODAY SPORTS

4½, hooked by a sport that her mother, Elana, would have preferred she avoid.

The youngest of six kids, Elor remembers tagging along to her older brother Orry's wrestling practices in the Bay Area and being immediately entranced. She begged and begged and begged her mother to let her give the sport a try. Eventually, Elana Elor relented, but under one condition. She told her daughter the wrestling club didn't have a program for kids her age, but she could have a one-on-one conversation with the head coach – who was "very intimidating," Elana said – and ask him for a chance.

Months before her fifth birthday, Elor went to the coach's office. He obliged.

Elor said she wasn't an especially confrontational or physical kid, though strength runs in her family. Her brothers played high school football or wrestled, each an imposing figure with a large frame, like their father. Yair Elor immigrated from Israel to throw shut out for the track and field team at Boise State.

Wrestling as a child meant that, until she was 10, Amit competed only against boys. She recalls sometimes feeling isolated and unwanted. Boys would complain about having to wrestle her or make excuses about why they couldn't. In other cases, she said, they would get angry and almost take it out on her, getting unnecessarily physical and causing minor injuries on the mat.

Elor's mother, meanwhile, recalled driving around to different wrestling groups in the Bay Area, trying to find coaches who wouldn't treat Amit differently. "When she started, they were OK, it was like, 'Oh, there's a girl among the boys,'" Elana Elor said. "But once she started beating up the boys, there were a lot of coaches that didn't like it. They would tell her, 'Go easy on the boys.'"

Elor's nomadic wrestling childhood exposed her to a wide variety of coaching styles, her mother said. She also spent several summers in Israel, where she was exposed to international techniques and training methods, and took up judo and jujitsu at different points.

During one particularly intensive stretch, Elor said she was maintaining a regular wrestling training schedule while also incorporating separate jujitsu sessions, every day: "I was basically training all day long. It was wonderful."

It was around that time that Elor started to view the Olympics as a realistic opportunity.

Orry, who is 11 years older than Amit, had come close to making it to the Games. In 2016, he placed fourth at the U.S. Olympic trials in Greco-Roman wrestling. A few years later, after Amit won an under-15 Pan American title in Mexico, it became clear that she would also get her shot.

"I think people will look at her physically and say she's a specimen – so

strong for her age – and that's part of it," said Steiner, the U.S. women's wrestling coach. "But technically, she's very, very sound. Very hard to score on. ... She just does a lot of things well."

Mental toughness

Elor said she's "never truly felt my age," which may be part of the reason why she won her first under-20 world title when she was just 17 and her first senior world championship at 18.

Elana Elor said there's also a mental toughness that has enabled her daughter to compartmentalize and continue competing through periods of tragedy and grief – including the deaths of two people who were closest to her.

Elor's mother said they were at a wrestling tournament in 2018 when they received a phone call that Amit's older brother Oshry had been shot in what police later described as a marijuana-related robbery attempt, in which a group of men purchasing marijuana from Oshry later attacked and shot him.

Then, about two years later, Elor was confronted with tragedy again with the sudden death of her father. Although some of the details remain unclear, even among members of the family, Amit's brother Orry said their father had isolated himself at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic due to a fear of catching the disease. He added that the family believes he had fallen victim to misinformation and conspiracy theories.

Amit said her father's death was difficult for her to process in part because of how much he had supported her throughout her wrestling career and the fact that he was gone by the time it took off. Yair Elor died in April 2022, and she won her first senior world title five months later.

"It was really hard to continue after that and just be OK, mentally," she said. "I think just knowing how much he believed in me and how much he supported me is what led me to continue and power through. Because I just wanted to make him proud."

In a sport where anything can happen, she said she often surprises herself with her own performances. At her first world championships, for instance she recalled being "shocked" every time the official raised her hand.

"I hope I can shock myself at the Olympics, too," she said before the Games.

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NOTICES	NOTICES	NOTICES	NOTICES	NOTICES	BUSINESS & SERVICES
PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
<p>On August 6, 2024, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a proposal to list the eastern regal fritillary (Argynnis idalia idalia) as an endangered species and to list the western regal fritillary (A. i. occidentalis) as a threatened species with a 4(d) rule under the Endangered Species Act, opening a 60-day public comment period. The eastern regal fritillary is found in a single location near Annville, Pennsylvania, and the western regal fritillary is found in portions of the States of Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. The proposed rule can be found at https://www.regulations.gov under Docket No. FWS-R6-ES-2023-0182. The 60-day comment period ends on October 7, 2024, and comments on the proposed rule can be made via the rule link.</p>	<p>REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS</p> <p>Sourcewell, a State of Minnesota local government unit and service cooperative, is requesting proposals for Body Armor with Related Accessories, Equipment, and Services to result in a contracting solution for use by its Participating Entities.</p> <p>Sourcewell Participating Entities include thousands of governmental, higher education, K-12 education, nonprofit, tribal government, and other public agencies located in the United States and Canada.</p> <p>A full copy of the Request for Proposals can be found on the Sourcewell Procurement Portal https://portal.sourcewell-mn.gov</p> <p>Only proposals submitted through the Sourcewell Procurement Portal will be considered.</p> <p>Proposals are due no later than September 19, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. Central Time, and late proposals will not be considered.</p>	<p>UCC Public Sale Notice Related to Assets of Gresham Worldwide, Inc., formerly known as Giga-tronics Incorporated</p> <p>Please take notice that each of Walleve Opportunities Master Fund Ltd. ("Walleve") and Arena Investors, LP ("Arena"; Walleve and Arena are together "Lender"), together as secured party, (i) hold claims against and security interests in the assets of Gresham Worldwide, Inc., formerly known as Giga-tronics Incorporated ("Debtor") under certain loan documents and liens; and (ii) offer for sale at a public auction pursuant to the Uniform Commercial Code, all of the tangible and intangible assets of Debtor pledged to it, including, without limitation, all personal property and real property of Debtor, including, without limitation, Debtor's right, title and interest in and to the following, whether now owned or hereafter acquired (collectively, the "Collateral"): (a) Accounts; (b) Chattel Paper; (c) Commercial Tort Claims; (d) Deposit Accounts; (e) Documents, (f) General Intangibles; (g) Goods, including without limitation any and all Inventory, and all Equipment and any and all Fixtures; (h) Instruments; (i) Investment Property; (j) Letter-of-Credit Rights; (k) Supporting Obligations; (l) Instruments; (m) Intellectual Property; (n) all cash and currency; (o) any and all other personal property and interests in property; (p) all accessions and additions to, and substitutions and replacements of, any and all of the foregoing; and (q) all proceeds and products of the foregoing, and all insurance pertaining to the foregoing and proceeds thereof. All capitalized terms have the respective meanings ascribed thereto under the Uniform Commercial Code as in effect in the State of New York from time to time.</p> <p>Arena and Walleve, as noteholders and the secured party have each appointed Arena to act as collateral agent on their behalf (in such capacity, "Collateral Agent") for purposes of the perfection and enforcement of all liens on and security interests in the Collateral and the enforcement of Debtor's obligations to Lender, including conducting the subject public auction.</p> <p>The virtual public auction will be held on August 15, 2024 at 11:00 AM Eastern Time via Zoom. Information on how to participate by remote means is available upon request from the undersigned counsel. The Debtor and/or certain of its subsidiaries are generally in the domestic and international defense and technology industries.</p> <p>The sale will be on an "as-is, where-is" basis, with no express or implied warranties, representations, statements or conditions of any kind made by Lender or Collateral Agent or any person acting for or on behalf of Lender or Collateral Agent, without any recourse whatsoever to Lender, Collateral Agent, or any other person acting for or on behalf of Lender or Collateral Agent. Collateral Agent, on behalf of Lender, reserves the right to exclude certain Collateral at the sale or designate the Collateral to be sold in discrete bidding lots.</p> <p>Collateral Agent, on behalf of Lender (or any assignee of Lender), reserves the right to credit bid, set a minimum reserve price, reject any or all bids (including without limitation any bid that it deems to have been made by a bidder that is unable to satisfy the requirements imposed by it upon prospective bidders in connection with the sale or to whom in its sole judgment a sale may not lawfully be made) and terminate or adjourn the sale to another time, at the sale or at any other time without further notice. Collateral Agent, on behalf of Lender (or any assignee of Lender), further reserves the right to restrict prospective bidders to those who will represent that they are purchasing any equity interests constituting Collateral for their own account for investment not with a view to the distribution or resale of such equity interests, to verify that any certificate for any equity interests to be sold bears a legend substantially to the effect that such interests have not been registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), and may not be disposed of in violation of the provisions of the Securities Act and to impose such other limitations or conditions in connection with the sale of any equity interests constituting Collateral as it deems advisable in order to comply with the Securities Act or any other applicable law.</p> <p>All bids (other than credit bids of Collateral Agent, on behalf of Lender (or any assignee of Lender)) must be for cash, and the successful bidder must be prepared to deliver immediately available good funds within three (3) business days after the sale (unless otherwise agreed by Collateral Agent) and otherwise comply with the bidding requirements. Further information concerning the Collateral and the requirements to bid on the Collateral are available from counsel for Collateral Agent listed below.</p> <p>Lisa M. Peters Joel L. Wiegert KUTAK ROCK LLP 1650 Farnam Street Omaha, Nebraska 68102 Telephone: (402) 346-6000 Email: lisa.peters@kutakrock.com joel.wiegert@kutakrock.com</p>	<p>Do you struggle with low mood or a lack of energy?</p> <p>An online research study from Princeton University is looking for participants to try a self-help tool for depression symptoms.</p> <p>Find out more here or scan the QR code: https://nivlab.princeton.edu/participate/mood</p>	<p>Offering our Best Selling Anti Aging Beauty Mist</p> <p>Sales of 26 million dollars U.S. Buy for \$450K U.S. including long-term Product packaging and shipping. Multimedia Gold mine.</p> <p>541-660-5231 No Texting Willem.biologicaquaresearch@gmail.com</p>	
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Weight DQ shines light on wrestling 'dark side'

Tom Schad
USA TODAY

PARIS – A female wrestler from India was disqualified from her gold medal bout at the Paris Olympics on Wednesday morning after weighing in about 100 grams above the maximum limit for her weight class.

That is about 0.22 pounds or 3.5 ounces – roughly the weight of a bar of soap.

The shocking news not only knocked Vinesh Phogat out of the 50-kilogram Olympic final against American Sarah Hildebrandt, where she would've been guaranteed to win no worse than a silver medal. Under international wrestling rules, Phogat's failure to make weight resulted in a full disqualification. She will technically finish dead last.

U.S. wrestling icon Jordan Burroughs, who is on the call for NBC in Paris, described the situation on X as "tragic."

"She has looked amazing this week, and deserved to be on that podium," Burroughs wrote.

The Indian Olympic Association's chief medical officer, Dinshaw Pardiwala, said in a statement that Phogat used "all possible drastic measures" to lose weight during a sleepless night – including spending time in a sauna, restricting fluids and even cutting off her hair. She was the first Indian wrestler to reach an Olympic final, and her gold or silver would've been the best finish for an Indian athlete at the Paris Games to date.

Phogat's sudden disqualification sent shock waves across the wrestling world and particularly in India, where high-ranking sports and political officials, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, have weighed in publicly on the story.

But it also casts a bright spotlight on what recently crowned Olympic gold medalist Amit Elor described to USA TODAY Sports earlier this year as "the dark side of the sport," particularly in women's wrestling: Cutting weight.

"It's something that a lot of times, if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time, it can be really promoted and it's very unnecessary – especially from a young age," said Elor, who won gold at 68 kilograms on Tuesday night.



India's Vinesh Phogat (red) wrestles Cuba's Yusneylis Guzman Lopez (blue) in their women's freestyle 50kg semifinal match Tuesday in Paris. PUNIT PARANJPE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

"For women, I think weight cutting is very unhealthy and not recommended. Not only physically but mentally, I think it can ruin your relationship with the sport. It makes it less about wrestling and more about sweating and dieting and feeling hungry and tired and weak – and those things are unnecessary, especially when you're just starting out."

Elor, 20, said she is thankful that her parents did not let her cut weight when she was first getting started. At the elite and professional level, however, it is commonplace.

At Champ-de-Mars Arena this week, for example, any wrestler who gets into the mix for a medal winds up competing over parts of two days. They are required to weigh in early each morning, to ensure they are below the maximum allowable weight in their division, but they can then eat and drink as needed after that to recover their energy.

For Phogat, that schedule led to a frantic and perhaps dangerous roller coaster of weight gains and losses over a span of 24 hours, according to information released by Indian Olympic officials and reported by Indian news outlets. According to news reports, she easily made weight Tuesday morning but then gained about 2.7 kilograms – or roughly 6 pounds – over the course of the day while rehydrating and refueling after three bouts.

Pardiwala, the Team India medical officer, said that Phogat's nutritionist had anticipated she would gain only about half that amount. The team soon realized that their normal weight-cutting measures – such as "a calculated restriction of food and water" and "sweating from exercises and sauna" – would not work. After a reportedly sleepless night, they resorted to cutting her hair. But to no avail.

After not making weight, Team India said, Phogat was hospitalized for possible dehydration and had blood tests performed. She "feels perfectly well" but is disappointed, the Indian Olympic Association added.

"After three tough matches against world class opponents, no athlete should have to spend the night preparing for a Gold medal in this manner," Burroughs wrote in another tweet, before later lobbying for Olympic organizers to give Phogat a silver medal.

Phogat is one of the many wrestlers in Paris who had to switch out of their usual weight class to compete at the Olympics, where only six weight classes are offered in women's wrestling rather than the usual 10 that are contested at world championships.

In Wednesday's final, Hildebrandt defeated Yusneylis Guzman of Cuba 3-0 for the gold medal.

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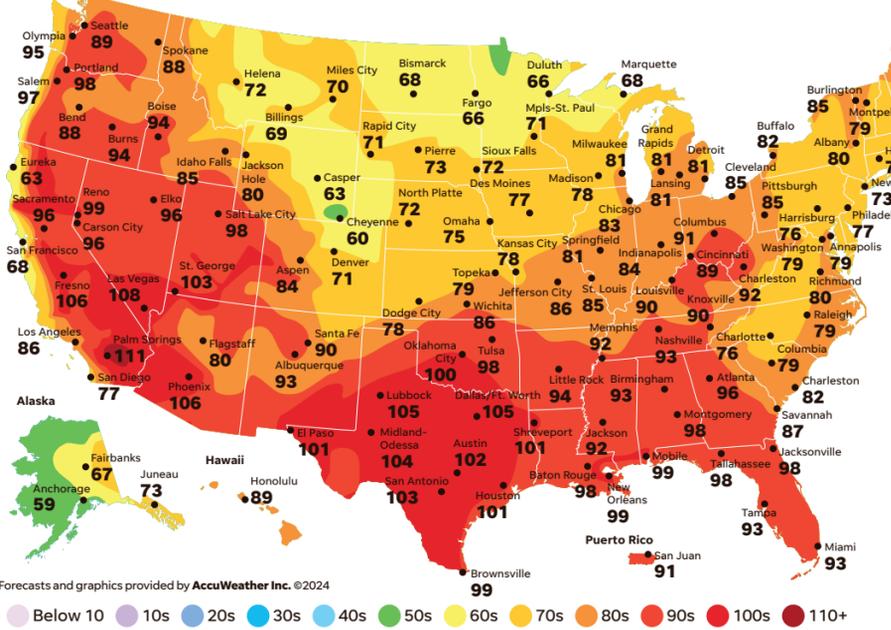
TODAY'S FORECAST

Debby will continue to produce flooding and isolated tornadoes in eastern North Carolina today. Significant rainfall may result in flooding as far west as the Carolina Piedmont and as far north as Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. Flooding on streets and in poor drainage areas can occur. Prolonged heavy rainfall and storm surge can lead to life-threatening flooding.

Elsewhere, thunderstorms can bring flash flooding and localized damaging wind gusts to northern Arizona and western New Mexico. The desert Southwest will be seasonably hot. The highest temperatures compared to the historical average will be from central Oklahoma southward through much of Texas.

A few locations may approach daily record-high temperatures. Meanwhile, fall-like air will be found in the northern Plains.

TODAY'S HIGH TEMPERATURES



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PRECIPITATION FORECAST

T-storms Rain Snow Ice/mix



EXTREMES Note: For contiguous 48 states through 3 p.m. ET yesterday. HOTTEST: 102° Frederick, Okla. COLDEST: 39° Stanley, Idaho

TOP TRAVEL CITIES Air quality index (AQI)

CITY	TODAY	FRI	CITY	TODAY	FRI	CITY	TODAY	FRI	CITY	TODAY	FRI	CITY	TODAY	FRI									
ATLANTA	Humid 96/75	T-storms 78/75	BOSTON	Turning cloudy 71/62	Rain, humid 78/72	CHARLOTTE	Wind, rain 76/71	Cloudy, warmer 92/72	CHICAGO	Partly sunny 83/59	Not as warm 76/58	DALLAS/FT. WORTH	Sunny, hot 105/81	Stray t-storm 100/80	DENVER	Stray t-storm 71/58	Humid 81/66	HONOLULU	Partly sunny 89/75	Hot 101/79	LAS VEGAS	Partly sunny 108/85	Partly sunny 86/64
BALTIMORE	T-storms 81/69	Rain, humid 78/72	CHICAGO	Cloudy, warmer 92/72	Not as warm 76/58	DALLAS/FT. WORTH	Sunny, hot 105/81	Stray t-storm 100/80	DENVER	Stray t-storm 71/58	Humid 81/66	HONOLULU	Partly sunny 89/75	Hot 101/79	LAS VEGAS	Partly sunny 108/85	Partly sunny 86/64						
BOSTON	Turning cloudy 71/62	Rain, humid 78/72	CHARLOTTE	Wind, rain 76/71	Cloudy, warmer 92/72	CHICAGO	Partly sunny 83/59	Not as warm 76/58	DALLAS/FT. WORTH	Sunny, hot 105/81	Stray t-storm 100/80	DENVER	Stray t-storm 71/58	Humid 81/66	HONOLULU	Partly sunny 89/75	Hot 101/79	LAS VEGAS	Partly sunny 108/85	Partly sunny 86/64			
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Algerian will get last word with a medal



Dan Wolken
Columnist
USA TODAY

PARIS – The only relevant issue that remains unresolved in the weeklong brouhaha around Algerian boxer Imane Khelif is whether she will go home with a gold medal Friday night.

Every other player in this story has had their say, and so now it's time for a full accounting of where everybody stands.

The Algerian people? They're with Khelif. They showed up by the thousands for her semifinal bout Tuesday night. They roared to the rafters when she entered the ring against Thailand's Janjaem Suwannapheng, and they shook their green-and-white flags when she landed a right-handed blow in the third round that put an exclamation point on her victory.

The International Boxing Association? After shaking up these Olympics with accusations that Khelif failed a "sex test" at its 2023 world championships, the IBA's clownish news conference here Monday served only to make its leadership – and particularly its Russian leader Umar Kremlev – look incompetent, vindictive and corrupt. Any relevance the IBA had in the world of amateur boxing has been pushed further to the fringes.

The International Olympic Committee? It's been steadfast in refusing to give the IBA and its accusations even a millimeter of credibility as they pertain to what is happening with these Olympics. Khelif was eligible to compete here under IOC rules, any IBA testing is irrelevant to that reality, and backtracking on that in any way would open a Pandora's box to an Olympics where women are being hauled into doctor's offices because their competitors think they look too much like a man.

The online rage mob? They thought, when Khelif connected with a vicious punch to her first-round opponent's face, that they finally had the thing they've been warning about: A man pretending to be a woman inflicting physical harm to a real woman in a sporting event. When it became clear that every bit of evidence in Khelif's life and backstory points to her being born a woman, they shifted their obsession to chromosomes and hormones. Five minutes after these Olympics end, they will forget about Khelif and assuredly move on to something else.

And Khelif? As difficult emotionally



Algeria's Imane Khelif celebrates after defeating Janjaem Suwannapheng on Tuesday in their welterweight semifinal. MICHAEL MADRID/USA TODAY SPORTS

as the last few days likely have been, she appears to have moved on, too. This time, there was no crying. She celebrated her Tuesday victory with smiles and fist pumps. She stopped in the media zone and answered a few questions in Arabic. Though the translations were a bit sketchy, she purportedly said that she did not care about the controversy. The net effect of all of this, regardless of whether she wins gold or silver, is that she is going to return as one of the most famous and beloved athletes in the Arab world.

"I am very happy," she said, according to the official transcript. "I've worked eight years for these Olympics, and I am very proud of this moment. I would like to thank the support from people back home."

And that's going to be where the story ends.

In 2028, boxing is either going to be cut from the Olympics or a new federation like World Boxing is going to be in charge. To the extent that any of the people making these politically motivated attacks on Khelif will care or remember, there will be some interest in whether the new governing body institutes some rules on women with differences in sex development (DSDs) and establish thresholds on testosterone levels that would allow them to compete.

That's a debate World Boxing or some other organization will have to have,

and it will undoubtedly face immense pressure to do so given the dialogue around Khelif.

To be clear, we do not know whether Khelif or any other boxer in this tournament has a DSD, and it's unfair to assume so based on how she looks or how she fights. One of the most disheartening things about this entire story is how many people are making full-throated assumptions about a person and a topic they don't know much about.

For instance, a promotional video that shows Khelif in some intense training sessions started popping up on social media the last couple of days with comments from people saying that it proves she's a man. No, it proves she's a boxer.

She trains the way a boxer trains. She looks the way a boxer looks. She is in a sport where people hit each other in the head. If you took 15 minutes to watch other fights, there is not any visual difference in the way she fights as opposed to her peers.

That's why, until now, Khelif was not considered some overwhelming force in the welterweight division. She was just a pretty good and improving boxer who lost a whole bunch of fights before the wins started to come. There wasn't any controversy around her participation until last year when the IBA disqualified her from its world championships.

About that: At its news conference Monday, the IBA was asked repeatedly

about the circumstances of those tests. It offered no answers that made any sense. At one point, Kremlev ranted in Russian and got so spun up that he said Khelif had the testosterone levels of a man. But the IBA's own statement last week said that Khelif wasn't tested for testosterone but rather a "separate and recognized test."

The IBA also claims that it tested Khelif the first time in 2022 on the basis of other coaches and boxers complaining about her, but that the result was inconclusive.

It raises two questions: Why did the Kremlin-backed IBA wait 10 months to test her again and let her enter the next world championships, only to disqualify her with no due process after she had beaten a previously unbeaten Russian boxer named Azalia Amineva? If the IBA wanted to be taken seriously as a credible source, it should have had an answer to both of those issues. It didn't.

A lot of people who have gotten interested in this story have then asked, OK, so if there was some question about the Russian tests, why not retest under the IOC?

The reason is simple: The IOC either has a process, or it has chaos. When an Olympic cycle begins, every athlete in every sport knows the rules to qualify. Whether you think it's right or wrong, and regardless of whether it might change in the future, this particular kind of testing was not necessary for Khelif to be eligible for the Paris Olympics.

To change that policy on the fly, or to single out an athlete because some organization that is irrelevant to the Olympics dropped a lab report on its doorstep, would have far-reaching unintended consequences. If the IOC allowed that, it would be inviting challenges to all kinds of athletes on all kinds of illegitimate grounds who find themselves having to prove things about themselves that have never before been in question as they try to qualify for an Olympics.

The IOC doesn't merely have a moral imperative to stand behind Khelif in these circumstances, it has a duty to protect its process.

And that's basically that. The saga with Khelif has reached a dead end. There are some questions we'll never get answers to, and the people who are still convinced she's a man will never see it another way.

But Friday, after all of this, Khelif has a chance to leave Paris as a gold medal winner and a superstar who won't have to answer any more questions about this witch hunt for the rest of her life.

Imane Khelif latest victim of exploiting fear



Mike Freeman
Columnist
USA TODAY

(Editor's note: Imane Khelif won Tuesday and will box for a gold medal.)

There was a magnificent tell showing that the entire controversy involving boxer Imane Khelif was entirely phony, propelled by fake outrage, and it happened recently at a Donald Trump rally. There are lessons here for the future that all people who believe in decency and reside on fact-based Earth 1 should heed. Pay close attention.

By now you know the story. Khelif became a target of the right over a phony gender eligibility controversy at the 2024 Paris Olympics. She's been abused on social media despite the International Olympic Committee stating there's no doubt she's a woman.

Recently, at one of his rallies, Trump jumped into the controversy. He mentioned how Khelif beat Italian boxer Angela Carini.

"Now all you have to do is look at the boxers," Trump said. "This young girl from Italy, a champion boxer, she got hit so hard she didn't know what the hell hit her."

"It's a person that transitioned," Trump said of Khelif. "He was a good male boxer. And (Carini) didn't even go down. He hit her with two jabs and she said, 'I'm out.'"

Trump's words about Khelif were so full of lies, former Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban felt compelled to respond. "... She is from Algeria," Cuban posted on X, formerly Twitter. "In Algeria it is illegal to be gay. The idea they would send a gay or trans Olympian is insane."

Why would Trump weigh in on a boxer he clearly knows nothing about at one of his rallies? The answer is he saw the hatred generated by this contrived situ-



On her way to the Olympic final, Imane Khelif, above, fought Angela Carini of Italy in the first round. ISABEL INFANTES/REUTERS

ation and joined in for political reasons.

Yes, you've heard about the story of Imane Khelif, but there's one part of it you may not fully understand. The extremist and angry reaction aimed at her was orchestrated. It was plotted. Brought to you by the same people and corporations that portrayed Colin Kaepernick as disloyal to America. The same media conglomerate that states, almost every year, that a migrant caravan is coming and will destroy the nation. The same people who say Taylor Swift was part of a weird conspiracy.

The same people who tried to destroy

the Dixie Chicks and Bud Light. And Target. And something something something about gas stoves. The same people who said there was a pedophile ring at a pizza parlor. That some nebulous force stole an election. That Barack Obama wasn't a real American and Kamala Harris isn't really Black. That there's a war on Christmas.

These are the anti-DEI, CRT, and 1619 Project people. Harley Davidson is woke people. Disney is woke people.

Big Bird, Dr. Seuss, death panels and Mr. Potato Head people. Vaccines and masks. The "Barbie" movie people.

They are all fake issues that at one point caused massive hyperventilation among extremists.

They are mushroom-clouded by Fox News, which is patient zero for disinformation. Emerging from Fox is a system of polluted tributaries, all looking to mine anger for profit.

That's the main thing here: money. It's a Grifting Industrial Complex. Please remember that.

This is what happened to Khelif. She was shoved into this rage-rewarding algorithmic vortex by an opportunistic grifting meat grinder. There, facts don't matter. Truth doesn't either. In fact, the more anyone tries to replace the lying with reality, it only hardens the grifting resolve.

The good news is that these controversies have become so numerous, and so fake, their shelf life is shrinking. The bad news is that to keep the attention of their marks they have to constantly shift from outrage to outrage. So the cycle doesn't really end.

An even bigger problem is the personal toll these lies can take. They destroy lives and sometimes put people in actual physical harm. The falsities about Khelif led to her publicly pleading for decency.

"I send a message to all the people of the world to uphold the Olympic principles and the Olympic Charter, to refrain from bullying all athletes, because this has effects, massive effects," Khelif said in an interview with SNTV, according to The Associated Press. "It can destroy people, it can kill people's thoughts, spirit and mind. It can divide people. And because of that, I ask them to refrain from bullying."

The right will move on from Khelif and find something else to hate. Just remember this for the next outrage. Remember the goal. It's to get you to hate someone, or something, who likely did nothing but exist.

That's all Khelif is guilty of. Just living.

Breaking goes from Bronx to Paris

Chris Bumbaca
USA TODAY

NEW YORK – Chino Lopez, aka B-boy Action, took a page out of Wilt Chamberlain's book. His breaking crew, the New York City Breakers, didn't own a video camera in the beginning of 1984. But they owned a still camera and had a pen and paper.

"We the New York City Breakers see the Olympic Games as our future," the message begins. "We see break dancing as a future Olympic sport, and ourselves as pioneers in making this dream a reality."

Every member of the group signed the piece of paper. Lopez posed with it. Forty years later, as breaking is about to make its debut at the 2024 Paris Olympics, Lopez's dream turns into reality – and brings an art form for kids trying to survive in the South Bronx to the biggest stage in international sports.

'When people started breaking, it made people stop ... and watch'

The Bronx burned around them in the projects. As kids, they were scared, said London Reyes, a member of the New York City Breakers during the group's heyday of the 1980s.

"You had crack, you had heroin, you had gangs that were running the streets, and they didn't allow people to go from block to block," Reyes told USA TODAY Sports. "And when this dance started to be created, it demanded respect, attention."

By now, the story of DJ Kool Herc elongating the breaks in the beat – hence the term breaking – long enough for people to drop to the floor and start dancing is well-chronicled, and the DJ born in Jamaica, who moved to the Bronx as a 12-year-old with his family in the late 1960s, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2023.

The breaks he invented became known as the "go off," a phrase that has found life generations after its origination.

For the racial minorities of the South Bronx, this became their life force.

"We didn't know why we were here," Reyes told USA TODAY Sports. "And so we did things to create attention, like 'I'm somebody important. Look at me. I'm not a nobody. I'm a somebody.' And that's the importance of this art form."

"When people started breaking, it made people stop what they were doing and watch."

The burnt-down buildings became their playgrounds. They danced in basements, hallways, outside on the concrete. The best days were when they found cardboard to lay down.

Reyes' mother became legitimately concerned for her child when he removed all of the furniture from his bedroom to practice breaking. Watching him spin on his head made her even more worried.

"We caught the attention of the media because they were looking at this like, 'What is wrong with this kid?'" Reyes said.

They listened to music from artists such as Baby Huey and Sly and the Family Stone and, of course, James Brown. To this day, ask a breaker what music he or she loves to dance to – the answer will likely involve Brown. That's because of the drum beats from Brown's drummer, Clyde Stubblefield.

The draw to "B-boy culture," Reyes said, was that it allowed a person to find out who they really were. They had to live it, dress it, breathe it, dance it.

"There are some B-boys out there that don't dress in the traditional B-boy style because they didn't grow up in the '70s. So they're not going to rock the hat like this necessarily," said Reyes, pointing to his cap with the bill slightly turned to the side.

"But they might rock a stiletto, they might rock a beanie, they might rock a baseball cap twisted all the way around. They're going to do something slightly different that fits their persona."

And there was just something about the bravado from a Bronx B-boy – or B-girl. Even back then, breaking was for everybody.

As Reyes put it: "That, 'Yeah, what up dog? What's up baby?'" They fell in love with that person, that attitude like, "Yo, let's go get him. Serve that dude."

"That little flavor, that little twist to it, that's what made people say, 'What are they doing?'" Reyes said. "Just because you could do headspins and windmills doesn't make you a B-boy. What makes you a B-boy is your persona. That persona has to transcend. And people have to feel that."

Soon enough everybody knew what breaking was. It went from the Bronx to Manhattan and Brooklyn. From New York to Florida. From the U.S. to Mexico and Japan and Europe.



London Reyes participates in a rehearsal for the 1985 film "Krush Groove."
PROVIDED BY LONDON REYES



London Reyes participates in a rehearsal for the 1985 film "Krush Groove."
PROVIDED BY LONDON REYES

"We came from the streets in Black and brown communities," said Sunny Choi, aka B-girl Sunny, who will represent the U.S. in Paris. "Breaking has really kind of globalized, and now we have this extremely, beautifully diverse world."

Movies like "Breakin'" and "Beat Street" and "Style Wars" popularized the dance. Crews such as the Breakers, Rock Steady Crew and Dynamic Rockers were earning invites from television programs.

The New York City Breakers performed in front of President Ronald Reagan in 1984, and Lopez even challenged the United States men's gymnastics team, which went on to win gold at the Los Angeles Games that summer, to a floor competition.

"It was just everywhere," Reyes said. "You had toys, you had lunchboxes, posters."

The New York City Breakers wanted to add a layer of professionalism to it all. But as hip-hop went mainstream, the thinking became that if a group looked like they could dance, they could be hired. Along the way, the culture was lost.

"We were kids. We were still in school," Reyes said. "It wasn't until the adults came in and ruined everything. That's when the exploitation came in. That's when it became more about the money and less about the craft."

Eventually, people started speaking and singing over the break beats Herc had invented in the mid-1970s and other DJs had started making later in the decade. Rap music was born.

"Now it dominates the music charts," Reyes said. "Again, right out of the South Bronx."

Pioneers have mixed opinions on breaking as an Olympic sport

The early groups are referred to as the "OGs" in the breaking world. The current generation idolizes them. The respect is real.

"I get a lot of inspiration from the elders, from this dance," said U.S. Olympian Victor Montalvo, aka B-boy Victor.

They had names like Mr. Freeze, Frosty Freeze, Prince Ken Swift and Crazy Legs.

Not all "OGs" are pleased that breaking is now an Olympic sport – or considered a sport at all.

"I think some of 'em feel hurt," Reyes said. "Some of 'em feel like they got left behind. Some of 'em feel like they don't have respect. Some of it is self-inflicted, and some of it is business."

Reyes, who worked in Nike's basketball entertainment division for more than a decade, speaks at high schools and universities occasionally. He'll ask who has seen "Beat Street," for example. Not one hand goes in the air.

"Because nobody was alive," Reyes said. "So we have to move on."

The breaking world needs a new "Beat Street" – and the "Step Up" movies don't count.

A lot of the OGs are not involved in the Olympic movement because they refuse to evolve, Reyes said. They want things to be the way it was in the 1970s and '80s. But in this reality, Reyes added, everybody wins.

"This is a beautiful thing, and I encourage the people to embrace it," he said. "It's important. This is history in the making, and we're not kids anymore, so let's embellish it. Let's live it. Let's breathe it. Let's enjoy it while we

can, because we may not be around tomorrow."

Breaking became more than an activity once Red Bull started sponsoring it. The first "Lords of the Floor" competition in 2001 eventually turned into the popular BC One competition, the biggest international breaking showdown each year.

Breaking is not on the 2028 Los Angeles Games program. For it to be included in an Olympics hosted by the country it was born in gives Reyes mixed feelings.

"It says that we're still in the infant stage and we are still learning, right?" Reyes said. "We're learning the business part of it now. Because the truth is, you have to raise money. You need money to travel, to compete, to train, and we're still behind on that."

"Other countries are maybe a little ahead of us on that. So we have to regroup and we have to be honest with ourselves. We have to say, even though it started here, (it) doesn't mean that we're the gatekeepers."

Legendary battles put breaking into pop culture, elevated status

The competitive aspect of breaking has existed since its beginning in the form of "battles," the climaxes of those movies from the '80s.

Battles took place at New York locations such as Poe Park or Cedar Park. Crews would take the subway to Orchard Beach. The beauty of breaking is that it could go down anytime, anywhere – even the Place de la Concorde in Paris at the 2024 Olympics.

"We didn't need anything. Just music. And music was free," Reyes said. "All you had to do (was) buy the batteries for the radio. That was it."

The battles that will live on forever went down at New York City venues such as the Roxy Theater, Roseland Ballroom and Fun House. One of the most famous battles, Reyes said, was between the Rock Steady Crew and the Dynamic Rockers at the Lincoln Center in 1981. Rock Steady and The Floor Masters went at it at a place called The Grill in Manhattan. The Dynamic Rockers challenged The Floor Masters on a television show called "That's Incredible!" – the tape made its way to Mexico, where Victor Montalvo's father paid 1 peso to watch the recording.

There's also the battle that ended up airing in "Beat Street."

"That was a real battle," Reyes said. "It wasn't like 'Cut, makeup, please.' It was just 'let the cameras roll.' Whatever happens, happens. Which is why 'Beat Street' is considered such a legendary movie."

At the Olympics, competitors won't go against one another in "crews." It's one-on-one. But the spirit of breaking will be the same, Reyes said.

"It started with predominantly Puerto Ricans and Blacks in the community, and you can trace it all the way back to the music from the rock dance," Reyes said.

Reyes has organized a youth competition called "Battle of the Boroughs" for 25 years. The battles are, ideally, held quarterly but take place at least once per year.

"We want to provide opportunity for all young people," Reyes said. "We want to build their character. We want to build their spirit. We want them to know that anything is possible."

Calling it the "new lacrosse," Reyes has been petitioning school districts in Westchester County, immediately north of New York City, to make it an official sport.

His pitch is simple. "I said, 'Did you know breaking was in the Olympics?'" Reyes said.

The lack of expense and equipment appeals to administrators. All that is required is a shirt, floor space, maybe a hat or an elbow pad.

"It is affordable and anybody can do it. You don't have to be 7 feet tall, you don't have to bench 500 pounds," Reyes said. "All you have to do is be creative. And we're all creative."

Looking back, Reyes admits maybe the Breakers talked a big game with their Olympic-sized proclamation.

"It wasn't like it happened a week later," he said.

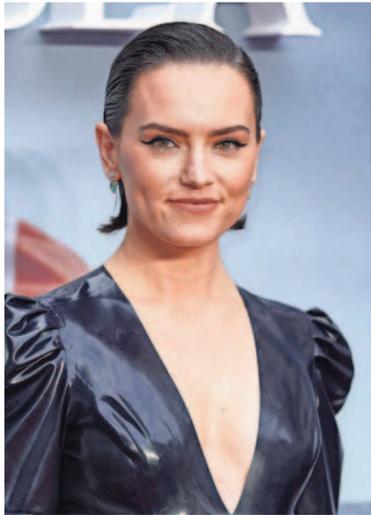
But Chino Lopez's prediction, with photographic proof, eventually came to fruition.

"This shows that we had this vision, that we really believed in this," Reyes said.

Reyes is thankful that he and his former crewmates are alive to see breaking reach the Olympics. He and Kid Nice and Icy Ice and Action are all excited to see their teenage dream come to life right before their own eyes.

"Who would've ever thought?" Reyes said. "I still can't believe it."

LIFELINE



MIKE MARSLAND/WIREIMAGE

**MAKING WAVES
RIDLEY SHARES DIAGNOSIS**

Daisy Ridley is opening up about her health. The actress, who played Rey in the "Star Wars" sequel trilogy, revealed in an interview with Women's Health that she has been diagnosed with the autoimmune disorder Graves' disease. "I didn't realize how bad I felt before," she told the magazine, sharing that her symptoms included a racing heart rate, weight loss, fatigue, tremors and irritability. Ridley, 32, is now on daily medication and cut down on gluten to ease her symptoms.



**IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY
WHO'S CELEBRATING TODAY**

Shawn Mendes is 26. Meagan Good is 43. Dustin Hoffman is 87.

HOROSCOPE | SANCTUARY
More: www.sanctuaryworld.co

Aries (March 21-April 19). Today's Libra moon sees you sussing out someone's character. Trying to be discreet calls attention to yourself!

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Tweaking your habits? You're determined to restore lost equilibrium. It's time to get organized!

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Letting love change you? An unexpected attraction has you in your feelings!

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Getting to the bottom of something? Today's Libra moon applauds self-discovery, but an a-ha moment adds to the mystery.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Adapting to work the room? You get along with everyone! But are you being yourself?

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Trusting your instincts? Today's Libra moon has you considering a big investment. Do some research before committing.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Riding the emotional wave? The moon is traveling through Libra today! Even minor events can touch a raw nerve.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Psychic senses amplified? Today's Libra moon strengthens your intuitive powers. Stay alert for magical revelations!

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). In an inquisitive mood? Today's Libra moon finds you asking questions of your social circle.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Being transparent? Getting personal advances your professional reputation. Invite others to connect with you!

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Today's Libra moon supports you in broadening your horizons. Consider the possibilities. Let your intuition guide your actions.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). Emotional realizations? You're deep in your feels. Passion steers you in a different direction.

MOVIES



"The game is fun. It's irreverent. It's really stupid," says Cate Blanchett, who stars in a film adaptation of "Borderlands."

Blanchett won't classify video-game movie as 'art'

Patrick Ryan USA TODAY

NEW YORK – Cate Blanchett had no intention of spending lockdown with a PlayStation 5. "It was COVID, and I was doing everything to keep my kids away from playing video games, like, 'Let's get outdoors!'" recalls the actress, who shares four children with her playwright husband Andrew Upton. But then, director Eli Roth reached out about a new movie called "Borderlands" (in theaters Friday), a kooky space adventure based on the popular video game series. He wanted her to play Lilith, a hard-boiled bounty hunter tasked with retrieving an arms dealer's missing daughter (Ariana Greenblatt) with the help of a misfit team of treasure seekers (played by Kevin Hart, Jack Black and Florian Munteanu).

Blanchett, 55, found the game "quite addictive" and was drawn to its predominantly female characters and fan base. "I thought, 'This could be really interesting,'" she says. "In the game, there was always a nod and a wink; a deliberate B-grade mash-up of chunky sci-fi and spaghetti Western."

Plus, it gave her an opportunity to work with Jamie Lee Curtis and Gina Gershon, playing Lilith's long-time pals. "Jamie's just exceptional. And when Gina walked on set, it was like *va-va-voom*, as it always is with her," Blanchett says with a grin. "I mean, it's not 'The Grapes of Wrath.' It's not 'Blade Runner.' It's its own

strange, weird thing, and when you look at the casting, there's a motley quality to it.

"We're a very motley crew, in life and in art. (Laughs.) I don't think anyone would call 'Borderlands' art, but it's fun."

Blanchett slipped into 'Tár' character on 'Borderlands' set

"Borderlands" shot in Budapest in spring 2021, just before Blanchett traveled to Berlin to film "Tár" that summer. In the Oscar-nominated film, she portrayed the fearsome

See **BLANCHETT**, Page 2D



Cate Blanchett, left, Ariana Greenblatt, Florian Munteanu and Kevin Hart lead the star-studded cast of "Borderlands." PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LIONSGATE

STREAMING NEWS & NOTES

Damon says Williams 'a completely unique brain'

Marco della Cava
USA TODAY

Ten years ago on Sunday, the laughter stopped.

In a beautiful waterfront home in Paradise Cay, California, Robin Williams took his own life, unwilling to contend with the increasingly debilitating impact of Lewy body dementia. He was 63.

It was impossible to experience Williams – a kinetic dervish who was to comedy what Taylor Swift is to music: uncategorizable – and not have that experience leave a lasting impact. Just ask Matt Damon.

"Robin, wow," Damon says softly when asked about the comedy legend while promoting "The Instigators," his new Apple TV+ heist movie co-starring Casey Affleck and Hong Chau. "He was a very deep, deep river."

Damon met Williams in 1997 while filming "Good Will Hunting." As therapist Sean Maguire, Williams was tasked with breaking down the psychological walls erected by Damon's math savant Will Hunting. Williams' fearless performance won him the 1998 best supporting actor Oscar.

"So I just realized, here are two movies that are pro-therapy: 'Good Will Hunting' and 'The Instigators,'" says Damon, referring to Chau's therapist character who works against great odds to reach both Damon and Affleck's troubled characters. "Undergirding both movies are positive messages about therapy, which Robin handled so beautifully."



Robin Williams, left, and Matt Damon share a Boston bench during a pivotal scene in 1997's "Good Will Hunting." PROVIDED BY MIRAMAX

'Good Will Hunting' bench could soon have a statue of Williams

In "Hunting," a memorable scene finds Williams challenging Damon's brash character to dig deeper. The two are sitting on a park bench in the Boston Public Garden. Williams' voice is a whisper but his message lands like a hammer.

"You don't know about real loss," says Williams, talking about his wife who died from cancer. "Because that only occurs when you love something more than you love yourself. I doubt you've ever dared to love anybody that much."

The bench turned into an impromptu shrine after Williams' death. Damon says an artist recently reached out to him and pal Ben Affleck, who co-wrote and co-starred in "Hunting." The artist wants to make a bronze statue of Williams and place it on that same bench.

"That call just buckled us," says Damon. "It's such a great idea, to have a statue of him in the middle of this park, where at any time of day or night, if you're feeling alone, you go and you sit with Robin. That's something I know he would have absolutely loved. So if this idea can make its way up the Boston political hierarchy, it will happen."

Williams, the pope and a chance lunch encounter

Damon listens intently as he's told a story about how a year before Williams' death, this reporter had an accidental lunch with the comedian.

Just one patron was seated at the restaurant's sole outdoor table. I asked if it was OK to sit and only after he softly answered, "Sure" did I realize it

See **WILLIAMS**, Page 2D

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

An important lesson we learned from Biles

Felecia Wellington Radel

USA TODAY

Not many people knew what “twis-ties” were prior to the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2021, but they quickly learned when women’s gymnastics phenom Simone Biles withdrew from several events because of it, making the star’s mental health a pivotal part of Olympics commentary this time around.

Biles has been open about going to therapy, and this summer in Paris, the GOAT (if we’re using formal titles), won gold medals in the team final, all-around final and vault final. She also won silver on floor.

And it isn’t just Biles. Several other moments at the Paris Olympics this summer have put a positive spotlight on mental health:

Stephen Nedoroscik, “the pommel horse guy,” had a viral moment when he was seen meditating before his event. Plus, high jumper Yaroslava Mahuchikh of Ukraine sought out a different sort of rest. Mahuchikh was seen climbing into a sleeping bag during her event, taking a nap between jumps. And sprinter Noah Lyles, the newly crowned fastest man in the world, said in a social media post: “I have asthma, allergies, dyslexia, ADD, anxiety and depression. But I will tell you that what you have does not define what you can become.”

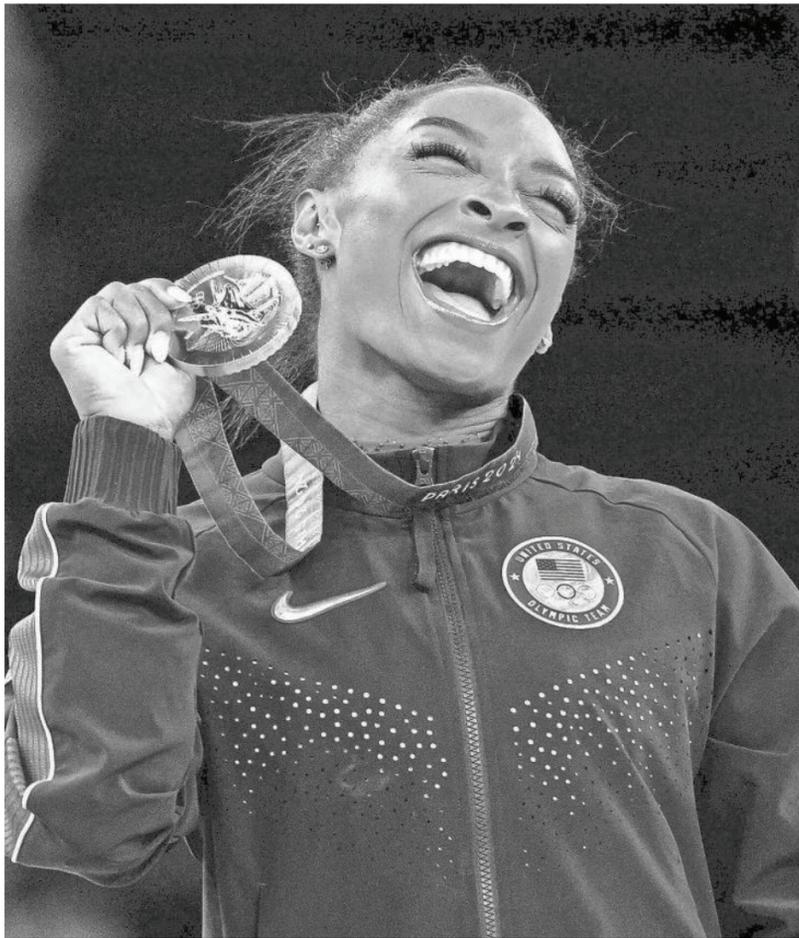
All those athletes took home coveted metals for their countries.

Yet, athletes haven’t always spoken very openly about their mental health or how it’s impacting their performance. It has been a refreshing change to see that shift, shaking off the apparent stigma around it. And this openness can be important, experts say, not just for athletes, but for fans, too.

Why elite sports are also a mind game

Mindfulness – the cognitive ability to be fully present and being aware of one’s thoughts and feelings – is helpful in combating stress, but honing the skill could be what separates a great athlete from an even better one.

Gretchen Schmelzer, a licensed psy-



Simone Biles of the United States celebrates her gold medal during the medal ceremony for the vault on the first day of gymnastics event finals during the Paris 2024 Olympic Summer Games at Bercy Arena on Aug. 3.

KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

chologist who was a U.S. national champion in rowing and trained for the U.S. women’s rowing team alongside those who would go on to the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, says often, training harder than competition is “a mind game, not a physical game.”

“At the level of elite athletics, it is your mind that distinguishes you from the person sitting next to you,” says Schmelzer, who is also an author and co-founder of the Center for Trauma

and Leadership.

And developing and maintaining mental capacity could be key in competition.

“Being able to regulate your physiological response to stress is how we perform at the highest level,” says Peter Economou, assistant professor of applied psychology at Rutgers University and director of behavioral health and wellness for Rutgers University Athletics.

When the conversation about mental health shifted

In the years since Biles withdrew in Tokyo, athletes are more publicly open about their mental health, but something that happened before that may have spurred the shift, Schmelzer says.

The Larry Nassar sex abuse case may actually have been the “defining moment about mental health and sports,” Schmelzer says, with so many gymnasts coming forward, testifying and being open about getting help for the trauma.

Nassar, the former USA Gymnastics team doctor and Michigan State University doctor, was arrested in 2016 and found to have sexually assaulted hundreds of women and girls, including Olympic champions, under the guise of providing medical treatment.

‘A person can only take so much’

Other factors could also have influenced athletes’ attitudes to encourage more openness about mental health.

Athletes are sharing more with the public in general, like on social media, about many aspects of their life, such as training, diet or sleep habits.

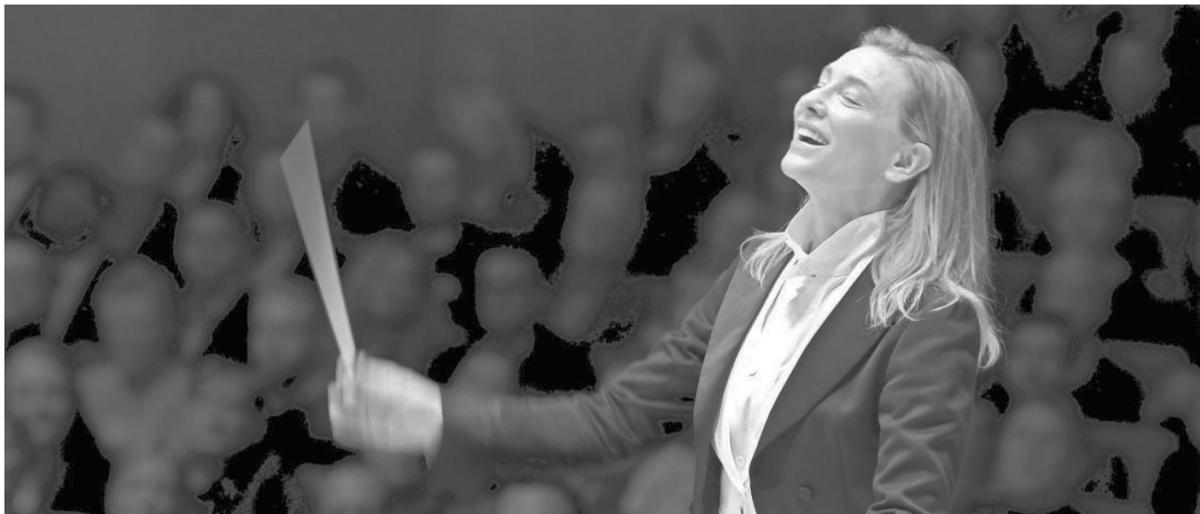
On TikTok, it’s easy to find athletes giving tours of the Olympic Village and showing off their pre-competition preparations.

This cultural shift has helped more people, like Lyles, feel comfortable posting about their personal struggles.

Aside from that, not only has stigma about mental health lessened in the U.S., but the world has gotten more stressful over time, too, and “a person can only take so much before they need support,” Schmelzer says.

So how can we take the lessons from this Olympics and apply it to our own lives? For starters, we can follow these athletes’ lead and speak openly with those around us about what we’re feeling.

And as for our own mindfulness? Schmelzer says, try “taking 10 minutes in the morning, sitting outside and just looking at a tree, or going for a walk or talking to a therapist.” It can be as simple as that.



Cate Blanchett says “Tár” is exquisite storytelling, because it “pulls the rug out and subverts the film you think you’re going to be getting.” PROVIDED BY FOCUS FEATURES

Blanchett

Continued from Page 1D

(fictional) composer Lydia Tár. Between takes of “Borderlands,” she’d practice conducting while dressed in Lilith’s flame-haired, pistol-packing getup.

Flipping between characters “was a joy,” Blanchett says. “During the weekend, I’d immerse myself in Mahler, go through the music, and have piano lessons. And then I’d go back to my day job, which was running, punching, kicking, jumping – it was quite schizophrenic! But it was liberating. They were energetically and intentionally so different.”

Roth remembers the whiplash: “It was wild to see her switch from wielding a flamethrower to wielding a conductor stick,” he says. “But there’s a reason she’s Cate Blanchett – she can do it all.”

For a small awards movie, “Tár” has had a unique pop-culture footprint since its release in 2022. Despite being a nearly three-hour drama about cancel culture and the creative process, the film continues to spawn countless online jokes and merchandise two years later. Many of the movie’s fans talk about the disgraced Lydia as if she’s a real person.

“The memes!” Blanchett says with a smile. “It’s so interesting. Who would’ve thought? I mean, I knew it was really special the minute I finished it.”

Blanchett gravitates to ‘crazy, out-of-the-box’ career choices

Throughout her three-decade career, the Aussie icon has constantly eschewed expectations. She has eight Oscar nominations and two wins, for her roles in “The Aviator” and “Blue Jasmine.” But she has always taken big swings, too, playing Bob Dylan (“I’m Not There”), an elven queen (“The Lord of the Rings”), a Marvel villain (“Thor: Ragnarok”) and a wordless monkey (“Guillermo del Toro’s Pinocchio”). It’s why “Borderlands” shouldn’t come as a shock.

“I like those crazy, random, out-of-the-box asks,” Blanchett says, sitting by an office window in a slouchy black suit paired with “Brat” green Diadora sneakers. “They’re always the ones I find the most exciting and terrifying. It wasn’t like I said to myself, ‘Hey, let’s go find a character from a video game.’”

The actress likes to keep audiences guessing, with an eclectic upcoming slate that includes Alfonso Cuarón’s Apple TV miniseries “Disclaimer” (premiering Oct. 11). She’ll next star in films from Guy Maddin (“Rumours”) and Steven Soderbergh (“Black Bag”), and there’s “a great lot of chicks” she’d still like to work with: Carrie Coon, Lily Gladstone and Sandra Hüller, among them.

Blanchett is flattered by fans’ continued love for the 2015 lesbian romance “Carol,” which has become an unlikely Christmas staple among many cine-

philes. (“Carol” and “Elf,” Blanchett jokes.)

And she’s delighted that young people are discovering 1999’s Euro thriller “The Talented Mr. Ripley,” after the success of last year’s “Saltburn.”

“Ripley” just wouldn’t be made now, even if the great Anthony Minghella were here,” she says. To get that sort of financing for an R-rated drama is almost unheard-of these days: “He’d have to fight so hard to actually shoot in those locations.”

She’s always surprised when fans ask about 2007’s “Notes on a Scandal,” a juicy, scholastic potboiler co-starring Judi Dench as an obsessed colleague.

“I don’t think I realized how many people have seen it,” Blanchett says. “What’s really rewarding is when someone comes up to you, and they didn’t see your film in the cinema the first time around. But they have a screen at home that’s not in sports mode, and they bothered to watch something you made 10 or 15 years ago. It means that had a longer shelf life.”

“People say, ‘Oh, that was a flop’ or ‘that was a hit.’ But sometimes the films we hold up as the greatest of all time were not financial or audience successes, yet they’ve become classics,” she says, pausing and laughing as she brings it back to the movie she’s promoting.

“I’m not saying ‘Borderlands’ is a classic! It’s fun, fun, fun, but it’s not ‘Citizen Kane!’”



Academy Award winners Matt Damon, left, Robin Williams and Ben Affleck pose with their Oscars at the 70th Academy Awards. The actors starred together in “Good Will Hunting.” ROBERT HANASHIRO/USA TODAY

Williams

Continued from Page 1D

was Williams. A casual conversation started, mostly about his beloved racing bicycles. Then a detour into an assignment I’d covered: the 2013 papal conclave in Rome that elected Pope Francis.

Suddenly, it happened. The almost hermit-like presence at our table erupted into ... *Robin Williams*.

“Pope Francis is from Argentina, can you imagine, though, if the pope was from Brazil, wow, think about that one,” Williams says, eyes instantly alight. “I mean, he’d likely have all the nuns up there doing a samba dance with him!”

Damon laughs at the tale. It is the Williams he remembers as well.

It is surprising how serious and quiet and very shy he was, compared to that expectation he created – the expectation being that he was there to make you laugh,” says Damon. “I know I had that expectation of him, the second he first walked into the room. And now, I just can’t imagine living under that constant pressure.”

Damon looks down for a moment. “What a completely unique brain he had, the connections he would make,” he says. “He’s quiet, reserved, and suddenly, yeah, he’s doing a bit about the pope and his Brazilian dancers. What can you say?”

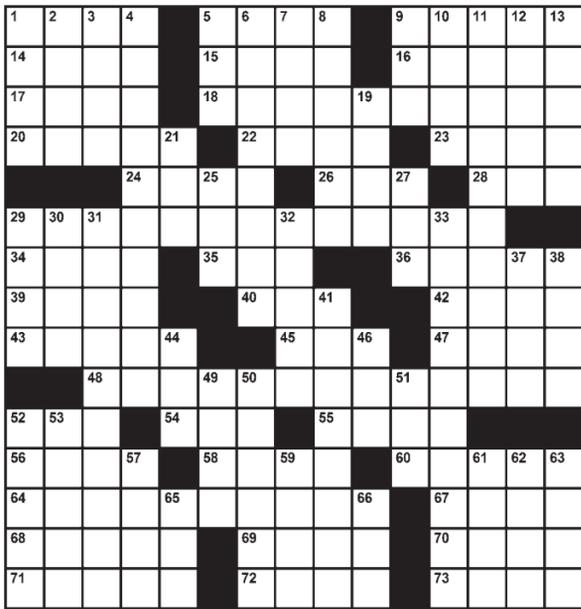
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USA TODAY CROSSWORD

EDITED Amanda Rafkin
BY Claire Rimkus

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(FREESTYLE)

- ACROSS**
- 1 Irish New Age singer
 - 5 Birthstone that has a "fire" variety
 - 9 Wrist accessory
 - 14 Like games headed for overtime
 - 15 Like bright-red cardinals
 - 16 Sneeze sound
 - 17 Dressed
 - 18 Simone Biles' sport
 - 20 Words on some pronoun pins
 - 22 Swishes back and forth, like a tail
 - 23 Bratty person
 - 24 "Cheerio! I'm off!"
 - 26 "Ugh, it's right on the ___ of my tongue!"
 - 28 Power source for some cars
 - 29 Game where you sit when the tunes shut off
 - 34 Norway's capital
 - 35 Under the weather
 - 36 Slip and fall
 - 39 "I feel ___"
 - 40 Tamari ingredient
 - 42 Layer of paint
 - 43 Little ___ culture (form of self-care that involves rewards)
 - 45 "Yay!"
 - 47 Boundary-pushing
 - 48 Acting calm
 - 52 "The Equalizer" TV network
 - 54 Precious stone
 - 55 Plus
 - 56 The "A" in STEAM
 - 58 Ant-Man's partner
 - 60 Dads' sisters
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 - 68 Day before tomorrow
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- DOWN**
- 1 Engrave
 - 2 River featured in "The Prince of Egypt"
 - 3 Casual affirmative
 - 4 Extra
 - 5 "No way!"
 - 6 Barriers to accessing some online content
 - 7 "___ and How She Got Her Name" (children's book)
 - 8 What mascara often adds to lashes
 - 9 Past tense of "is"
 - 10 Divisions of plays
 - 11 Heading on a planner page
 - 12 Warming chocolate drink
 - 13 People throwing parties
 - 19 Angkor Wat's continent

- 21 Fleetwood ___
- 25 ___ chi (martial art)
- 27 Dessert eaten on Pi Day
- 29 The majority
- 30 ___ ID (login name)
- 31 Procedure that can diagnose apnea
- 32 Performer making balloon animals
- 33 Speedway
- 37 "Aladdin" parrot
- 38 Texting signoff
- 41 Warrior or downward dog
- 44 Playground game with an "it"
- 46 Cleansing ___ (kind of makeup remover)
- 49 Certain evergreens
- 50 Some search results
- 51 Luggage-screening org.
- 52 Lists of actors
- 53 Small stream
- 57 Provide validation at a slam poetry event
- 59 Spend time in a tub
- 61 Dark blue shade
- 62 Plant with rings
- 63 Email button
- 65 Hair colorist's supply
- 66 Morning moisture on grass

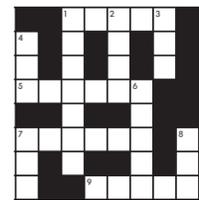
Wednesday's Answer



8/7

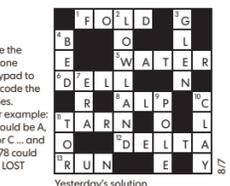
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- Across**
- 1. 62667
 - 5. 927437
 - 7. 746937
 - 9. 73529
- Down**
- 1. 6267466
 - 2. 6683
 - 3. 784
 - 4. 669
 - 6. 78725
 - 7. 739
 - 8. 349

Today's theme
House and home



8/7

Words

WORD ROUNDUP

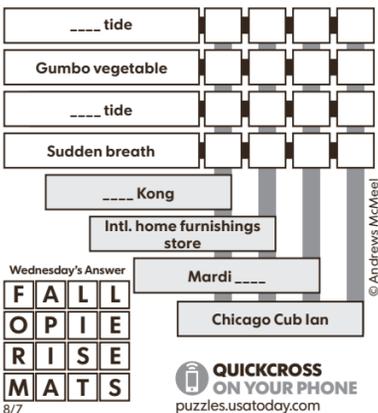
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

- Find and Circle:
- Eight four-letter mammals
- Four punctuation marks
- Three four-letter metals
- Three chess pieces
- Ben of "Argo"



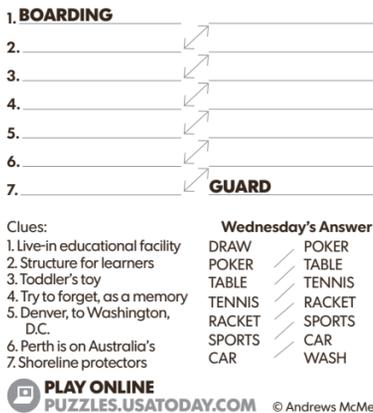
QUICKCROSS

By John Wilmes



UP & DOWN WORDS

By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt



DON'T QUOTE ME

Car maker Henry Ford talks about hard work.
Rearrange the words to complete the quote.
FEW HARDEST PROBABLE THERE THINKING WHICH WHY
___ IS THE ___ WORK ___,
___ IS THE ___ REASON
___ SO ___ ENGAGE IN IT.

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- 1 feral (7)
- 2 making shorter (10)
- 3 Tripoli residents (7)
- 4 "The Little Mermaid" meanie (6)
- 5 like a blast from the past (5)
- 6 word after mutual or trust (4)
- 7 got behind, in a way (8)

SOLUTIONS

DOR UN MED LA LI
ANS TRO ING EN CO
ND NDE RE TA SU
NS SED UR BY FU

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TNNHI
ENVTE
SBDARU
GRACIL

THE 100-METER SPRINT WAS DELAYED DUE TO A TECHNICAL GLITCH AND WOULD BE ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Yesterday's Jumbles: PINCH RURAL MIDDLE PLACID
Answer: The winners of the Olympic track competitions were all members of the --- HUMAN RACE

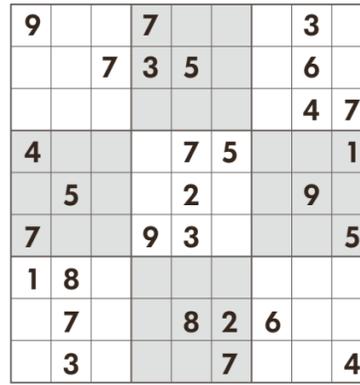
Numbers

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Want solutions? answers.usatoday.com
Feedback: feedback@usatoday.com



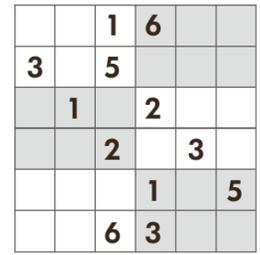
SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).



8/8 DIFFICULTY RATING ★★★★★
SUDOKU FUSION ON YOUR PHONE
puzzles.usatoday.com

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x2 box contains the numbers 1 through 6 (no repeats).

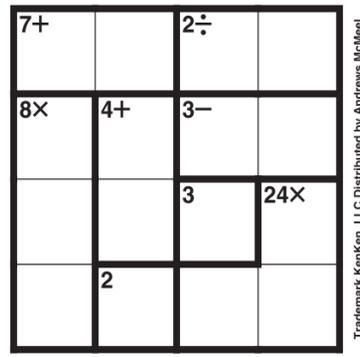


DIFFICULTY RATING ★★★★★
Wednesday's Answers

3	8	9	5	7	1	6	4	2
2	6	1	4	8	9	5	3	7
4	7	5	2	6	3	1	8	9
7	5	2	3	1	8	9	6	4
6	3	8	7	9	4	2	5	1
9	1	4	6	5	2	8	7	3
1	2	7	8	3	5	9	6	4
5	4	3	9	2	6	7	1	8
8	9	6	1	4	7	3	2	5

8/7

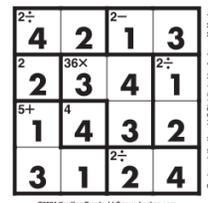
KENKEN



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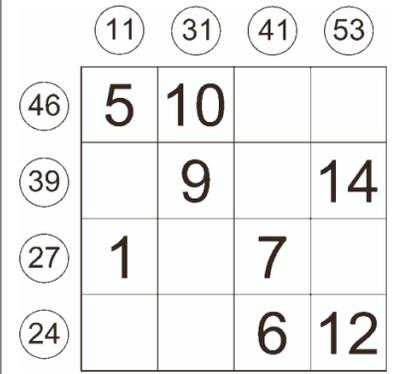
- Each row and column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
- The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
- Freebies: fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

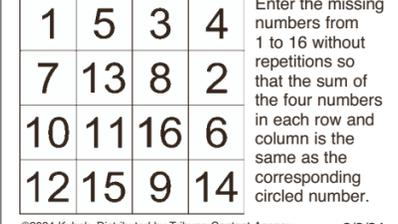


KUBOK 16

By Davide Coppo Difficulty: MEDIUM



Solution to Wednesday's puzzle



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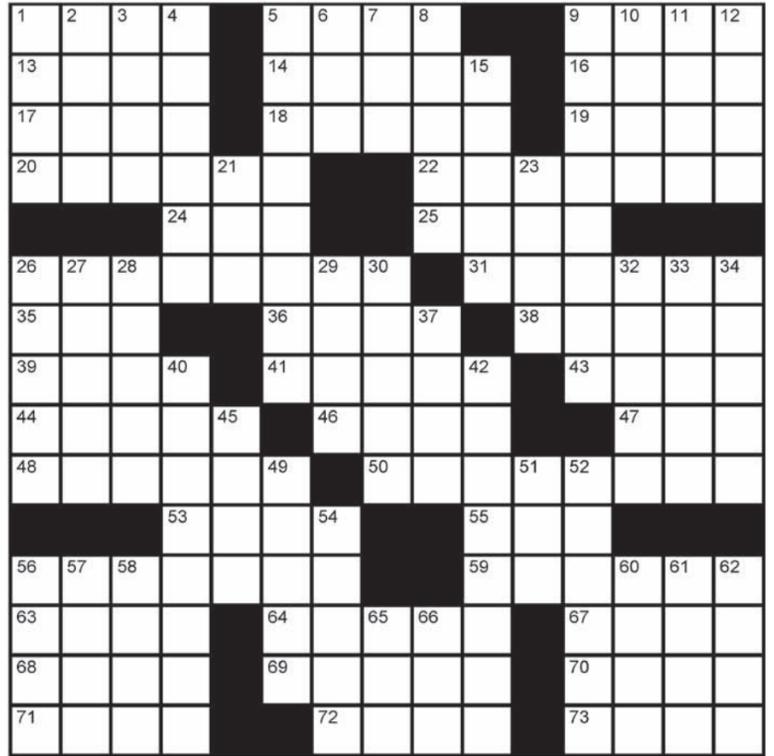
BONUS CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Puttin' on the ___"
 - 5 "You've got ___ of nerve!"
 - 9 Grouch
 - 13 Chills and fever
 - 14 Bete ___
 - 16 Lois of "Superman"
 - 17 Homer Simpson's mom
 - 18 Chair back part
 - 19 Grammatical gaffe
 - 20 Course of undergraduate study
 - 22 Actor — Bronson
 - 24 — -Ida brand potatoes
 - 25 Berra of baseball
 - 26 Fan frenzy
 - 31 Has an inkling
 - 35 Strong wood
 - 36 Redact
 - 38 Gave out the cards
 - 39 Climb
 - 41 Actress — Day
 - 43 Threesome
 - 44 Doughnut shape
 - 46 Onion-like veggie
 - 47 From — — Z
 - 48 Drunk
 - 50 Soaked
 - 53 Hard to come by
 - 55 Court
 - 56 Least
 - 59 Main course
 - 63 Fencing item
 - 64 Cousin to a croc
 - 67 Bridge charge
 - 68 Org.
 - 69 Vermont ski area
 - 70 Old Greek weight
 - 71 "___ in Space"
 - 72 Observed
 - 73 Island bird
- DOWN**
- 1 Incline
 - 2 Prince in opera
 - 3 Make fine adjustments
 - 4 Fanatic
 - 5 Replied
 - 6 Cut off
 - 7 Fuel in barrels
 - 8 Comics detective
 - 9 Benny Goodman's instrument
 - 10 Track
 - 11 Actress — Bancroft
 - 12 Bookie's business
 - 15 Moral character
 - 21 Exist
 - 23 Elderly ones
 - 26 Emcees
 - 31 Has an inkling
 - 27 Internet giant
 - 28 Go around
 - 29 Object of worship
 - 30 Ventilated
 - 32 — Jessica Parker
 - 33 Aristocratic
 - 34 Rose
 - 37 Cake part
 - 40 Vitamin or mineral
 - 42 Impaled
 - 45 Coal deposit
 - 49 Hauls
 - 51 — compos mentis
 - 52 Bowl in Dallas
 - 54 Gladden
 - 56 Ground grain
 - 57 — facto
 - 58 Promontory
 - 60 Judge's garment
 - 61 Tesla's — Musk
 - 62 She, in Paris
 - 65 Bauble
 - 66 Be in the red

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED



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USA TODAY BEST-SELLING BOOKS BOOKLIST.USATODAY.COM

Rank this week Rank last week

		TITLE/AUTHOR	PUBLISHER	GENRE	C
1	1	Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis / Vance, J D	Harper Paperbacks	Poverty & Homelessness	NF
2	2	The Book of Bill / Hirsch, Alex	Hyperion Avenue	Humorous - General	F
3	3	It Ends with Us / Hoover, Colleen	Atria Books	Women	F
4	5	A Court of Thorns and Roses / Maas, Sarah J.	Bloomsbury Publishing	Fantasy - Epic	F
5	4	The Women / Hannah, Kristin	St. Martin's Press	Women	F
6	6	The Housemaid / McFadden, Freida	Grand Central Publishing	Psychological	F
7	n/a	The Grandest Game / Barnes, Jennifer Lynn	Little, Brown	Romance - Contemporary	F
8	19	It Starts with Us / Hoover, Colleen	Atria Books	Women	F
9	n/a	Slow Dance / Rowell, Rainbow	William Morrow & Company	Women	F
10	16	The God of the Woods / Moore, Liz	Riverhead Books	Literary	F
11	12	The Exchange: After the Firm / Grisham, John	Vintage	Literary	F
12	30	Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones / Clear, James	Avery Publishing Group	Organizational Behavior	NF
13	n/a	Masters of Death / Blake, Olivie	Tor Books	Fantasy - Paranormal	F
14	n/a	Hard to Kill: Meet James Patterson's Greatest Character Yet / Lupica, Mike	Little Brown and Company	Women	F
15	51	Iron Flame / Yarros, Rebecca	Entangled: Red Tower Books	Fantasy - Epic	F
16	13	The Housemaid Is Watching / McFadden, Freida	Poisoned Pen Press	Psychological	F
17	22	Haunting Adeline / Carlton, H D	Hailey Carlton	Romance - Contemporary	F
18	n/a	The Wedding People / Espach, Alison	Henry Holt & Company	Humorous - General	F
19	26	The Housemaid's Secret / McFadden, Freida	Mobius	Psychological	F
20	n/a	All in the Family: The Trumps and How We Got This Way / Trump, Fred C.	Gallery Books	Personal Memoirs	NF
21	17	Dog Man: The Scarlet Shedder: A Graphic Novel (Dog Man #12): From the Creator of Captain Underpants / Pilkey, Dav	Graphix	Humorous Stories	F
22	18	Bluey: Grannies and Other Stories: 4 Stories in 1 Book. Hooray! / Penguin Young Readers Licenses	Penguin Young Readers Licenses	Imagination & Play	F
23	14	Bluey 5-Minute Stories: 6 Stories in 1 Book? Hooray! / Penguin Young Readers Licenses	Penguin Young Readers Licenses	Social Themes - Friendship	F
24	29	Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow / Zevin, Gabrielle	Vintage	Literary	F
25	n/a	Loud: Accept Nothing Less Than the Life You Deserve / Afualo, Drew	Auwa	Personal Memoirs	NF

		TITLE/AUTHOR	PUBLISHER	GENRE	C
26	57	All Fours / July, Miranda	Riverhead Books	Humorous - General	F
27	24	A Good Girl's Guide to Murder / Jackson, Holly	Ember	Thrillers & Suspense	F
28	27	Sandwich / Newman, Catherine	Harper	Humorous - General	F
29	78	James / Everett, Percival	Doubleday Books	Literary	F
30	35	A Court of Mist and Fury / Maas, Sarah J.	Bloomsbury Publishing	Fantasy - Epic	F
31	n/a	Bane / Shen, L. J.	Bloom Books	Women	F
32	21	Powerless / Roberts, Lauren	Simon & Schuster	Social Themes - Class Differences	F
33	28	All the Colors of the Dark / Whitaker, Chris	Crown Publishing Group (NY)	Literary	F
34	34	Just for the Summer / Jimenez, Abby	Forever	Humorous - General	F
35	41	Fourth Wing / Yarros, Rebecca	Entangled: Red Tower Books	Fantasy - Epic	F
36	n/a	Five Brothers / Douglas, Penelope	Penguin Publishing Group	Coming of Age	F
37	38	Butcher & Blackbird: The Ruinous Love Trilogy / Weaver, Brynne	Zando	Romance - Romantic Comedy	F
38	65	True Gretch: What I've Learned about Life, Leadership, and Everything in Between / Whitmer, Gretchen	Simon & Schuster	Women	NF
39	44	If He Had Been with Me / Nowlin, Laura	Sourcebooks Fire	Social Themes - Dating & Sex	F
40	33	The Spellshop / Durst, Sarah Beth	Bramble	Romance - Romantic Comedy	F
41	46	Long Island Compromise / Brodesser-Akner, Taffy	Random House	Literary	F
42	42	A Death in Cornwall / Silva, Daniel	Harper	Thrillers - Suspense	F
43	43	Twisted Love / Huang, Ana	Bloom Books	Romance - New Adult	F
44	n/a	What Have You Done? / Lapena, Shari	Pamela Dorman Books	Women	F
45	40	Eruption: Following Jurassic Park, Michael Crichton Started Another Masterpiece--James Patterson Just Finished It / Crichton, Michael	Little Brown and Company	Thrillers - Suspense	F
46	73	The Wild Robot / Brown, Peter	Little, Brown	Animals - Bears	F
47	123	Gravity Falls: Journal 3 / Hirsch, Alex	Disney Press	Humorous Stories	F
48	52	A Court of Wings and Ruin / Maas, Sarah J.	Bloomsbury Publishing	Fantasy - Epic	F
49	n/a	Bury Your Gays / Tingle, Chuck	Tor Nightfire	Science Fiction - General	F
50	39	Swan Song / Hilderbrand, Elin	Little Brown and Company	Women	F

WHAT AMERICA'S READING® The book list appears every Thursday. You also can find it at booklist.usatoday.com. Each week, USA TODAY collects sales data from booksellers representing a variety of outlets: bookstore chains, independent bookstores, mass merchandisers and online retailers. Using that data, we determine the 150 top-selling titles of the week.







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SAN FRANCISCO: Oct. 19 • RALEIGH: Oct. 26 • PHOENIX: Nov. 2 • NAPLES: Nov. 16

NATION & WORLD **EXTRA**

INSIDE

Swift's Vienna concerts canceled; tragedy averted, chancellor says. **7NN**

WAR IN MIDDLE EAST

TENSE ISRAEL IN WAITING

Military, hospitals on high alert as attack threat looms



Hannah Confino REUTERS

RAMLA – Israel's ambulance service has stocked blood supplies in a fortified underground center, factories have moved out hazardous materials and municipal authorities are checking bomb shelters and water supplies as the country waits for a threatened attack from Iran and its proxies.

Israel has been fortifying its homefront for months and many preparations have been in place since the start of the war in Gaza last October, when thousands of Hamas-led gunmen carried out a devastating cross-border attack on Israeli communities.

But the urgency has risen sharply over the past 10 days as a relatively contained conflict with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah movement in southern Lebanon has threatened to spiral into an all-out regional war.

"I know that the citizens of Israel are on alert, and I ask of you one thing – keep patient and cool," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday while meeting new army recruits.

"We are prepared for both defense and attack, we are striking our enemies and are also determined to defend ourselves," he said.

Israel now finds itself facing the threat of a multifront war, confronting a clutch of militant movements – Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen, all backed and funded by its longstanding enemy Iran.

An attack is expected in the coming days

UK, Egypt alert airlines to avoid airspace in Iran, Lebanon

Joanna Plucinska and Rajesh Kumar Singh
REUTERS

LONDON – Britain and Egypt asked their airlines on Wednesday to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace amid growing fears of a possible broader conflict in the region after the killing of senior members of militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah.

Britain's advisory to its airlines to avoid Lebanon's airspace came hours after Egypt instructed all of its airlines to avoid Iran's airspace for three hours in the early morning on Thursday.

Many airlines globally are revising their schedules to avoid Iranian and Lebanese airspace while also calling off flights to Israel and Lebanon. Flights through conflict zones became a prominent industry safety issue a decade ago after

See AIRSPACE, Page 8NN

following vows from Iran and Hezbollah to retaliate for the assassinations last week of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukur in Beirut.

After months of alarm and an attack by hundreds of Iranian missiles in April that was thwarted by Israel's air defenses and the help of international allies, Israelis have become used to the crisis.

Tens of thousands of people were evacuated from northern areas in range of Hezbollah rockets at the start of the war and many border areas now have a ghostly, abandoned air.

But a prolonged bombardment from Hezbollah's rocket arsenal could reach deeper into the country to sensitive targets like the port city of Haifa in northern Israel, which is well in range.

The city's Rambam Hospital has been on alert since last October and has readied its three-floor, fortified underground facility to treat patients.

"We're waiting to see what happens," said David Ratner, a hospital spokesperson.

Alert system

The military is on high alert and last week-end it augmented its nationwide system of air raid sirens and broadcast alerts to include real-time text messages to be sent to residents in targeted areas.

See ALERT, Page 8NN

ABOVE: An Israeli tank drives along the border with the Gaza Strip on Wednesday in southern Israel. AMIR LEVY/GETTY IMAGES

Harris, Walz test out Midwest credentials



Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris holds a campaign rally with running mate Tim Walz on Wednesday in Eau Claire, Wis.

KEVIN MOHATT/REUTERS

Vance holds own campaign events to counter Dems

Jeff Mason and Joseph Ax
REUTERS

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. – Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris and her new running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, put his Midwestern credentials to the test on Wednesday with rallies in the battleground states of Wisconsin and Michigan.

"Hello, Eau Claire!" Walz said to a boisterous crowd of thousands in the Wisconsin city about 80 miles away from his home across the Minnesota border. "Isn't it good to have a candidate who can pronounce the name correctly?"

The Democratic candidates are using their first joint campaign swing to introduce Walz, a former teacher and football coach and a veteran of the Army National Guard, to voters around the country after he beat out better-known Democrats for the No. 2 spot.

They are also making their case against Republican rival Donald Trump and his running mate, U.S. Sen. JD Vance, with less than three months until the Nov. 5 election.

"We are joyful warriors," Harris said at an evening rally in Detroit, underscoring the sense of optimism that has

See MIDWEST, Page 6NN



Republican vice presidential candidate JD Vance said he held Harris responsible for President Joe Biden's economic and border policies, at one point referring to the government as the "Harris administration."

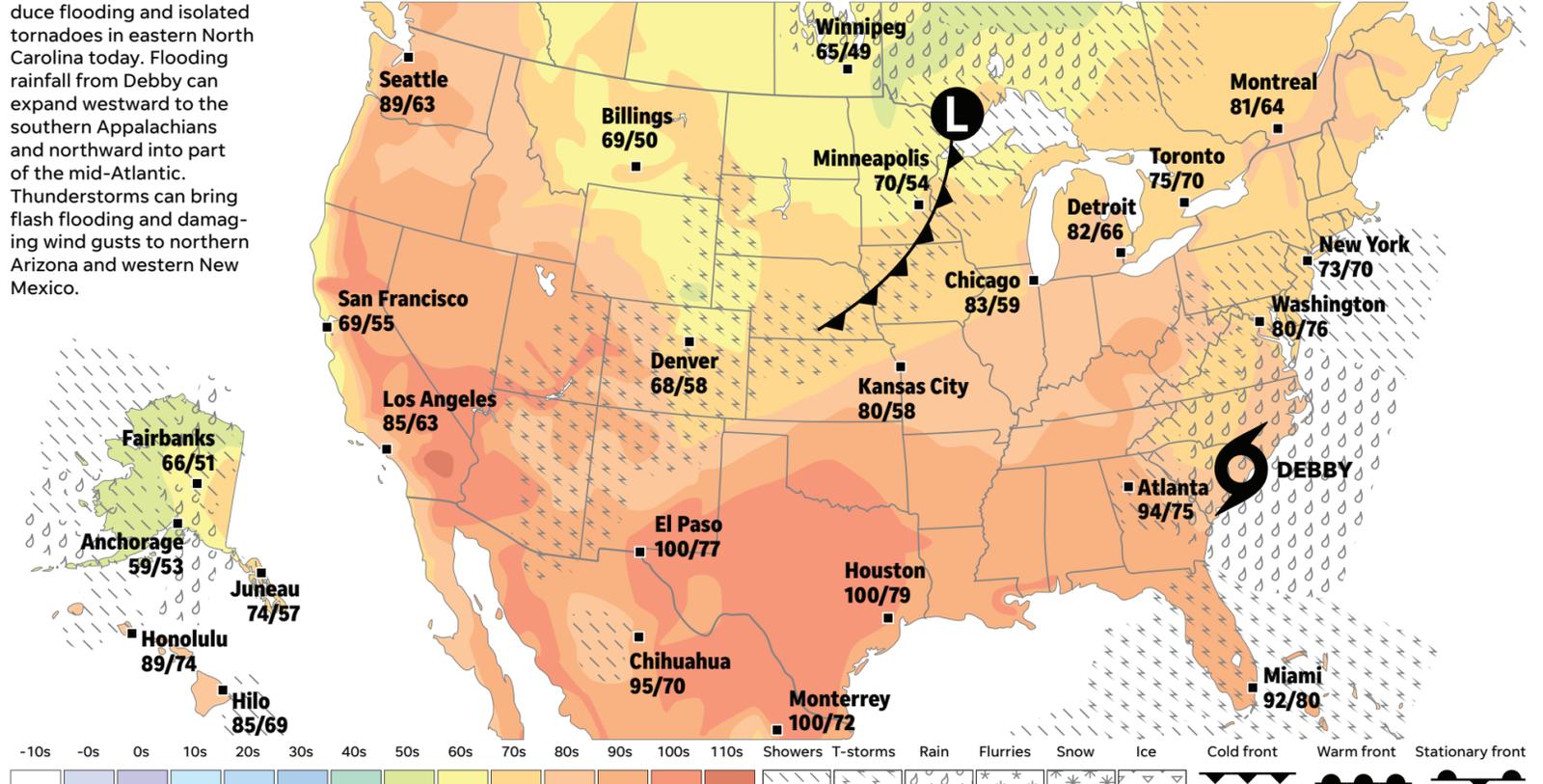
EMILY ELCONIN/GETTY IMAGES

NATIONAL SUMMARY

Debby will continue to produce flooding and isolated tornadoes in eastern North Carolina today. Flooding rainfall from Debby can expand westward to the southern Appalachians and northward into part of the mid-Atlantic. Thunderstorms can bring flash flooding and damaging wind gusts to northern Arizona and western New Mexico.

In the digital e-edition, you can click anywhere on the US map to get up-to-date forecasts, radar, MinuteCast® and more.

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation for Thursday. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



WEDNESDAY EXTREMES

NATIONAL (for the 48 contiguous states)
High: 112 at China Lake, CA
Low: 38 at Amasa, MI
Precip: 2.84" at North Myrtle Beach, SC

INTERNATIONAL (excludes Antarctica)
High: 118 at Basrah, Iraq
Low: 18 at Rio Gallegos, Argentina
Precip: 4.37" at Manaung, Myanmar

TODAY IN HISTORY

Snow fell on Lake Michigan on Aug. 8, 1882. One report from a boater indicated snow and slush up to 6 inches deep.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

Q: Is the eye of a hurricane the worst part of the storm?
A: No. In the eye, the wind is nearly calm.

NATIONAL CITIES THURSDAY

City	High/Low/W	Air Quality	City	High/Low/W	Air Quality	City	High/Low/W	Air Quality	City	High/Low/W	Air Quality
Aberdeen, SD	69/48/c	31	Evansville, IN	87/69/s	55	Levittown, PA	76/72/sh	50	Rochester, NY	78/71/t	36
Abilene, TX	108/76/s	71	Fall River, MA	75/66/sh	32	Lincoln, IL	82/58/pc	46	Rockford, IL	78/52/pc	47
Accomac, VA	77/73/r	38	Farmington, NM	93/66/t	69	Louisville, KY	90/72/s	66	Ruidoso, NM	87/58/pc	61
Adrian, MI	82/63/pc	43	Fayetteville, NC	79/75/r	23	Lubbock, TX	105/72/s	65	Salem, OR	96/59/pc	48
Akron, OH	86/70/t	33	Fond du Lac, WI	78/54/pc	37	Manitowoc, WI	77/56/s	35	Salina, KS	78/60/pc	52
Alamogordo, NM	100/73/pc	55	Fort Myers, FL	91/80/t	47	Mansfield, OH	86/68/pc	38	Salinas, CA	74/56/s	63
Alexandria, VA	80/75/t	50	Fort Smith, AR	100/75/s	58	Marshall, NC	81/71/sh	30	Salisbury, MD	80/75/r	40
Alliance, OH	85/70/t	35	Framingham, MA	75/63/sh	35	Marshfield, WI	72/49/c	25	San Angelo, TX	107/73/s	64
Amarillo, TX	97/64/pc	69	Freeport, IL	77/53/pc	40	Massillon, OH	88/70/t	41	Sarasota, FL	91/81/t	54
Ames, IA	74/51/t	28	Fremont, OH	83/68/pc	41	McLean, VA	79/74/t	36	Savannah, GA	87/76/r	30
Anderson, SC	85/73/pc	34	Fort Collins, CO	63/55/t	57	Melbourne, FL	93/77/t	50	Sheboygan, WI	79/58/pc	37
Appleton, WI	76/51/pc	36	Gadsden, AL	93/73/s	54	Memphis, TN	91/73/s	45	Shelby, NC	75/70/r	34
Asheville, NC	79/72/r	30	Gainesville, FL	96/77/t	47	Middletown, NY	69/65/sh	24	Sherman, TX	106/76/s	94
Ashland, OH	87/68/c	39	Galesburg, IL	81/53/pc	44	Milford, MA	75/63/sh	33	Shreveport, LA	101/76/s	87
Athens, GA	88/71/c	35	Gastonia, NC	76/71/r	34	Milwaukee, WI	80/58/pc	41	Silver City, NM	93/67/pc	59
Augusta, GA	81/72/r	32	Glen Rose, TX	104/76/pc	94	Monroe, MI	80/65/pc	39	Sioux Falls, SD	72/50/c	21
Austin, TX	102/75/pc	62	Gonzales, LA	100/73/s	82	Monroe, LA	97/74/s	66	Somerset, PA	74/69/c	28
Bartlesville, OK	94/69/s	62	Great Falls, MT	68/46/pc	51	Montgomery, AL	97/76/pc	67	Somerville, NJ	76/72/sh	48
Battle Creek, MI	82/63/pc	45	Green Bay, WI	76/52/pc	35	Muncie, IN	84/64/c	49	South Bend, IN	82/64/pc	47
Bedford, IN	84/65/s	46	Greenville, SC	78/71/r	33	Murfreesboro, TN	92/71/s	50	Spartanburg, SC	76/69/r	32
Binghamton, NY	69/64/pc	24	Hackensack, NJ	73/70/sh	54	Naples, FL	91/80/t	48	Springfield, IL	82/58/c	44
Bluffton, SC	85/78/r	28	Hagerstown, MD	77/73/sh	26	Nashville, TN	93/74/s	45	Springfield, MO	87/66/s	51
Bremerton, WA	91/59/s	47	Hattiesburg, MS	95/75/s	72	Neptune, NJ	75/73/sh	42	St. Augustine, FL	94/77/t	43
Brockton, MA	74/63/sh	36	Henderson, KY	85/67/s	49	New Bedford, MA	75/66/sh	33	St. Cloud, MN	68/49/pc	21
Brownwood, TX	106/72/pc	80	Hendersonville, NC	77/71/r	31	New Bern, NC	84/78/r	25	St. George, UT	102/76/pc	68
Burlington, IA	79/54/pc	44	Herkimer, NY	76/65/pc	33	New Philadelphia, OH	88/70/t	37	Staunton, VA	78/72/t	10
Burlington, NC	77/73/r	19	Hillsdale, MI	81/60/pc	44	Newark, OH	91/70/t	38	Stevens Point, WI	74/51/s	27
Burlington, VT	85/64/pc	31	Holland, MI	79/63/s	42	Newton, NJ	71/68/sh	28	Stockton, CA	101/65/s	85
Cambridge, OH	91/72/t	32	Hornell, NY	74/69/c	22	New York, NY	73/70/sh	57	Stroudsburg, PA	71/67/sh	40
Camdenton, MO	85/61/pc	45	Houma, LA	100/73/s	78	Norwich, CT	73/65/sh	27	Stuart, FL	90/78/t	45
Canandaigua, NY	75/70/pc	31	Howell, MI	81/62/s	39	Ocala, FL	93/77/t	53	Sturgis, MI	80/62/pc	45
Canton, OH	87/70/t	40	Hutchinson, KS	83/62/s	51	Oklahoma City, OK	101/71/t	85	Tallahassee, FL	98/78/pc	54
Carlsbad, NM	104/74/s	78	Hyannis, MA	72/66/sh	30	Opelousas, LA	98/72/s	76	Thibodaux, LA	100/72/s	79
Chambersburg, PA	77/73/sh	25	Indianapolis, IN	84/65/pc	51	Oshkosh, WI	77/53/pc	38	Topeka, KS	81/59/c	57
Cherry Hill, NJ	77/73/sh	46	Iowa City, IA	77/53/pc	39	Palm Beach, FL	90/79/t	40	Tuscaloosa, AL	94/75/s	64
Cincinnati, OH	90/70/pc	59	Ithaca, NY	72/68/pc	25	Palm Springs, CA	109/85/pc	65	Utica, NY	76/65/pc	34
Clarksville, TN	90/71/s	47	Jackson, MS	92/74/s	71	Panama City, FL	96/82/s	67	Ventura, CA	70/57/pc	60
Coldwater, MI	80/61/pc	44	Jackson, TN	90/70/s	48	Pekin, IL	83/58/pc	44	Victorville, CA	102/67/pc	85
Columbus, OH	91/71/c	42	Jacksonville, FL	97/78/t	37	Pensacola, FL	98/77/s	72	Vineland, NJ	77/73/sh	35
Corning, NY	76/70/c	24	Jacksonville, NC	82/77/r	30	Peoria, IL	83/57/pc	46	Visalia, CA	103/68/s	92
Corpus Christi, TX	98/78/s	49	Kent, OH	84/68/t	44	Petersburg, VA	83/75/r	23	Washington, DC	80/76/t	32
Daytona Beach, FL	94/77/t	51	Kewanee, IL	80/54/c	44	Phoenix, AZ	105/88/pc	96	Watertown, SD	67/49/c	27
Deming, NM	97/70/c	58	Keyser, WV	81/72/c	23	Port Huron, MI	80/64/s	35	Wausau, WI	72/50/c	25
DeRidder, LA	100/75/s	80	Kinston, NC	81/76/r	22	Portsmouth, NH	75/64/pc	42	Waynesboro, PA	77/73/sh	24
Des Moines, IA	75/54/t	33	Knoxville, TN	90/72/pc	42	Poughkeepsie, NY	72/67/sh	23	White Plains, NY	71/68/sh	33
Detroit, MI	82/66/pc	41	Lafayette, IN	82/63/s	45	Providence, RI	73/65/sh	36	Wichita Falls, TX	108/75/s	87
Devils Lake, ND	62/49/c	29	Lafayette, LA	100/76/s	76	Pueblo, CO	80/60/t	66	Wilmington, DE	78/73/sh	31
Dover, NH	76/63/pc	35	Lakeland, FL	95/77/t	51	Quincy, MA	74/64/pc	40	Wilmington, NC	82/77/r	43
El Paso, TX	100/77/pc	59	Lansing, MI	81/63/pc	42	Redding, CA	105/69/s	68	Wisconsin Rapids, WI	75/51/s	26
Elmira, NY	75/70/c	22	Las Cruces, NM	100/72/pc	58	Reno, NV	99/66/pc	66	Wooster, OH	87/68/t	35
Erie, PA	85/73/t	28	Lebanon, PA	74/70/sh	28	Ravenna, OH	85/68/t	40	Worcester, MA	73/62/sh	35
Eugene, OR	94/57/pc	51	Leesburg, FL	93/77/t	54	Richmond, IN	85/65/c	52	York, PA	77/73/sh	23

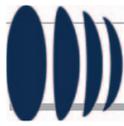
Air Quality Index: 0-50, Good; 51-100, Moderate; 101-150, Unhealthy for sensitive groups; 151-200, Unhealthy; 201-300, Very unhealthy; 301-500, Hazardous

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

City	Thursday High/Low/W	Friday High/Low/W	City	Thursday High/Low/W	Friday High/Low/W	City	Thursday High/Low/W	Friday High/Low/W	City	Thursday High/Low/W	Friday High/Low/W
Acapulco	89/79/t	88/77/t	Cape Town	60/53/sh	59/52/pc	La Paz	59/29/s	60/27/s	San Jose	76/66/t	81/68/r
Addis Ababa	71/56/r	70/56/r	Caracas	92/76/t	91/76/t	Lagos	84/75/r	84/76/c	San Salvador	87/69/t	80/69/t
Algiers	94/74/s	92/72/s	Casablanca	86/65/s	89/66/pc	Lima	64/58/pc	64/59/c	Santiago	60/30/s	66/37/pc
Amman	93/70/s	93/71/s	Colombo	88/82/sh	88/81/sh	Lisbon	82/64/s	92/66/s	Sao Paulo	86/63/pc	67/50/r
Amsterdam	73/66/s	73/61/sh	Copenhagen	73/61/pc	68/59/sh	London	70/64/pc	76/59/s	Sarajevo	83/60/pc	89/60/s
Ankara	92/64/s	95/67/s	Damascus	102/66/s	101/67/s	Madrid	104/71/s	105/72/s	Shanghai	104/85/pc	104/85/pc
Asuncion	64/44/pc	59/38/pc	Dublin	69/56/c	69/55/pc	Manila	90/79/t	88/79/t	Singapore	91/81/c	85/78/t
Athens	93/76/s	96/77/s	Geneva	85/60/pc	87/62/s	Mexico City	77/56/sh	78/56/sh	Stockholm	72/55/c	69/55/sh
Auckland	57/46/sh	59/45/r	Guatemala City	81/63/t	74/62/t	Milan	92/74/s	93/74/s	Sydney	68/49/s	67/50/c
Baghdad	114/92/s	114/90/pc	Hanoi	99/83/pc	100/83/pc	Mombasa	84/70/pc	85/71/pc	Taipei	93/80/t	98/80/t
Bangkok	94/81/t	96/82/t	Harare	81/52/s	83/53/s	Montevideo	52/45/r	52/38/pc	Tegucigalpa	81/67/t	79/66/t
Beijing	93/75/pc	86/77/r	Havana	91/74/pc	91/73/pc	Montreal	81/64/s	74/69/r	Tehran	108/84/s	106/85/s
Beirut	90/78/s	89/79/s	Helsinki	72/65/s	74/63/pc	Moscow	72/56/r	71/55/sh	Tokyo	88/79/r	92/80/t
Belgrade	92/69/s	91/66/pc	Hong Kong	92/83/c	92/83/s	Nairobi	71/58/sh	72/54/c	Toronto	75/70/t	77/60/t
Berlin	74/57/c	78/60/c	Jakarta	92/76/c	92/75/pc	New Delhi	89/80/t	89/80/t	Tunis	96/74/s	99/75/s
Bogota	69/50/pc	66/50/r	Jerusalem	89/68/s	89/68/s	Panama City	86/76/t	87/76/t	Vancouver	80/62/s	79/62/s
Brussels	75/66/pc	76/58/pc	Johannesburg	74/51/s	75/46/s	Paris	81/63/s	82/60/s	Vienna	85/64/sh	84/65/pc
Bucharest	91/65/s	94/67/pc	Kabul	93/64/s	95/60/s	Port-au-Prince	98/76/t	95/77/s	Warsaw	78/60/t	76/63/pc
Budapest	84/65/pc	86/60/s	Khartoum	88/77/t	91/78/pc	Rio de Janeiro	88/73/s	78/64/pc	Yerevan	90/67/s	91/68/s
Buenos Aires	48/39/r	53/41/s	Kyiv	82/64/s	83/65/pc	Riyadh	112/86/pc	113/85/pc	Zagreb	86/65/pc	86/64/pc
Cairo	97/79/s	98/80/s	Kingston	91/81/t	94/81/c	Rome	89/72/s	90/73/s	Zurich	77/56/t	82/59/s

● Denotes possible travel delays Thursday

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.



KENYA

Nothing to lose

In late June, Kenyan President William Ruto blinked. After winning the 2022 general election on his plans to reform the economy, he scuttled planned tax hikes and conceded that he was reversing his position in the wake of protests by Gen Z and millennial demonstrators who ransacked parliament and stayed on the streets for weeks, despite a crackdown that led to at least 50 deaths.

Now protesters want Ruto to step down, too, even after he fired most of his cabinet in a move designed to show his critics that he is open to change.

"The arrogance is gone, but the lies are still there," prominent social justice activist Boniface Mwangi wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, according to Reuters. "Yesterday they unleashed goons and police to kill peaceful protesters. That will not stop us."

This attitude is one reason why the Economist believed the protests could change the East African country forever.

The protests erupted after Ruto announced his plan to raise levies on commodities, increasing living costs as many Kenyans are already struggling to make ends meet, CNN wrote. Now they have also expanded to include general discontent with government incompetence and corruption.

"It's about a generation demanding a better future, one where they are not perpetually marginalized," Daystar University political analyst Wandia Njoya told Turkey's Anadolu Agency.

As Inge Amundsen, a senior researcher at the Chr. Michelsen Institute, noted in the Conversation, Kenyan politicians frequently enact laws and rig regulations to benefit themselves and their circles. These politicians then use their influence to control companies, government agencies, civil institutions and other groups, cementing their power and



creating networks of patronage and illicit activities.

Ruto has announced reforms that aim to attack political corruption. But whether or not he can pierce the elite networks that benefit from these relationships will depend on how much political capital he wants to expend on changing the country's power structure that helped propel him to office.

In the meantime, the protests are spreading on the continent. Youth groups are organizing similar mass demonstrations in Nigeria, Uganda and other countries where officials appear more likely to help themselves than tackle the issues that are harming their constituents, World Politics Review noted.

VENEZUELA

A campaign of terror

Venezuela's attorney general on Monday launched an investigation into opposition presidential candidate Edmundo González and opposition leader María Corina Machado, accusing them of inciting the armed forces to disobey the government,

after the pair called on them to halt actions against protesters demonstrating against President Nicolás Maduro's attempt to remain in office via electoral fraud, the Associated Press reported.

Top prosecutor Tarek William Saab, a close Maduro ally, based his decision on an open letter shared by the two opposition politicians hours earlier, asking the military and the police to stand "on the side of the people."

Saab also accused Machado and González of undermining the election process by announcing a different election winner "than the one proclaimed by the National Electoral Council, the only body qualified to do so."

The letter came after a week of deadly clashes between security forces and demonstrators following a ruling by the electoral body, made up of Maduro loyalists, declaring the incumbent had won the July 28 presidential election.

Machado and her allies released their own voting tallies, which showed that González had dealt Maduro a knockout blow – a claim later confirmed by the Washington Post, which estimated that the opposition candidate had "likely received more than twice as many votes" as the president.

DISCOVERIES

Reaching the ceiling

Nearly 130 years after the first modern Olympiads, humans might be finally reaching their limits, research says.

This could bring the Olympic motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" (faster, higher, stronger) to a standstill at the Paris Olympics this year, in the very city where Pierre de Coubertin coined it in 1894.

"The rate of progression must naturally slow down," physiologist Andrew Jones told the Washington Post.

In a 2008 paper, a group of researchers estimated that more than half of all world records at Olympic events, mostly the oldest, would be topped by 2027 – one year before the Los Angeles Games. But the scientists added that recently introduced sports might peak even faster than those that took over a century to do so.

Some argue the claim goes against human nature in its essence. "It's part of who we are as a species to push limits and to push beyond what we think we're capable of doing," Brad Wilkins from the University of Oregon told the Post.

Equipment is one of the reasons for breaking record after record. While Jesse Owens had to dig holes in cinder tracks to place his feet at the beginning of his races, pressure-sensitive starting blocks and synthetic ground surfaces have since helped athletes surpass his historic wins.

Neuropsychological factors play a huge role, too. An Olympian does need to have all the right physical ingredients to succeed – the brain does the rest. Science says that athletes' brains are wired differently from those of ordinary mortals – and that is partly down to genetics. Research in 2015 found that a gene impacting dopamine transportation gave them an extra chemical boost to reach for the stars.

Putin says Ukraine attack is major provocation

Russian border was pierced, triggering fierce clashes

Guy Faulconbridge and Lidia Kelly
REUTERS

MOSCOW – Russia said on Wednesday it was fighting intense battles against Ukrainian forces that had penetrated its southern border near a major natural gas transmission hub, in one of the largest incursions into Russian territory since the war began.

The acting governor of Kursk region, Alexey Smirnov, said he had introduced a state of emergency in the border region. Regional officials said that meant restricting access to specific areas.

Russia's health ministry said 31 civilians, including six children, had been wounded. Smirnov said on Tuesday that five people had been killed.

No information on military casualties was available.

Russia's National Guard said it had beefed up security around the nearby Kursk nuclear power station and its four reactors.

Russia has advanced this year after the failure of Ukraine's 2023 counteroffensive to achieve major gains, and has taken 162 square miles of territory from Ukrainian forces since June 14, Russian officials say.

Ukraine struck back on Tuesday, and battles continued through the night into Wednesday as Ukrainian forces pushed to the northwest of the border town of Sudzha, 330 miles southwest of Moscow, Russia's defense ministry said.

"The Kyiv regime has launched another major provocation," President Vladimir Putin told members of the Russian government, referring to the attack in Kursk region.

Up to 1,000 Ukrainian soldiers

The chief of Russia's general staff, Valery Gerasimov, told Putin that Russian forces had halted a thrust by up to 1,000 Ukrainian soldiers – more than three times the figure that Russia's defense ministry had stated on Tuesday – and would push them back to the bor-



A Russian drone attack on Ukrainian armored vehicles outside the town of Sudzha in the Kursk region is shown. RUSSIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

der.

The advance was stopped by "the actions of the units covering the state border together with border guards and reinforcement units, with airstrikes, missile and artillery fire," Gerasimov said in televised comments.

The Ukrainian military appeared to have adopted a strategy of strict silence.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in his nightly video address on Wednesday, made no reference to the attack, while exhorting Kyiv's soldiers to press on and weaken Russian forces.

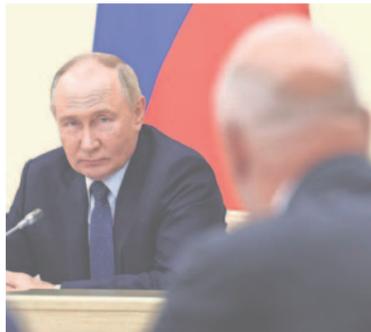
Ukraine's General Staff also made no acknowledgment in its daily battlefield update. In a late evening report, it said fighting had intensified in Sumy region – across the border from Russia's Kursk region.

The General Staff said Russian forces had deployed aircraft, helicopters and heavy weapons in the area "but made no headway and suffered significant losses."

Washington: No violation of rules

In Washington, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said the United States was seeking an understanding from Ukraine of the incursion, and said it had had no advance knowledge of it.

State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said U.S. rules on Ukrai-



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting with members of the government in Moscow on Wednesday. VALERY SHARIFULIN/SPUTNIK/POOL VIA REUTERS



A view shows what is said to be a Russian army strike on Ukrainian military hardware in the Kursk region, which borders Ukraine, in this still image from video released Wednesday. RUSSIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY VIA REUTERS

nian use of U.S. weapons – authorized in areas over the Russian border – remained in effect, but that Ukraine's actions were "not a violation of our policy."

The Russian ambassador to Washington, Anatoly Antonov, said on Telegram that U.S. statements on the Ukrainian action were "outrageous...not a word criticizing their clients, not a regret about the victims of the tragedy."

There was fighting around Sudzha, the last operational trans-shipping point for Russian natural gas to Europe via Ukraine. The Urengoy-Pomary-Uzhhorod pipeline carried about 14.65 billion cubic meters of gas in 2023, about half of Russia's gas exports to Europe.

Ukraine's gas transmission operator said Russian gas was transiting to European consumers normally. Just 37 miles to the northeast lies the Kursk nuclear power station.

The battles around Sudzha come at a crucial juncture in the conflict, the biggest land war in Europe since World War II. Kyiv is concerned that U.S. support could drop off if Republican Donald Trump wins the November presidential election.

Trump has said he would end the war, and both Russia and Ukraine are keen to gain the strongest possible bargaining position on the battlefield. Ukraine wants to pin down Russian forces and show the West it can still mount major battles.

Russian military bloggers depicted the situation in Kursk region as more serious than the official accounts, with some suggesting that Ukraine had opened a new front. Russia has sent reserves to help shore up its defenses.

Some bloggers suggested that Ukraine might be planning an advance on the Kursk nuclear plant.

Both Kyiv and Moscow say they do not target civilians in the war, triggered by Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Russian Telegram channels carried unverified footage of shelled houses.

Forces describing themselves as voluntary paramilitaries fighting on Ukraine's side penetrated parts of Kursk and the adjacent Belgorod region earlier this year, triggering a push by Russian troops to set up a buffer zone in Ukraine's northeast.



The drop in interest rates gives some people who bought homes when rates were higher the option to refinance and reduce payments. SARAH SILBIGER/REUTERS FILE

US 30-year mortgage rate drops

Decline gives potential homebuyers some relief

Ann Saphir
REUTERS

The interest rate for the most popular U.S. home loan plunged last week to its lowest level in 15 months, after the Federal Reserve signaled it could start cutting its policy rate in September and a downshift in the job market bolstered financial market bets that the reductions in borrowing costs would be big.

The average contract rate on a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage dropped 27 basis points in the week ended Aug. 2, to 6.55%, the Mortgage Bankers Association said on Wednesday. That was the lowest rate since May 2023 and the sharpest drop in two years.

The decline gives potential homebuyers some long-hoped-for relief in what has become an increasingly unaffordable housing market in recent years, as home prices and borrowing costs both rose.

That unaffordability was also on display on Wednesday in July's housing sentiment index from Fannie Mae, the government-sponsored mortgage finance company. Only 17% of respondents said it was a good time to buy a home, down from 19% in June, Fannie Mae said.

Moreover, 35% said they would rent their next residence – rather than buy it – the highest share since 2011.

“Right now, it’s difficult to tell if this reflects simple buyer fatigue or a greater sense of disenchantment with the market, but we think it could have important implications should the trend continue,” Doug Duncan, chief economist at Fannie Mae, said in a statement.

Refinance wave

The drop in interest rates also gives some people who bought homes when



While the Fed left rates steady at its July meeting, its post-meeting policy statement showed it was now just as focused on the health of the labor market as on bringing down inflation. CHRIS WATTIE/REUTERS FILE

rates were higher the option to refinance and reduce payments. The MBA 30-year average rate topped out at 7.9% last October.

Refinancing applications rose sharply to the highest level in two years, the MBA said on Wednesday. That helped lift the refinance share of overall loan application volumes to 41.7% – the highest level since the week of the Fed's first rate hike in March 2022.

But purchase activity edged up less than 1%, constrained by a low inventory of homes for sale that has pushed up prices.

The Fed, whose aggressive inflation-fighting rate-hike campaign in 2022 and 2023 drove borrowing costs to their highest levels in decades, signaled last week that cooling price pressures and a slowing labor market mean a policy rate cut could be on the table as soon as next month. The U.S. central bank has kept its policy rate in the 5.25%-5.50% range for more than a year.

Two days after the Fed's last policy meeting, the Labor Department's monthly jobs report showed that the U.S. unemployment rate had jumped to 4.3% in July and hiring had slowed, raising fears a recession is imminent or perhaps even underway.

The fears set off a slide in equities that reverberated in global markets into Monday, before stocks recovered somewhat on Tuesday. Major U.S. stock indexes were trading higher again on Wednesday before dropping.

Last week's labor market data also triggered a rally in U.S. Treasuries, lowering their yields – which move inversely to bond prices – and pulling closely linked mortgage rates down along with them, a silver lining for millions of U.S. households on the hunt for new homes, cheaper housing, or both.

Rate cuts coming

While the Fed left rates steady at its July meeting, its post-meeting policy statement showed it was now just as focused on the health of the labor market as on bringing down inflation.

That shift in communication, San Francisco Fed President Mary Daly said on Monday, has translated to lower mortgage rates as investors anticipate the central bank's next move.

“You already see policy working, even before we cut the rate,” she said.

Interest rate futures now reflect bets the Fed will cut its policy rate by a total of a full percentage point by the end of this year, starting with a reduction of half a percentage point next month.

More than 4 million mortgages originated since 2022 have interest rates of 6.5% or higher, according to Intercontinental Exchange's ICE Mortgage Monitor.

But more than six in 10 mortgages have rates below 4%, according to data from Freddie Mac, the government-sponsored mortgage giant. That suggests that for a large fraction of homeowners mortgage rates would need to drop far more to make the cost of refinancing worthwhile, or to entice them to buy a new home and put their current one on the market.

FINANCIAL MARKETS

Nasdaq ends down 1% as tech shares fall

Caroline Valetkevitch
REUTERS

NEW YORK – U.S. stocks ended lower on Wednesday, with the Nasdaq falling 1% as technology shares declined and weak demand in a 10-year Treasury auction stoked investor jitters in choppy trade.

Indexes started the day higher with a surge in tech shares, and both began to lose steam in afternoon trading. With investors still nervous after a recent steep selloff in global stocks, equities pared gains further after the Treasury auction.

All three indexes went red, and losses steepened just before the close. The S&P 500 technology index ended down 1.4% and was the biggest drag on the benchmark index.

“There’s just a lot to worry about over the next eight weeks or so, so I’m expecting more volatility. I wouldn’t be surprised if after a few days of rally you have another small selloff,” said Peter Tuz, president of Chase Investment Counsel in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Investors have been worried about a possible U.S. recession and weaker forecasts from some big U.S. companies, among other factors.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 234.21 points, or 0.6%, to 38,763.45; the S&P 500 lost 40.53 points, or 0.77%, to 5,199.5; and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 171.05 points, or 1.05%, to 16,195.81.

Lindsey Bell, chief strategist at 248 Ventures in Charlotte, North Carolina, said investors also may be taking profits after Tuesday's rebound in stocks.

“You don’t just have the fall we had on Monday and it’s done. You typically test the lows again before we can move out of this downtrend,” she said.

On Monday, the Nasdaq and S&P 500 fell at least 3% each.

Stocks got early support Wednesday following comments from Bank of Japan Deputy Governor Shinichi Uchida that the central bank would not raise rates when financial markets are unstable.

The Bank of Japan's surprise rate hike on July 31 to a level unseen in 15 years had sparked a global stocks rout as investors unwound their sharp yen carry trade positions following a surge in the low-yielding currency, widely used for acquiring high-yielding assets.

Shares of Walt Disney fell 4.5% as it predicted a “moderation in demand” at its theme park business in the coming quarters.

Super Micro Computer shares dropped 20.1% after it reported quarterly adjusted gross margins below estimates. Rival Dell Technologies dropped 4.9%.

Markets await more commentary on monetary policy from U.S. central bank officials next week, in the run-up to the Jackson Hole, Wyoming, event where Fed Chair Jerome Powell is scheduled to speak.

Nike sees gold rush with website visits, sales

Ananya Mariam Rajesh
REUTERS

The summer Olympics is turning out to be a rare win for Nike as the global sporting event has helped boost demand for the sportswear giant's new launches and edge out competition, website searches from research firm Similarweb showed.

In the opening week of the Olympics, from July 26 to Aug. 1, Nike and Puma managed to increase visits to their direct-to-consumer sites, while Adidas, Hoka and On all saw their visits decline compared to the week before, according to Similarweb.

The visits peaked on July 31 to 2 million, following U.S. gymnast Simone Biles clinching her seventh Olympic gold medal after the United States earned their third gold in the women's team event.

Out of those visits to Nike.com, 86,900 included a sale, while Adidas had a total of 532,500 visits with only 3,600 likely converted into product purchases, the data showed.

“If the athletes and teams sponsored by Nike carry on winning, that’s likely going to boost their popularity and

therefore they’ll probably still see those conversions remain strong through the rest of the Olympics,” said Daniel Reid, Similarweb's senior insights analyst.

Nike had said it was spending more on this Olympics than any previous games, as it hopes to revive sales and compete with upstart rivals. CFO Matthew Friend said in June that Nike was reinvesting nearly \$1 billion in consumer-facing activities in fiscal 2025, which includes product launches and deepening its sports marketing portfolio through campaigns during the Paris Olympics.

The world's largest sportswear maker and official sponsor for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic team, launched a slew of products ranging from Jordan 4 Retro SE shoes to an Olympic Electric Pack consisting of 55 shoes, including new designs of Alphafly 3 and Pegasus that have intrigued consumers.

On the resale platform StockX, the Jordan 4 Retro SE Paris Olympics Wet Cement, which retails for \$225, were traded over 8,373 times as of July end, making it the highest-selling Olympic product on its site.

Still Nike's performance so far this year has lagged brands such as Roger



The Nike Alphafly 3 running shoe's new design has intrigued customers. STEPHANIE LECOQC/REUTERS FILE

Federer-backed On, Deckers Outdoor's Hoka and Adidas in the running, performance and casual shoe category with the sportswear giant struggling to bring innovative designs and some strategy missteps.

“(Nike is) still a struggling brand overall. But the Olympics, it definitely drives interest in these things ... Nike is the one that’s really winning there,” said Drew Haines, the merchandising director at StockX.

Debby stalls off coast of Carolinas

Tropical storm leaves flooding in its wake

Rich McKay
REUTERS

ATLANTA – Tropical Storm Debby brought unrelenting rain to the U.S. Southeast as it drifted off the Carolinas on Wednesday, threatening the region with dangerous flooding before picking up speed in the coming days and moving north.

At least six people have died in Florida and Georgia in the wake of the storm, which made landfall on Florida's Gulf Coast on Monday as a Category 1 hurricane and headed northeast. It is expected to next menace the Southeastern and mid-Atlantic coasts for days.

Governors in the Carolinas, Florida and Georgia have declared states of emergency. The storm has already left neighborhoods and communities underwater with widespread flooding washing out streets and inundating homes across the region.

"All North Carolinians across our state need to be prepared for a deluge," North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said during a briefing at the state's Department of Emergency Management on Wednesday.

Officials in Charleston, South Carolina, lifted a citywide curfew on Wednesday, saying crews on standby were not needed to conduct any rescues overnight as the worst of the storm passed through.

Even so, the storm could still deliver another 3 to 9 inches of rainfall to the Carolina coast, the National Weather Service said. That would bring rain totals to 25 inches in South Carolina and 15 inches in southeastern North Carolina near Wilmington and coastal Georgia.

Debby was about 55 miles southeast of Charleston on Wednesday afternoon and moving northeast about 3 miles per hour toward the northeast, with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph. It was forecast to make landfall again further north in South Carolina on Thursday morning, the National Hurricane Center said.

Debby's greatest threat remains the sheer volume of rain it is dumping on the Eastern Seaboard and the potential for flooding that could continue into



Heavy rainfall caused flooding in Statesboro, Ga., on Wednesday amid Tropical Storm Debby. MEGAN VARNER/GETTY IMAGES

next week. In South Carolina, 15 homes had suffered major damage and one had been destroyed as a result of Debby's flooding.

Parts of Virginia were expected to get 3 to 7 inches of rain through Friday, while 2 to 4 inches were forecast for parts of Maryland, Pennsylvania and upstate New York through Saturday, with risks of flash floods, the center said.

"This is certainly an extreme rainfall event," said Neil Dixon, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Charleston, noting that daily rainfall records have already been broken in the area. "In that respect, the flooding has been something that we haven't seen in many years."

Emergency management officials were keeping a close watch as the rainwater drained into the numerous river systems that snake through the Carolinas.



Tropical Storm Debby drifts through Myrtle Beach, S.C., on Wednesday. MARCO BELLO/REUTERS

Public schools become new religious battleground

Liya Cui and Joseph Ax
REUTERS

It is a foundational democratic tenet taught in every basic U.S. history course: the Constitution bars the government from endorsing an official religion or favoring one over others.

But moves by two Republican-governed states – Louisiana's requirement that public schools display the biblical Ten Commandments and Oklahoma's mandate that public schools teach the Bible – take aim at the Constitution's "establishment clause," long understood by courts as separating church and state.

Lawmakers in 29 states have proposed at least 91 bills promoting religion in public schools this year, according to Americans United for Separation of Church and State, an advocacy group backing a lawsuit challenging Louisiana's law. Rachel Laser, its chief executive, said the group tracked 49 similar bills in 2023.

The movement is fueled by opposition to what conservatives call liberal curricula, including a focus on diversity and LGBTQ+ rights, and by the U.S. Supreme Court's willingness to overturn precedent as it moves American law rightward.

Republican Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill, whose office is defending the Ten Commandments law in court, said on Monday that legislators frustrated by a lack of discipline in schools turned to the biblical precepts to "start a conversation about order."

"That's the fundamental message that exists in our legal structures about what Moses stood for and what the Ten Commandments stood for," Murrill told a news conference.

When asked how nonreligious parents could respond to the law, Republican Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry told the news conference they could tell their children not to look at Ten Commandments posters.

Conservatives are hopeful that legal challenges will give the Supreme Court an opportunity to reconsider longstanding limits on religious expression in public schools.

"They see the writing on the wall of



Supreme Court rulings in recent years have galvanized conservative Christians. AMANDA ANDRADE-RHOADES/REUTERS FILE

what the Supreme Court is doing," said law professor Steven Green of Willamette University in Oregon, who wrote the book "Separating Church and State: A History."

A week after Louisiana in June became the first state to require schools to display the Ten Commandments since the Supreme Court struck down a similar Kentucky law in 1980, Oklahoma's schools superintendent, Ryan Walters, directed all public schools to teach from the Bible.

Under Oklahoma's guidelines, teachers will be given a copy of the Bible and focus on its historical context in Western society and American history, its literary significance, and its influence on the arts and music. Several Oklahoma school districts have refused to alter their curricula to accommodate the policy change.

Walters did not respond to a request for comment.

In both states, officials said the religious texts are important to understanding the birth of American government. The claim echoes arguments by some Christian conservatives that the United States was founded as a Christian country, an idea many historians call inaccurate.

Christian lawmakers

The National Association of Christian Lawmakers (NACL), founded in 2020, has coordinated legislative efforts across different states. It has produced three dozen "model" bills for introduction in state legislatures, including one on the Ten Commandments and another requiring schools to display "In God We Trust" signs.

Republican Louisiana Rep. Dodie Horton, the sponsor of that state's Ten Commandments bill and a member of the association, did not respond to a request for comment.

The next major battleground could be Republican-governed Texas, which passed the first law in the United States last year letting public schools hire chaplains as counselors. Similar bills subsequently were introduced in more than a dozen states.

The Texas board of education will decide in November whether to approve a new elementary school curriculum that includes Bible teachings. Texas Republican lawmakers are likely to revive bills requiring the display of the Ten Commandments in schools and allowing publicly funded vouchers to pay for student tuition at private religious schools.

In an interview last month at the Republican National Convention, the NACL's founder, former Arkansas state Sen. Jason Rapert, argued that religious values are disappearing from American public life, imperiling the future.

"The Judeo-Christian history and heritage of the nation has been torn down in many places," Rapert said.

A conservative Supreme Court

The Supreme Court in 1962 ruled that school-sponsored prayer in public schools violated the establishment clause. But the court, which now has a 6-3 conservative majority, has taken an expansive view of religious rights in some important cases in recent years.

In 2022, it ruled that a Washington state public school district violated the constitutional rights of a Christian high school football coach who was suspended for refusing to stop leading prayers with players on the field after games. In doing so, it abandoned a 1971 precedent that had outlined how to determine if a law violated the establishment clause.

The ruling galvanized conservative Christians, as did the court's decision days earlier rolling back abortion rights.

The court also has made it easier for religious schools and churches to receive public money; exempted family-owned corporations from having to provide employee insurance coverage for women's birth control on religious grounds; and backed a Christian baker and a Christian web designer who refused to provide services for same-sex weddings.

Rapert called the court's evolving view on religion in public life a "great opportunity."

If new laws on religion and public schools are challenged at the Supreme Court, it will have to answer questions such as whether they make a denominational preference or coerce people to participate in a religion, said law and religion professor Michael Helfand of Pepperdine University in California.

"Should I feel religiously coerced if the state puts up the Ten Commandments in my classroom?" Helfand asked. "I could see a court going either way on that."

ANALYSIS

Black voters line up behind Harris

More white voters support Trump

Jason Lange and Trevor Hunnicutt
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris is drawing more support from Black voters than President Joe Biden did when he was in the race this year, while Republican Donald Trump's support among white voters has risen somewhat in recent months, according to an analysis of Reuters/Ipsos polling.

The analysis, which examined more than 10,000 responses from seven nationwide Reuters/Ipsos polls conducted since May, points to significant strengths and vulnerabilities for Harris, the vice president who took over Biden's campaign when the president dropped his reelection bid on July 21.

Harris would be the first Black woman elected president, as well as the first Asian American, if she were to defeat Trump in the Nov. 5 election.

Some 70% of Black voters polled in July picked Harris over Trump on a hypothetical ballot, up from 59% who backed Biden in May and June polls. Trump's share of the Black vote rose marginally to 12% in July from 9% in May and June.

Trump, meanwhile, is seeing increased support from white voters. Some 50% picked Trump in July polls, up from 46% in May and June. Harris had the support of 38% of white voters in July, compared to 36% in May and June.

The race remains essentially tied,



Supporters of former President Donald Trump attend a women's basketball game at the Paris Olympics on Wednesday. Some 50% of white voters picked Trump in July polls, up from 46% in May and June. BRIAN SNYDER/REUTERS

with Harris and Trump each getting 43% support in an aggregate of last month's polls. Biden and Trump each had 40% in the polls conducted in the previous two months.

The analysis examined poll responses gathered throughout July on a hypothetical Harris-Trump contest and included responses from before Biden, 81, ended his bid. All responses on Harris, however, were gathered after Biden's June 27 debate against Trump, when the president's faltering performance led Democrats to call on him to end his

campaign. White voters make up the biggest racial bloc, accounting for 72% of all voters in the 2020 election, according to the Pew Research Center, though their share of the electorate has dropped sharply in recent decades.

African Americans accounted for only 11% of voters that year. But they are a critical component of the Democratic Party's coalition and could play an outsized role in this year's election.

Black voters in Georgia, for example, propelled Biden to victory over Trump in the 2020 presidential election. But a

surge in the cost of living and what they see as a lack of progress on racial justice issues has prompted disillusionment in some quarters.

Terrance Woodbury, a Democratic pollster who specializes in minority voter outreach, said Harris needs overwhelming support from African Americans to compensate for her weakness among white voters, particularly white men and seniors. Biden won 92% of the Black vote in 2020, while Trump won 55% of white votes, according to analysis of exit polls by the Pew Research Center.

"She's going to have to consolidate her base of Black voters, of young voters and women of color," Woodbury said.

Harris could be picking up a larger share of Black voters who had previously been on the fence. Some 19% of Black registered voters in July said they were undecided, might pick a third candidate or not vote at all, down from 31% in May and June.

A Harris campaign official said the campaign expects the race to remain close in the run-up to November.

The Trump campaign did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump has falsely accused Harris of previously downplaying her Black heritage. He drew jeers from a convention of Black journalists when he said she only promoted her Indian heritage in the past. Harris, who is of Indian and Jamaican heritage, has long identified as both Black and Asian.

Reuters combined multiple polls to examine trends among smaller racial and ethnic groups. Margins of error for the poll results varied between about 2 and 6 percentage points.

A LOOK AT MINNESOTA'S ECONOMY UNDER GOV. TIM WALZ

Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee to succeed President Joe Biden, has selected Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, a champion of progressive economic policies such as universal school meals, to be her running mate in the Nov. 5 election.

Here is a look at how the state's economy has done since Walz became governor in January 2019.

Growth

The Minnesota economy has trailed overall U.S. growth under Walz, data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis shows.

Heading into the COVID-19 recession in early 2020, the state economy essentially matched the U.S. growth rate. Since the recovery began in the second quarter of 2020, state growth has lagged national growth by 5.5 percentage points.

Employment

Job growth in Minnesota under Walz has not kept up with the U.S. pace, especially after the COVID-19 job losses in early 2020, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Total nonfarm payrolls have grown by just 0.5% – 14,700 jobs – since Walz became governor versus 5.8% for the U.S. overall. The state has not fully recovered all the jobs lost during the health crisis, with payrolls down by 15,400 since February 2020, one of more than a dozen states still to have a COVID-19 jobs deficit.

Unemployment

Joblessness – at 2.9% as of June – has been notably lower in Minnesota than in across the U.S., BLS data shows.

The unemployment rate peaked at 11.2% in the spring of 2020, 3.6 percentage points below the national peak, and

it has remained low – not rising above 3% since December 2021.

That dynamic is the result of a drop in the ranks of the unemployed – down 10% since Walz assumed office – alongside essentially no net growth in the state's workforce.

Personal income

Income growth in Minnesota has kept pace with the national average during Walz's administration, climbing 30% through the first quarter of 2024, the latest BEA data available at the state level.

Inflation

Like the rest of the country, Minnesota experienced the wave of inflation that arose during the pandemic.

It has eased notably faster in the state's largest metro area tracked by



Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz speaks during a campaign rally with Kamala Harris at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport on Wednesday. ELIZABETH FRANTZ/REUTERS

BLS price data – Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington – than in the rest of the country. As of May, the latest month for which BLS data is available, the annual inflation rate in that area was 2.6% versus 3.3% nationally.

Reuters

Midwest

Continued from Page 1NN

enveloped Democrats since she replaced President Joe Biden at the top of the presidential ticket two weeks ago.

Polls show Harris has erased the lead Trump had built during the final faltering weeks of Biden's campaign, and a reenergized Democratic Party has flooded her campaign with donations.

The Harris campaign said it raised \$36 million in 24 hours after announcing Walz as the vice presidential pick on Tuesday. Wednesday's rallies drew more than 27,000 people in total, according to the campaign.

Democrats regard Wisconsin and Michigan as near must-wins in the 2024 election. The states have loomed large for the party since Hillary Clinton's unexpected defeats there helped clinch Trump's 2016 win. Biden beat Trump in both states in 2020. But opinion polls showed him facing a close battle in Michigan before his exit, with many members of the state's significant Arab and Muslim American population fuming over the humanitarian crisis of Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza.

In a reminder of how divisive the issue has been for Democrats, a group of pro-Palestinian protesters briefly interrupted Harris' speech in Detroit, chanting, "Kamala, Kamala, you can't hide, we won't vote for genocide."

She paused for a moment, saying she believed in democracy and the importance of every voice, and then added, "But I am speaking now." When the chants continued, she repeated, "You know what? If you want Donald Trump to win, then say that. Otherwise, I'm speaking."



A reflection shows supporters gathering ahead of a rally for Vice President Kamala Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, in Eau Claire, Wis., on Wednesday. KEVIN MOHATT/REUTERS

The moment was reminiscent of a viral moment from her vice presidential debate in 2020, when she told an interrupting Republican Mike Pence, "Mr. Vice President, I'm speaking."

Some pro-Palestinian activists see Harris as more of an ally than Biden given her more forceful public comments on Palestinian human rights, even though the two Democrats have displayed no substantive policy differences. Those left-leaning activists also expressed more support for Walz than some other candidates to be Harris' running mate, particularly Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro.

A former congressman who won elections in a Republican-leaning district before becoming governor, Walz has a record of appealing to the white, rural voters who have increasingly turned to Trump over the years.

But Trump and Vance have portrayed Walz as too left-wing.

With Trump largely off the road this week, Vance has been trailing Harris and Walz around the country and holding campaign events near their rallies, an effort that comes as Harris' surge appears to have rattled the Trump camp.

In an unusual moment on Wednesday, Vance approached Air Force Two

while Harris appeared to be in her motorcade on the tarmac in Wisconsin and asked nearby reporters why she did not take more of their questions.

The two candidates' planes were several hundred yards apart at Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in Eau Claire.

Vance said he was trying to "check out this plane that's going to be mine in a few months" and spoke to reporters while Harris' motorcade drove away.

Harris' campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the incident, which several people traveling with the vice president said went unnoticed at the time.

IN BRIEF

Romanian paid Hunter Biden to seek influence, prosecutors say

Prosecutors in the U.S. criminal tax case against Hunter Biden accused him of accepting payments from a Romanian businessman who sought to "influence U.S. government agencies" in connection with a criminal probe in Romania.

The U.S. Department of Justice made the allegation in a Wednesday filing in Los Angeles federal court, where President Joe Biden's son faces a scheduled Sept. 9 trial over tax evasion charges. He has pleaded not guilty.

ABC said the claim stems from Hunter Biden's work for Gabriel Popoviciu, a wealthy Romanian identified as "G.P." in the filing, and who prosecutors say hired Hunter Biden for legal work in late 2015 when Joe Biden was vice president.

Reuters could not independently verify that "G.P." is Popoviciu.

In the filing, prosecutors said they plan to present evidence that Hunter Biden and a business associate "received compensation from a foreign principal who was attempting to influence U.S. policy and public opinion and cause the United States to investigate the Romanian investigation of G.P. in Romania."

CDC issues second health alert for mpox virus in Congo

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a second health alert on Tuesday to notify clinicians and health departments about a deadly type of the mpox virus spreading in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The World Health Organization said earlier in the day that an emergency committee would be convened to discuss whether the current mpox outbreak in the DRC represents a public health emergency of international concern. The current mpox outbreak in Congo has already seen around 27,000 cases and claimed more than 1,100 lives, most of them children, since the beginning of 2023.

The CDC said its alert was about the spread of a subtype of the mpox virus called Clade I from DRC to some neighboring countries.

Clade I generally leads to more severe infections than another subtype called Clade II. However, the risk of Clade I infection spreading in the U.S. is considered to be very low, the CDC added.

Starliner astronauts could return on SpaceX capsule in February

NASA officials said on Wednesday the two astronauts delivered to the International Space Station in June by Boeing's Starliner could return on SpaceX's Crew Dragon in February 2025 if Starliner is still deemed unsafe to return to Earth.

The U.S. space agency has been discussing potential plans with SpaceX to leave two seats empty on an upcoming Crew Dragon launch for NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who became the first crew to fly Boeing's Starliner capsule.

The astronauts' test mission, initially expected to last about eight days on the station, has been drawn out by issues on Starliner's propulsion system that have increasingly called into question the spacecraft's ability to safely return them to Earth as planned.

A Boeing spokesperson said if NASA decides to change Starliner's mission, the company "will take the actions necessary to configure Starliner for an uncrewed return."

Prosecutors: After Maduro ouster failed, US vet took steps to flee

A U.S. military veteran who took credit for a failed 2020 raid to oust Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro should be detained on weapons smuggling charges, reflecting his history of online searches for how to be a "successful fugitive," federal prosecutors said on Wednesday.

Jordan Goudreau was arrested in New York last week on charges of violating U.S. arms export control laws by shipping weapons to Colombia for a May 3, 2020, maritime raid aimed at ousting Maduro, a socialist foe of the United States.

Prosecutors in Tampa, Florida, where the charges were brought, urged U.S. District Judge Virginia Covington to keep Goudreau behind bars pending trial, calling him a flight risk.

They cited Google searches he made shortly after the raid, including "how to run and stay hidden from the feds," "what happens if i run from the law" and "how do you prove gun smuggling."

Federal prosecutors believe Goudreau later traveled to Mexico and back without using normal channels that could have alerted law enforcement to his whereabouts.

Reuters

Report: Taylor Swift concerts canceled after planned attack

Alexandra Schwarz-Goerlich and Riham Alkousaa

REUTERS

BERLIN – Taylor Swift's three concerts in Vienna this week were canceled after the government confirmed a planned attack at the stadium, the organizer announced late on Wednesday, and Austria's Chancellor Karl Nehammer said "a tragedy was prevented."

"Thanks to the intensive cooperation of our police and the newly established DSN with foreign services, the threat was identified early on, combated and a tragedy prevented," Nehammer said in a post on social media platform X. DSN is Austria's Directorate for Security and Intelligence.

"With confirmation from government officials of a planned terrorist attack at Ernst Happel Stadium, we have no choice but to cancel the three scheduled shows for everyone's safety," Baracuda.music said in a post on Instagram, adding all tickets would be automatically refunded.

Austrian police on Wednesday detained two people suspected of plotting attacks on concerts, Franz Ruf, director general for public security, said at a news conference on Wednesday evening.

"During our investigations, we identified preparatory actions and noted that the 19 year-old suspect had a particular focus on the Taylor Swift concerts in Vienna," Ruf said, adding that the suspect, an Austrian citizen, had pledged allegiance to Islamic state. Another suspect was later arrested in Vienna.

Police searched the residence of one of the suspects in Ternitz, Lower Austria, and were analyzing items from the home. Local media, citing police sources, said three suspects were still on the run.

Earlier on Wednesday before the cancellation announcement, police had said the events would take place but with increased entry checks and personal searches, with deployment of special units including anti-terror and bomb disposal teams, advising the public to arrive early at the events.

Three Taylor Swift concerts were scheduled to take place in Vienna from Thursday to Saturday. Police had been expecting around 65,000 attendees at each show, as well as up to 15,000 people outside the stadium without tickets, which fed security concerns.

The shows were to be part of the record-breaking Eras Tour by the American singer-songwriter which started



Three Taylor Swift concerts were scheduled to take place in Vienna from Thursday to Saturday with police expecting around 65,000 attendees each day.

JULIEN DE ROSA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE

on March 17, 2023, in Glendale, Arizona, and is set to conclude on Dec. 8, 2024, in Vancouver, Canada.

Swift, 34, had not yet commented on the cancellations on her official Instagram account, which has 283 million followers. The singer has been taking Europe by storm, prompting some pundits to envisage an economic windfall as fans flock to dozens of sold-out shows from Dublin to Warsaw and beyond. After Vienna, Swift was set to sing in London, where six concerts are scheduled at Wembley Stadium, starting on Aug. 15.

Delta passengers sue Delta for refusing refunds after outage

Jonathan Stempel

REUTERS

Delta Air Lines was sued by passengers who complained that the carrier refused to offer full refunds after delaying or canceling their flights in the wake of last month's massive computer outage.

The proposed class action was made public on Wednesday in Atlanta federal court, after the July 19 outage disrupted airlines, banks, hospitals and emergency lines.

Passengers accused Delta of breach of contract for failing to provide automatic refunds, and providing partial refunds only if they signed waivers against pursuing further legal claims.

They also said Delta should compensate them for the cost and inconvenience of rebooking with other airlines, hotels and food, and from being separated from their luggage.

One of the four plaintiffs, John Brennan of Florida, said he and his wife missed a \$10,000 anniversary cruise after being stranded in Atlanta on a layover, but Delta offered just \$219.45 in compensation.

The lawsuit said the airline's "unfair, unlawful, and unconscionable practices resulted in Delta unjustly enriching itself at the expense of its customers."

Delta declined to comment on the lawsuit, but has said passengers whose travel was disrupted can request and receive refunds, and seek compensation for incidental costs.

Delta's passengers remained stranded, waiting in lines for days trying to get to their destinations," Joseph



American passenger Loudon Erskine waits for a Delta Airlines flight on the floor at Haneda International Airport in Tokyo, Japan, following a global IT outage on July 19. KIM KYUNG-HOON/REUTERS

Sauder, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, said in an email. "When our clients sought refunds, Delta again failed to deliver."

The outage stemmed from a flawed software update from the cybersecurity company CrowdStrike that crashed more than 8 million computers worldwide and affected many Microsoft customers.

Disruptions subsided the next day for many U.S. carriers but persisted at Delta, leading to more than 6,000 cancellations. CrowdStrike, Microsoft and Delta have since argued publicly over

who is to blame and who should pay.

Delta Chief Executive Ed Bastian estimated on July 31 that the outage cost his Atlanta-based carrier about \$500 million.

Passengers filed a separate class action against CrowdStrike on Monday, also seeking damages.

The Austin, Texas-based company has said it was neither grossly negligent nor at fault for Delta's problems.

The case is Bajra et al v Delta Air Lines, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Georgia, No. 24-03477.

Box-office hero Deadpool could set record at comic-book auction

Rollo Ross

REUTERS

LOS ANGELES – Deadpool, the mouthy mercenary producing big box-office sales, may soon set a record at a comic-book auction.

Cover artwork featuring Deadpool's first appearance in the comics went on sale this week at Heritage Auctions with an asking price of \$7.5 million. If it sells at that price, it will be the most valuable comic-book art ever sold.

The penciled artwork was created by writer/artist Rob Liefeld at age 23 for New Mutants #98, which was released in February 1991.

Liefeld does not own the artwork. He sold it to a collector 25 years ago, although he said he is thrilled that the character he created is doing so well financially.

"I just keep smiling," said Liefeld about the auction.

Ryan Reynolds plays Deadpool in the box-office hit "Deadpool & Wolverine," a movie from Walt Disney-owned

Marvel Studios. The film ranks as the highest-grossing R-rated movie of all time with more than \$879 million in global ticket sales.

When New Mutants #98 was released in 1991, the comic book cost \$1. Now the original editions have become one of the most sought-after comics for collectors, with issues selling from \$350 to \$55,000 on eBay.

"Selling artwork was part of the income stream back then," Liefeld told Reuters. "I sold this 25 years ago. I have zero regrets."

Liefeld created Deadpool as a combination between Spider-Man and G.I. Joe. Immediately after his first appearance, Marvel Comics was flooded with fan mail.

"Marvel contacted me and said, this is the most fan mail we've had on a new character in 15 years," said Liefeld. "They were flooded with letters, fan letters, which they sent me."

The current record holder in comic-book auctions is a copy of Action Comics #1, which features the first appear-



The original cover art for Rob Liefeld's New Mutants #98, which is expected to sell at an auction.

ROB LIEFELD/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

ance of Superman and sold for \$6 million earlier in the year, also at Heritage Auctions.

Hayya seen in key role under new Hamas leader

Nidal al-Mughrabi
REUTERS

CAIRO – Hamas politician Khalil al-Hayya is set to continue leading indirect negotiations with Israel for a Gaza cease-fire with guidance from the group's newly appointed leader, Yahya Sinwar, who continues to run the war effort inside the enclave, three Palestinian sources including a Hamas official said.

Hamas announced on Tuesday that it had picked Sinwar – one of the masterminds of the militant group's Oct. 7 attack on Israel – as overall leader, replacing Ismail Haniyeh, who was assassinated in Iran last month.

The choice of Sinwar, whom Israel has vowed to kill, is seen signaling a defiant stance by Hamas as the Gaza war grinds on, handing the leadership to a man who is widely thought to be running the war from tunnels beneath the enclave.

Experts on Palestinian politics had seen Hayya as a leading candidate to replace Haniyeh, due partly to his good ties with the group's main backer, Iran, whose support will be vital for the movement to recover after the war.

Working under the supervision of Haniyeh, Hayya has led the group's delegation in mediated talks with Israel

aimed at securing a cease-fire and a deal to exchange Israelis abducted by Hamas on Oct. 7 with Palestinians in Israeli jails.

"Dr. Khalil Al-Hayya is the head of the negotiation team and there is no change to this," the Hamas official said.

Another source familiar with Hamas deliberations said Hayya had enjoyed the trust of both Haniyeh and Sinwar, and saying it was expected that he would "continue to lead the indirect negotiations and be the diplomatic face of the movement."

Both Hayya and Zaher Jabarin, who leads Hamas in the West Bank from outside the Palestinian territories, "will play a bigger role in the future, also as both have good relations with Iran and Hezbollah," the source said.

The sources declined to be identified because of political sensitivities.

Hayya is Hamas' deputy leader for Gaza, though he has performed the role from outside the Palestinian territories for several years and resides in Qatar.

Sinwar has not appeared in public since the Oct. 7 attacks, but has played a key role in directing military operations and the negotiations for a prisoner-hostage swap.

The source familiar with Hamas deliberations said messages continued to be exchanged back and forth between



Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya, center, sits at a mourning house for assassinated Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Doha, Qatar, last week. IBRAHEEM ABU MUSTAFA/REUTERS

the group's leaders abroad and Sinwar in the Gaza Strip, though these may take time to deliver.

Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters that Sinwar's selection underscored the weight given by Hamas to the Gaza Strip.

"It is also a message to the (Israeli) occupation that your assassination of

Haniyeh brought about counter results," he said.

Hamas-led militants last October killed 1,200 people and abducted another 250, according to Israeli tallies. The attack prompted Israel to launch its devastating Gaza offensive which has killed around 40,000 people, according to the Gaza health ministry.

Airspace

Continued from Page 1NN

Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was shot down over Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board.

U.S.-based United Airlines said on Wednesday its flights to Tel Aviv, which were paused on July 31 due to security concerns, remained suspended.

"We continue to ... monitor the situation and will focus on the safety of our customers and crews as we decide when to resume service," the airline said.

Its rival Delta Air Lines has paused its flights between New York and Tel Aviv through Aug. 31. British carriers are not flying to Lebanon currently, according to flight tracking website Flightradar24.

Singapore Airlines stopped flying through Iranian airspace last Friday and is using alternative routes, saying safety is its top priority.

Similarly, Egyptian airlines have already been avoiding Iran's airspace. The new directive applies to all Egyptian carriers, including charter operators and other smaller airlines, said Mark Zee, founder of OPSGROUP – a membership-based organization that shares flight-risk information.

"All Egyptian carriers shall avoid

overflying Tehran (Flight Information Region). No flight plan will be accepted overflying such territory," the safety notice provided to pilots from Egypt's NOTAM said, referring to the three-hour period specified.

Egypt's civil aviation ministry later confirmed on Wednesday the notice was intended to reduce flight safety risks in light of a notification it received from Iranian authorities.

The ministry's press statement followed an unnamed source quoted by the state-affiliated Al Qahera News TV as saying that Iranian authorities had said to avoid flying in the country's airspace because of "military exercises."

Iran's Acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani spoke with the Egyptian foreign minister by phone on Wednesday, according to the Iranian foreign ministry's website.

In 2020, Iranian air defense units said they mistakenly shot down Ukrainian International Airlines flight PS752, killing all 176 people on board, shortly after it took off from Tehran airport.

WCK says staff member killed

The World Central Kitchen, a U.S.-based, nongovernmental organization, said a Palestinian staff member was killed in Gaza on Wednesday, four



Egypt's civil aviation ministry said Wednesday the notice to avoid Tehran's airspace was intended to reduce flight-safety risks in light of a notification it received from Iranian authorities. AMR ABDALLAH DALSH/REUTERS FILE

months after seven staffers were killed by Israeli strikes in an attack that drew widespread condemnation.

The WCK identified the person as Nadi Sallout, saying in a post on X that he was "an integral member of our ware-

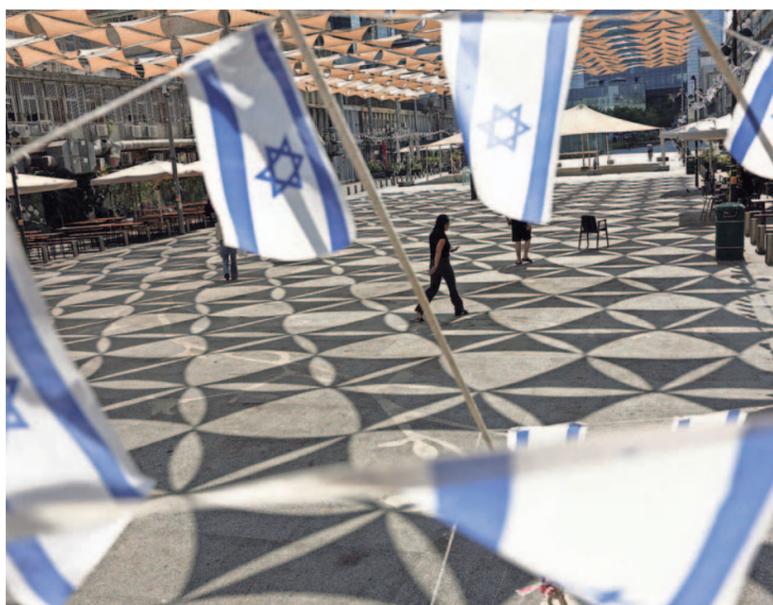
house team from the early days of our response in Rafah and a humanitarian at his very core."

The organization said it is still learning the details of the incident.

Joanna Plucinska, Reuters



Palestinians check the destruction in Deir el-balah in the central Gaza Strip on Wednesday following Israeli bombardment. EYAD BABA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A square in Tel Aviv displays Israeli flags on July 16. Israel has been fortifying its home front for months and many preparations have been in place since the start of the war in Gaza last October. RICARDO MORAES/REUTERS FILE

Alert

Continued from Page 1NN

Many local councils have advised residents to reduce nonessential activity, stay near protected areas and avoid large gatherings.

In Haifa, public bomb shelters have been equipped with digital systems so they can be unlocked remotely during an attack, said Yair Zilberman, director of the city's security and emergency services department. They are also being equipped with generators. A number of underground parking lots have been approved as makeshift shelters with enough space for thousands of residents if needed, Zilberman said.

In the city of Ramla in central Israel, national ambulance service Magen David Adom has been collecting blood donations in a subterranean service center, shielded with extra-thick concrete walls, blast doors and airlocks.

"We've got the threats from Iran, we've got threats from Hezbollah," said MDA's Aryeh Myers.

"Massive rocket attacks, massive threats to the state of Israel and we want to make sure that we are ready for anything."

Last Thursday, the Environmental Protection Ministry held a situational assessment to decide how best to protect factories with inventories that could be dangerous if targeted in a missile strike, or how to deal with an attack on a building that contains asbestos.

The military said the Home Front Command keeps in constant contact with factories and local authorities to maintain a "complete picture of the inventory levels of hazardous materials."

The Bazan Group, which operates in Haifa one of the largest oil refineries in the eastern Mediterranean, told Reuters it was "working to maintain energy security and the continuity of fuel supply to the economy."

Mass cash withdrawals are another scenario for which authorities are preparing.

"The stock of banknotes and coins in the Bank of Israel and the banking system will, according to every visible forecast, be sufficient," the Bank of Israel said.



A shredded Lebanese flag flutters on a pole on a street in Beirut on Wednesday amid regional tensions in the Gaza Strip. JOSEPH EID/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Interim leader heading to Bangladesh

Yunus' government set to be sworn in

Ruma Paul and Sudipto Ganguly
REUTERS

DHAKA, Bangladesh – The Nobel Peace laureate tapped to lead an interim government in Bangladesh called for calm and boarded a flight on Wednesday to return home, a day before his new government is expected to be sworn in to replace ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Muhammad Yunus, 84, was picked by President Mohammed Shahabuddin to lead the new interim government, a key demand of student demonstrators whose uprising drove Hasina to flee to India on Monday.

"Let us make the best use of our new victory," he said in a statement to Reuters before departing Paris, where he had been receiving medical treatment while out on bail from criminal cases brought under Hasina. "I fervently appeal to everybody to stay calm. Please refrain from all kinds of violence."

Outside the airport, he told reporters: "I'm looking forward to going back home and see what's happening there and how we can organize ourselves to get out of the trouble that we're in."

"I'll go and talk to them. I'm just fresh in this whole area," said Yunus, an economist who was awarded the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for founding a bank that pioneered fighting poverty with small loans to ordinary people.

Shahabuddin said the rest of the interim government needed to be finalized soon to overcome the crisis and pave the way for elections. Nahid Islam, a key student leader, said he expected the members to be chosen by late Wednesday.

Army chief Gen. Waker-Uz-Zaman said that he was hopeful the interim government would be sworn in by late Thursday and that the situation in the country was improving and was expected to become normal in the next three to four days.

He also said that military leaders had held discussions with student leaders, political parties and the president and that he was confident that Yunus would be able to take the country toward a democratic process.

Shahabuddin also announced the appointment of a new police chief, Mohammad Mainul Islam, to replace Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun as part of a shake-up of the security top brass



Muhammad Yunus, 84, was picked by Bangladesh's president to lead the new interim government. ABDUL SABOOR/REUTERS



Bangladesh Nationalist Party supporters gather near a poster of BNP chair Khaleda Zia during a rally in Dhaka on Wednesday. AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

that also included a new head of the technical intelligence monitoring agency and changes among senior army officials.

'No destruction, revenge'

Ahead of the arrival of Yunus, a court overturned his conviction in a labor case in which he was handed a six-month jail sentence in January. Yunus had called his prosecution political, part of a campaign by Hasina to quash dissent.

The main opposition Bangladesh Na-

tionist Party, buoyed by its chief Khaleda Zia's release from house arrest on Tuesday, drew hundreds of people to a rally in Dhaka and demanded elections within three months.

Zia, 78, a former prime minister and Hasina's archrival, addressed the rally by video link, as did her exiled eldest son, Tarique Rahman, who was introduced as the country's next prime minister. Both called on their followers not to seek revenge.

"No destruction, revenge or vengeance," Zia said from her hospital bed.

Her son said: "National elections should be held soon and power should be handed over to a government elected by the people at the earliest."

Zia had feuded and alternated power with Hasina since the early 1990s. She and Rahman were convicted of graft in 2018, in what they called a trumped up case.

Hasina's resignation triggered jubilation across the country and crowds stormed and ransacked her official residence unopposed after she fled, ending a 15-year second stint in office.

The daughter of state founder Mujibur Rahman, Hasina survived the assassination of her father and most of his family in 1975. She ran Bangladesh for 20 of the last 30 years.

Public anger against Hasina was also in part due to economic distress. Bangladesh's \$450 billion economy expanded under Hasina as the mainstay garments sector grew. But costly imports, high inflation, youth unemployment and shrinking reserves in recent years pushed it to seek a \$4.7 billion International Monetary Fund loan.

"The protests...have exacerbated downside risks to economic growth, fiscal performance, and external metrics," ratings agency S&P said in a note on Wednesday. "The damage to credit metrics may be contained if the sociopolitical situation normalizes soon and Bangladesh forms a new government."

Though calm has mainly returned there were still signs of lingering unrest.

Protests broke out at on Wednesday the headquarters of the Bangladesh Bank in Dhaka on Wednesday when hundreds of officials from the central bank forced four of its deputy governors to resign over alleged corruption, two sources at the bank said. The bank did not immediately comment.

India, a target of anger from some Bangladeshis for taking in Hasina, evacuated all non-essential staff and their families from its embassy and four consulates in the country, two Indian government sources said.

Most schools and university campuses in Dhaka and other cities reopened after having been shut for weeks. Garments factories that had been shut for days also began opening on Wednesday.

The movement that toppled Hasina rose out of demonstrations against public sector job quotas for families of veterans of the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan, seen by critics as a means to reserve jobs for allies of her Awami League party.



A demonstrator holds a sign during a counter-protest ahead of an anti-immigration protest in Derby, England, Wednesday. DENIS BALIBOUSE/REUTERS

Charity: UK seeing record levels of antisemitism

REUTERS

LONDON – Britain saw almost 2,000 antisemitic incidents in the first half of 2024, a record figure for the first six months of any year, a Jewish advisory body said on Thursday.

The Community Security Trust, or CST, which advises Britain's estimated 280,000 Jews on security matters, said more than half of the incidents recorded were related to Israel, Gaza, Hamas or the current conflict in the region.

"The disgraceful surge in British antisemitism is further evidenced by these latest figures," said CST Chief Executive Mark Gardner. "It happens across society, including in schools, campuses, places of work, public transport and on the streets."

Between January and July, there were 1,978 incidents of antisemitism, the CST said, more than double the number reported during the same peri-

od last year.

It said there was also a significant increase in online incidents and school-related anti-Jewish hate.

In February, the CST said 2023 had been the worst year for antisemitism in Britain since it began recording data after a surge in hatred following the Oct. 7 attack on Israel by Hamas.

Last year, the government granted the charity an extra 3 million pounds (\$3.8 million) in funding to help provide security at Jewish institutions.

"The soaring levels of antisemitic hate outlined in this report are truly appalling, and we must never relent in our work to root out this hatred in all its forms," said British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper.

"There is no place in Britain for this vile hatred and we are absolutely clear that those who push this poison – on the streets or online – must always face the full force of the law."

US judge tosses much of Mexico's firearms lawsuit

Nate Raymond
REUTERS

A U.S. judge on Wednesday dismissed much of Mexico's \$10 billion lawsuit seeking to hold U.S. gun manufacturers responsible for facilitating the trafficking of firearms to violent drug cartels across the U.S.-Mexico border.

U.S. District Judge Dennis Saylor in Boston dismissed claims against six of the eight companies that Mexico sued in 2021, including Sturm, Ruger and Glock, calling their connection to Massachusetts, where the case was filed, "gossamer-thin at best."

Mexico's foreign ministry responded by saying that legal action against the six firms would continue and that it was considering presenting an appeal or resorting to other U.S. courts.

"This decision does not affect the lawsuit against these two companies nor does it absolve the other six companies of responsibility," the ministry told Reuters.

The two remaining defendants are Smith & Wesson Brands, which in 2021 announced it was relocating to Tennessee from Massachusetts over gun regulations, and wholesaler Witmer Public Safety Group.

In his decision, Saylor said none of the six companies was incorporated in Massachusetts, and that Mexico did not show that any firearms sold in Massachusetts caused it harm.

While Mexico argued that statistically it was likely that some firearms sold in Massachusetts were eventually illegally trafficked to Mexico, Saylor said the country lacked sufficient evidence to establish jurisdiction.

Others companies dismissed from the case included Barrett Firearms Manufacturing; Colt's Manufacturing, a unit of Colt CZ Group; Century International Arms; and Beretta.



Mexico says U.S. gun manufacturers have facilitated the trafficking of firearms to violent drug cartels.

FRANCISCO ROBLES/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE

Lawrence Keane, general counsel of industry trade group National Shooting Sports Foundation, welcomed Saylor's decision to reject Mexico's "obvious forum-shopping," and expressed optimism that the U.S. Supreme Court would toss the rest of the case.

The companies in April asked the Supreme Court to review a federal appeals court decision that the case qualified for an exception to a law called the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act that grants the firearms industry broad protection from lawsuits over misuse of their products.

Steve Shadowen, a lawyer representing Mexico, said the country was disappointed in the decision and considering whether to appeal the dismissed claims, refile them in other courthouses or pursue other legal options. Mexico accused the gun manufacturers of undermining its strict gun laws by designing, marketing and distributing military-style assault weapons in ways they knew would arm drug cartels and fuel murders, extortions and kidnappings.

The country said more than 500,000 guns are trafficked annually to Mexico from the U.S., more than 68% of which are made by companies it sued.

SPORTS **EXTRA**

PARIS OLYMPICS



The United States' Quincy Hall races in the men's 400-meter final on Wednesday at the Paris 2024 Olympic Summer Games at Stade de France. LINTAO ZHANG/GETTY IMAGES

US women bring end to Nigeria's dream run

Steve Keating
REUTERS

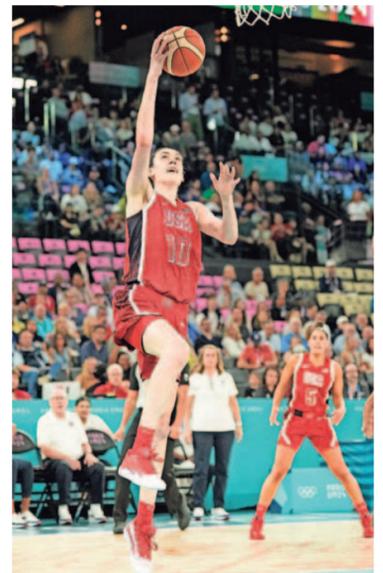
PARIS — The United States brought Nigeria's Paris Olympics fairy tale to an end with a testy 88-74 quarterfinal win on Wednesday while France's sweet dreams of women's basketball gold live on. The first African team, men or women, to reach the knockout stage of an Olympic basketball tournament, the plucky Nigerian underdogs have been one of the Paris Games feel good stories for their spirited, joyful play and boundless self belief that has embodied the Olympic spirit.

But an Olympic first is one thing, bringing an end to the U.S. 58-match winning streak and run of seven consecutive gold medals would have been a contender for biggest upset in sporting history.

There would be no Hollywood ending on the Bercy Arena hardwood. But Nigeria did not exit meekly, throwing a small fright into the mighty Americans when they rallied in the second quarter to pull within four, 31-27.

The Nigerians also would not be intimidated by the U.S. and stood their ground at the finish when the Americans vented some frustrations with Kahleah Copper of the U.S. swatting the ball at Ezinne Kalu after she drove

See **BASKETBALL**, Page 6NS



The United States' Breanna Stewart shoots the ball against Nigeria in the quarterfinals on Wednesday in Paris. KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

FAST AT THE FINISH

Hall grinds out victory in 400m to take gold for US

Mitch Phillips
REUTERS

PARIS — Quincy Hall produced an incredible late surge to overhaul Briton Matthew Hudson-Smith and take a first Olympic 400 meters gold for the United States since 2008 in another scintillat-

ing and dramatic race on Wednesday.

Long-striding Hudson-Smith seemed on course to win his country's first gold over the distance since "Chariots of Fire" Eric Liddell in the Paris Games 100 years ago, but Hall swept past to win in a personal best 43.40 seconds and give the U.S. its first triumph since LaShawn Merritt in Beijing.

Hudson-Smith bettered his own European record with 43.44 for silver and Zambia's 21-year-old Muzala Samukon-

ga set his second successive national record in Paris with 43.74 to take bronze.

Hall, who took bronze behind Jamaica's Antonio Watson and Hudson-Smith at last year's world championship, looked out of contention coming into the final straight, a distant fourth as Hudson-Smith seemed on course for a first global gold of an injury-plagued

See **HALL**, Page 6NS

GOLF PGA TOUR

Wet weather a concern at Wyndham Championship

Bob Sutton
FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

GREENSBORO, N.C. — The Wyndham Championship serves as a final chance to improve positioning for the FedEx Cup playoffs, so the last stop on the PGA Tour's regular season has the attention of plenty of golfers.

The first round comes Thursday at Sedgefield Country Club.

"Whether it's the playoffs or people making moves for eligibility, there's a lot at stake at this event," Jordan Spieth said. "My goal this week is to try to move up as far as I can in the FedEx Cup and head into the playoffs on a high note."

Only the top 70 golfers in the FedEx Cup standings advance to the playoffs.

While the Wyndham has naturally often been about creating momentum for the playoffs — or simply making the field for next week — another factor is

bound to loom large for at least a couple of days: wet weather.

Due to the forecast for dangerous weather conditions developing from the remnants of Hurricane Debby, Thursday's first round will be played without spectators on the tournament grounds.

Tournament officials announced late Wednesday afternoon that plans are to begin as scheduled at 6:50 a.m. Thursday without fans. Play will continue as long as conditions allow.

"This decision was a difficult one for us to make with our partners at the PGA Tour, but everyone's safety is our top priority," tournament director Bobby Powell said. "The most-recent forecast looks like the storm could clear our area sometime Friday."

The golfers are paying close attention to the situation.

See **WYNDHAM**, Page 3NS



Jordan Spieth putts on the 11th green during a practice round for the British Open on July 15 at Royal Troon in Scotland. JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY SPORTS

FOOTBALL

NFL NOTEBOOK

Steelers' Fields to start preseason opener

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Justin Fields will start for the Steelers in their preseason opener on Friday, but that doesn't mean he's overtaken Russell Wilson in the race to earn the job as Pittsburgh's starting quarterback.

The Steelers issued their first depth chart of training camp on Tuesday, with Wilson penciled in at No. 1 and Fields his backup. Tomlin said Wednesday morning at camp in Latrobe, Pa., that nothing had changed.

"You guys saw the depth chart that I released yesterday," Tomlin told reporters. "That is real."

The veteran Wilson, who won a Super Bowl with the Seattle Seahawks, has been limited by a calf injury in training camp, giving Fields considerable time with the first team.

While Tomlin maintains that Wilson, 35, is the No. 1 as of today, he said Fields will play "a couple series" Friday against the Houston Texans and have a chance to show the coaching staff what he can do in a game situation.

"I think everything is an audition," Tomlin said. "Everything that we do is an audition not only for him but for others."

Tomlin said the 25-year-old Fields, acquired in an offseason trade with the Chicago Bears, is impressing.

"I think he just comes to compete every day," Tomlin said of Fields. "He's got an awesome competitive spirit. We got a competitive environment, and it seems like he's enjoying it. He's doing a really good job of acclimating himself to it and to his teammates and letting his talent show."

The Steelers also have quarterbacks Kyle Allen and John Rhys Plumlee on the preseason roster.

Lions, Giants each fined \$200K for fights at joint practices

The NFL fined the Detroit Lions and New York Giants organizations \$200,000 each on Wednesday after multiple fights during joint practices earlier this week.

"All NFL clubs were reminded in a memo sent last month that fighting and unprofessional contact at joint practices would not be tolerated," NFL Network posted on X. The network also confirmed the fines with the league.

The teams practiced together on Monday and Tuesday in East Rutherford, N.J.

Monday's skirmish involved Detroit receiver Amon-Ra St. Brown and New York safety Dane Belton, while Tuesday's scuffle involved Lions safety Kerby Joseph and Giants rookie receiver Malik Nabers. Benches cleared and players stormed into the fray on both occasions.

Lions coach Dan Campbell expressed his frustration with the fighting before Tuesday's practice.

"Certainly too much," he said. "When you have to stop practice that many times to reset the drill and load it, it's a waste of everybody's time. I don't want those."

Giants coach Brian Daboll also commented on the situation before Tuesday's session.

"Practice is a little bit different than a



Steelers quarterback Justin Fields participates in drills during training camp on July 27 in Latrobe, Pa. BARRY REEGER/USA TODAY SPORTS

game," Daboll said. "Obviously, you can't do that in a game. We're going to try to clean up some of the things that led to some of that, but we're going to play hard and play physical and have another good practice."

The Giants and Lions will meet in Thursday night's preseason opener at MetLife Stadium.

Falcons WR Moore carted off field, taken to hospital

Atlanta Falcons wide receiver Rondale Moore was carted off the practice field on Wednesday, his right leg immobilized in an air cast near the end of a joint practice with the Miami Dolphins.

The Falcons immediately called off practice amid the news that Moore was being taken to a local hospital in the Miami Gardens, Fla., area.

The injury occurred during the 11-on-11 practice period. With all the action directed toward the right corner of the end zone, Moore collapsed in the opposite corner, where he was tended to by doctors and trainers.

"It's heartbreaking," veteran defensive lineman Grady Jarrett said after practice. "Not much of a heartbreak like it."

Report: Ravens CB Maulet to miss start of season

Baltimore Ravens cornerback Arthur Maulet is set to have arthroscopic knee surgery and isn't expected to be ready for the start of the season, NFL Network reported Wednesday.

Coach John Harbaugh said Tuesday that the injury wasn't season ending, and NFL Network said he will miss some regular-season time — perhaps only the first month.

Maulet, 31, entered the league in 2017 with the New Orleans Saints as an

undrafted free agent and played for the Indianapolis Colts, New York Jets and Pittsburgh Steelers before landing with the Ravens last season on a one-year deal. Baltimore signed him to a two-year, \$4 million contract in March.

Colts WR Downs sidelined with ankle injury

Indianapolis Colts wideout Josh Downs was helped off the practice field Wednesday with an ankle injury.

Downs did not put any weight on his lower leg after being tackled by safety Nick Cross during 7-on-7 drills.

ESPN reported it was a high ankle sprain and the 2023 third-round pick will be sidelined for about a month.

Downs, who turns 23 next week, caught 68 passes for 771 yards and two touchdowns in 17 games (nine starts) during his rookie campaign.

Colts coach Shane Steichen was disappointed with the injury and said Downs will undergo testing immediately.

"We gotta be smart," Steichen said. "We're competing like crazy, but we gotta stay off the ground, and we can't go down."

Jets WR Williams activated from PUP list

New York Jets wide receiver Mike Williams, who is recovering from a torn ACL, passed his physical and was activated Wednesday from the physically unable to perform list.

The Jets signed free agent Williams in March to a one-year contract reported to be worth up to \$15 million with incentives. The Los Angeles Chargers made him a salary cap casualty after his first seven seasons with the club. Williams, 29, was due to make \$17 million in the final year of his three-year deal with the

Chargers before he was released in March.

Packers top pick Morgan (shoulder) to miss time

Green Bay rookie offensive lineman Jordan Morgan, the Packers' first-round pick in the 2024 draft, will be out at least a week with a shoulder injury, coach Matt LaFleur said Wednesday.

Morgan, projected as the starter at right guard, was injured during Tuesday's practice.

"It's nothing long term," LaFleur said, "but he's going to be out probably a week or so."

LaFleur said Morgan will miss the preseason opener against the host Cleveland Browns on Saturday, but "it doesn't appear" that he won't be ready for the Packers' season opener Sept. 6 against the Philadelphia Eagles in Brazil.

Titans LB Wallow out for season with torn pec

Tennessee Titans linebacker Garret Wallow will miss the 2024 season with a torn pectoral muscle.

Coach Brian Callahan confirmed the practice injury on Wednesday and said Wallow will go on injured reserve.

The Titans signed Wallow off the Houston Texans' practice squad last December and he played in three games.

Bengals place DE Sample on IR, sign pair of DL

The Cincinnati Bengals placed defensive end Cameron Sample on injured reserve and signed two defensive linemen among a slew of moves Wednesday.

Sample, 24, will miss the 2024 season with the torn Achilles he suffered during 11-on-11 drills during Monday's practice. The move to IR during camp makes him ineligible to return during the regular season.

To bolster their line in Sample's absence, the Bengals announced the signings of undrafted rookie DE Andre Carter and DT Joshua Pryor.

Report: Veteran S Simmons visits Saints

Two-time Pro Bowl safety Justin Simmons visited with the New Orleans Saints on Wednesday, per multiple reports.

The Denver Broncos, in a cost-cutting move, released the veteran in March after eight seasons with the team.

49ers sign WR Kirklin, RB Vaughn

The San Francisco 49ers signed wide receiver Jontre Kirklin and running back Ke'Shawn Vaughn to one-year deals on Wednesday.

Kirklin, 25, entered the NFL as an undrafted free agent with the Arizona Cardinals in 2022 after five seasons at LSU. He joined the New Orleans Saints' practice squad in 2023 and has yet to appear in an NFL game.

Vaughn, 27, was a third-round pick by Tampa Bay in 2020.

Harbaugh gets 1-year ban, show-cause for violations

Tony Garcia
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY Network

Jim Harbaugh, the former Michigan football head coach who led the Wolverines to the 2023 national championship, has been suspended for one year and hit with a four-year show-cause order by the NCAA after he was found to have demonstrated both "unethical conduct" and a failure to promote "an atmosphere of compliance" as it pertains to an investigation into impermissible recruiting during a COVID-19 dead period in 2021.

The NCAA's released its 48-page document in its entirety Wednesday and specified "this decision solely relates to Harbaugh's conduct" after the school agreed to a three-year probation in April which included recruiting violations.

There's also now more specifics about the alleged wrongdoings by Harbaugh, who was charged with a Level I violation for "misleading investigators." The NCAA says he changed his story.

"During the investigation in this



Former Michigan football coach Jim Harbaugh walks the sideline during the warmups before the 2022 Fiesta Bowl against TCU. PATRICK BREEN/ARIZONA REPUBLIC

case, Harbaugh denied meeting with the two prospects," the report reads. "Initially, he told Michigan and the

enforcement staff that he had no recollection of meeting either prospect or their fathers.

"In a subsequent interview he went further, unequivocally disputing that either meeting happened. Despite his denials, the weight of the factual information—including statements from the prospects, their fathers, and other football staff members, as well as documentation such as receipts and expense reports—demonstrates that Harbaugh was physically present and engaged in these meetings."

The show-cause order will run effective immediately, from Aug. 7, 2024 through Aug. 6, 2028. Should he leave his current position as head coach of the Los Angeles Chargers and return to the college ranks in any capacity during this specified window, Harbaugh would be suspended for the first season he returned.

The show-cause penalty is so a coach can't simply move schools within the NCAA to avoid punishment. Because of the ruling, during the show-cause timeline, Harbaugh is "barred from all athletically related activities, including team travel, practice, video study, recruiting and team meetings."

GOLF THIS WEEK

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OLYMPICS

Women's side ready for Paris

It was dramatic to the finish. Amy Yang clinched her first major championship at the KPMG Women's PGA and with it, a berth into the Paris Olympics. Yang wasn't the only one to shore up a spot in the 60-player field with strong play in Sammamish, Washington. Runner-up Miyu Yamashita of Japan did the same.

The field was finalized on Monday after the conclusion of the third women's major of the season. The 2024 Summer Olympics women's event will begin Aug. 7-10. Le Golf National, the 2018 Ryder Cup venue and home of the DP World Tour's Open de France, will host.

LPGA Hall of Fame member Inbee Park won gold at the 2016 Olympic Games while current No. 1 Nelly Korda won in 2021.

The International Golf Federation utilizes the Rolex Rankings to create its own Olympic Golf Rankings. The top 15 players in the world are eligible for Paris, with a limit of four players from any given country. The rest of the field comes straight from the rankings, with a maximum of two eligible players from each country that does not already have two or more players in the top 15.

The race to make Japan's team got heated after Yuka Saso won the U.S. Women's Open, and then took a controversial turn after Nasa Hataoka was disqualified at the ShopRite LPGA Classic. Hataoka was subsequently passed in the rankings by Ayaka Furue, who tied for second at ShopRite.

In the end Yamashita, a JLPGA player who also tied for 12th at the U.S. Women's Open, passed them both with her fine play at Sahalee.

American Ally Ewing tied for fifth at the KPMG and took a share of third at the USWO, but it wasn't enough. She came up one spot short, moving up to 16th in the Rolex Rankings.

For the first time, no country in Paris will have four representatives.

Two players who qualified, Dewi Weber and Momoka Kobori, had their spots reallocated after they were not conformed by their respective National Olympic Committee. Sarah Schober of Austria and Pia Babnik of Slovenia were added to the field.

— Beth Ann Nichols

PGA TOUR

Spieth leads field for Wyndham

This week's Wyndham Championship is the final event of the PGA Tour's 2024 regular season, as the top 70 in the FedEx Cup Standings will head to Memphis, Tennessee, next week for the first playoff event, the FedEx St. Jude Championship.

However, before the race to East Lake gets underway, players on the outside looking in have one more chance to climb up the standings with a good finish at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Lucas Glover returns as the defending champion and is joined in the field by Jordan Spieth, Cameron Young, Sungjae Im, Shane Lowry, Billy Horschel and Brian Harman, among others.

Who to watch

Sungjae Im: The betting favorite this week, Im is in this position for a reason. Over his last 10 starts, Im has finished T-12 or better eight times. The 26-year-old Korean has finished inside the top 25 in all five of his appearances at the Wyndham Championship with three of those being top 10s.

Min Woo Lee: The Aussie is 62nd in the FedEx Cup Standings, so he's safe for the playoffs, but a little more breathing room wouldn't hurt. This will be Lee's Wyndham Championship debut, but he's been playing well. After opening with a 76 at the Olympics, Lee shot 65-68-68 over the final three rounds to finish T-22.

Thomas Detry: He has been lurking on leaderboards for the better part of the summer and has had some success at the Wyndham. He's missed just one cut in his last 12 starts and has five top-20 finishes during that span.

Nicolai Hojgaard: He had a solid showing at the Olympics, tying the course record Saturday with a 9-under 62 and eventually grabbing solo seventh. The Dane has made the cut at his last five Tour starts and finished T-14 at Sedgefield CC last season.

Patrick Fishburn: Over his last seven starts, Fishburn has finishes of T-20, T-25 (Rocket Mortgage Classic), 15th, 3rd and T-6 (3M Open). Sitting at 101st in the FedEx Cup Standings, Fishburn needs a huge week in North Carolina to earn a spot in Memphis.

— Riley Hamel

LPGA TOUR

Ko inching closer to Hall of Fame

Lydia Ko's fairytale finish awaits. A gold medal at the Paris Olympics would secure Ko's spot in the LPGA Hall of Fame, the toughest Hall in all of sports to get into. It would also put her in rarified air as the only golfer to boast all three medals, a feat that might not ever be matched.

Currently, she's the only golfer to have two: a silver from 2016 and a bronze from 2020.

"I think it's going to be the toughest Olympics as of yet," said Ko of the test presented by Le Golf National.

The competition for the 60-player field gets underway on Wednesday, giving the women a limited amount of time to practice. Ko played the front nine on Sunday with Japan's Yuka Saso as the men's competition finished up. She arrived on Saturday and watched a little golf late in the afternoon, cheering on her fellow Kiwis.

Korda won six of her first eight starts in 2024 before her game left her for a brief stretch over the summer, when she missed three straight cuts. She took some time off visiting with friends in Croatia before grinding in the weeks leading up to Paris.

"As a kid, I watched so many athletes and all their raw emotions on that podium when their flag goes up and the National Anthem," said Korda. "

Ko's season started off strong with a victory at the season-opening event at her home course, Lake Nona, in Orlando, Florida, followed by a playoff loss to Korda in her hometown of Bradenton.

Like Korda, the 27-year-old's momentum hit the brakes, however, and she only just started rounding back into form in Canada two weeks ago. Ko's feeling more confident but playing it cool.

"I'm not trying to push it," she said, before admitting that it would be a "hell of a way" to get into the Hall of Fame.

An Olympic gold medal is now worth one Hall of Fame point, a criteria change that was implemented in 2022. Ko has 26 of the 27 points needed to become the Hall's 35th member. Inbee Park, the 2016 gold medalist, was the last player to be inducted, not long before the Rio Games. Both Korda and Park were retroactively awarded a point for their gold medals.

— Beth Ann Nichols



Lucas Glover holds the champions trophy after winning last year's Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, N.C. DAVID YEAZELL/USA TODAY SPORTS

Wyndham

Continued from Page 1NS

"Lord willing, the weather will not be as bad as forecasted and we can get it in and play 72 holes and have some fun," said Brandt Snedeker, a past champion of the tournament.

"Everyone's going to have to deal with it," Spieth said. "Then maybe it may make it a little bit more scoreable, so you change your mindset a little bit in that regard. Looks like the weekend will be beautiful, so, hopefully, we move along just fine and, hopefully, the forecast improves."

Spieth, playing for the first time since The Open Championship last month, is No. 63 in the standings. He's in the Wyndham Championship field for just the fourth time, with a memorable 2013 playoff loss to Patrick Reed resulting in his best finish.

Will Zalatoris, who was a college standout at nearby Wake Forest, said the Sedgefield greens tend to be slick and putting up good scores is possible for golfers who find the right touch.

"It's just trying to run the tables around here," Zalatoris said. "These are some of the best greens we have on tour, so just give yourself as many looks

as you can and get hot with the putter and make a run."

Jhonattan Vegas won the 3M Open two weeks ago, so he will look to build on that.

"It's a golf course that requires a lot of precision off the tee and into the greens and even around the greens," Vegas said. "I love where I'm at and excited to make a push to the end of the year."

Snedeker was presented with the Payne Stewart Award, which is based on character, sportsmanship and charitable giving, on Tuesday at the course. He tends to be a fan favorite here.

"Obviously been a tough year for me on the golf course," said Snedeker, a two-time winner (2007, 2018) in Greensboro. "But I think grinding and practicing hard and feel like I'm close to doing something really good and hoping all these things line up this week for a good week for me."

The defending champion is Lucas Glover. The tournament hasn't had a back-to-back winner since Sam Snead's 1956 title.

Twenty-one golfers who competed in last week's Olympics are in the field. Keegan Bradley, who was recently named captain of the U.S. team for the 2025 Ryder Cup, is playing in Greensboro for the first time since 2017.

TENNIS ROUNDUP

3 Americans dominate first round in Montreal

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

A trio of seeded Americans had their way with their respective opponents on Wednesday, as Taylor Fritz, Tommy Paul and Ben Shelton completed sweeps in the first round of the National Bank Open in Montreal.

The ninth-seeded Fritz beat Mariano Navone of Argentina 6-4, 6-1, Paul, the No. 10 seed, topped Italy's Luciano Darderi 6-4, 7-6 (2) and the 11th-seeded Shelton ousted Kazakhstan's Alexander Bublik 7-6 (4), 6-2.

Shelton and Bublik are doubles partners, and their match ended in jovial fashion.

Down 5-2 in the second set, Bublik couldn't get to a drop shot from Shelton that landed near the front of the net, so he threw his racquet at the ball. The strategy ended up working, as the ball bounced off Bublik's loose racquet and landed on Shelton's side.

However, the shot didn't count since Bublik didn't have the racquet in his hands.

That moment got a laugh out of both Shelton and Bublik, who then hugged at the net. It will only be Shelton moving on, though, and he will next face Australian Alexei Popyrin, a 6-3, 6-4 winner over Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Fritz held commanding advantages in winners (19-3) and aces (7-1) against Navone.

Another American, qualifier Brandon Nakashima, also prevailed, defeating Canadian wild card Denis Shapovalov 6-4, 7-5.

Fellow American qualifier Mackenzie McDonald fell, though, as Matteo Arnaldi of Italy outlasted him for a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory. McDonald was one of the two Americans to lose on Wednesday, joining Marcos Giron, who was swept by lucky loser James Duckworth.

Other winners included 12th seed Ugo Humbert and qualifier Arthur Rinderknech of France, Croatian qualifier Borna Coric, Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina and qualifier Rinky Hijikata and Jordan Thompson of Australia.



Taylor Fritz hits a backhand against Mariano Navone during a first-round match at the National Bank Open in Montreal. ERIC BOLTE/USA TODAY SPORTS

Women

Naomi Osaka didn't face a break point in cruising to a 6-3, 6-1 victory over ninth-seeded Ons Jabeur in the first round of the National Bank Open in Toronto.

A former World No. 1, Japan's Osaka needed only one hour and 12 minutes to notch her fifth win over a Top-20 opponent this year in her return from maternity leave.

Three of those victories have come on hard courts, where Osaka has collected her four Grand Slam crowns.

Osaka converted 4 of 6 break points and hit 14 winners against Tunisia's Jabeur, who had seven double faults and landed just 36 percent of her first serves (21 of 58).

Spain's Paula Badosa, who won last week in Washington, extended her winning streak to six straight matches with a 6-1, 6-4 victory over Denmark's Clara Tauson.

Badosa recorded seven aces, converted 4 of 12 break points and saved 4 of 5. Tauson notched 10 double faults.

Brazil's Beatriz Haddad Maia, seeded 13th, needed three hours and 19 minutes to outlast the Czech Republic's Marie Bouzkova 5-7, 6-2, 7-6 (1).

MLB

WEDNESDAY'S ROUNDUP

Bell powers D-backs in sweep of Guardians

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Josh Bell homered in back-to-back innings and the visiting Arizona Diamondbacks won 5-3 on Wednesday to complete a doubleheader and three-game series sweep of the Cleveland Guardians, who have lost a season-high five straight.

Bell, who began last season with Cleveland before being dealt to the Miami Marlins, connected for an opposite-field solo homer against Carlos Carrasco (3-10) in the second. An inning later, he went deep with a man on for his ninth homer in 13 games.

The surging Diamondbacks, who won 7-3 in Game 1 of the twin bill, became the first team this season to sweep a series from the American League Central-leading Guardians.

Randal Grichuk homered for one of his two hits, Adrian Del Castillo had an RBI double in his first career at-bat and Eduardo Rodriguez (1-0) allowed three runs over 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings in his season debut as Arizona won for the 12th time in 14 games.

Justin Martinez (two saves) struck out Lane Thomas with the bases loaded to end the game for the Diamondbacks, who are 24-9 since June 29.

In the opener, Geraldo Perdomo, Corbin Carroll and Ketel Marte each hit two-run homers as the Diamondbacks beat the Cleveland 7-3.

Eugenio Suarez added a run-scoring double for the Diamondbacks, who have won the first two of this three-game set and 11 of their last 13.

Arizona starting pitcher Brandon Pfaadt (6-6) retired the first 12 batters before Josh Naylor homered in the fifth. Pfaadt gave up two runs on four hits and a walk while striking out six in 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings.

Ben Lively (10-7) allowed two homers among four hits and walked four in five innings for the American League Central-leading Guardians, who have lost a season-high four straight and just their third series at home.

Marlins 6, Reds 4

Derek Hill slugged his first career grand slam and rookie Valente Bellozo won his first major league game as Miami beat visiting Cincinnati.

Miami's Jake Burger homered twice to complement Hill's blast.

The Reds, who lead this four-game series 2-1, were powered by TJ Friedl, who hit the game's second grand slam.

Bellozo (1-1) allowed five hits and two walks across 5 $\frac{2}{3}$ scoreless innings. A 24-year-old who is far from a top prospect, Bellozo also cooled off Cincinnati superstar Elly De La Cruz, who struck out twice and grounded out once in three at-bats against the Mexico native.

Stopping De La Cruz was crucial for Miami. In the first two games of this series, the star shortstop went 8-for-10 with five RBIs, four doubles and two homers. On Wednesday, De La Cruz went 0-for-4 with three strikeouts and one walk.

Orioles 7, Blue Jays 3

Anthony Santander had two home runs, three RBIs and a spectacular catch as visiting Baltimore defeated Toronto.

Jackson Holliday added a two-run homer as the Orioles split the first two games of a three-game series.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. singled in the first inning to extend his hitting streak to 19 games for Toronto. Leo Jimenez added three doubles.

Toronto starter Bowden Francis allowed two runs, three hits and one walk in five innings. He matched his career best with seven strikeouts.

Baltimore starter Trevor Rogers also went five innings, giving up three runs (two earned), seven hits and two walks to go along with two strikeouts. Burch Smith (3-0) pitched a perfect sixth to earn the win.

Athletics 3, White Sox 2

Lawrence Butler capped a three-run seventh inning with a go-ahead sacrifice fly, All-Star Mason Miller returned from the injured list with a 1-2-3 ninth and Oakland earned a victory over visiting Chicago.

Chicago lost Wednesday's rubber match one day after ending its American League record-tying 21-game losing streak. The White Sox remain winless this season when trailing after seven innings (0-66).

Down 2-0 since the second inning, the A's rallied in the seventh against Chicago's bullpen. Brent Rooker opened



The Diamondbacks' Josh Bell hits a home run during the third inning of a game against the Guardians on Wednesday in Cleveland. KEN BLAZE/USA TODAY SPORTS

the frame with a single against Touki Toussaint (0-2) and Abraham Toro drew a one-out walk.

Armando Alvarez then singled to score Rooker and get Oakland within 2-1 before Zack Gelof greeted reliever Dominic Leone with a game-tying RBI single.

Two batters later, with the bases loaded, Butler lifted his difference-making sacrifice fly to left.

Giants 7, Nationals 4

Matt Chapman, Heliot Ramos and Mike Yastrzemski smashed solo homers as visiting San Francisco beat Washington.

Chapman and Ramos went deep off Nationals starter Jake Irvin (8-10) in a decisive fifth inning to give the Giants a two-run lead they didn't relinquish despite some late opportunities for Washington.

Chapman finished 3-for-4 with two RBIs and was a triple short of the cycle. Yastrzemski added an RBI triple and scored twice, and Ramos also had two hits and two runs.

Giants starter Blake Snell (2-3), in his first outing since throwing a 114-pitch no-hitter against the Cincinnati Reds on Friday, went six innings. He allowed three runs on four hits and one walk while striking out eight on 93 pitches.

Irvin left after five, having permitted five runs on eight hits and one walk with four strikeouts. San Francisco added a pair of runs against the Washington bullpen and moved to .500 with its ninth win in 12 games. The Nationals had won three of their previous four contests.

Astros 6, Rangers 4

Victor Caratini and Yordan Alvarez each homered as Houston beat Texas in the rubber match of a three-game series in Arlington, Texas.

Houston's Yusei Kikuchi (5-9) allowed two runs on four hits over 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings in his second start since being acquired from the Toronto Blue Jays at the trade deadline.

Josh Hader retired the Rangers in order in the ninth inning to convert his 24th consecutive save opportunity, matching Brad Lidge's single-season franchise record from 2005.

Marcus Semien hit a solo homer for Texas, which has lost nine of its past 12 games.

Houston outit the Rangers 13-9 in the final meeting of the year between the teams and won the season series 7-6. Astros designated hitter Yainer Diaz had three hits.

Cubs 8, Twins 2

Ian Happ clubbed a two-run homer and four Chicago relievers combined for five scoreless innings as the Cubs beat visiting Minnesota in the rubber match of a three-game series.

Chicago's bullpen thrived following a short outing from starter Javier Assad, who allowed two runs and three hits in four innings. Drew Smyly worked the fifth before Jorge Lopez (2-2) logged two innings and Porter Hodge and Julian Merryweather each pitched one.

Michael Busch went 2-for-3 with a solo home run, two runs and a walk for the Cubs, who won for the sixth time in their past eight games.

Carlos Santana had two hits and a run as Minnesota dropped its second straight game following a five-game winning streak.

After Twins starter Joe Ryan experienced right triceps tightness while fac-

ing Pete Crow-Armstrong to open the home half of the third, Trevor Richards (2-2) took over in relief, and Chicago jumped on him to take control of the game.

Cardinals 5, Rays 2

Nolan Arenado and Alec Bureson drove in two runs each as St. Louis defeated visiting Tampa Bay.

Masyn Winn went 2-for-4 with two runs for the Cardinals, who have won the first two games in this three-game series.

Cardinals starting pitcher Erick Fedde (8-5) allowed one run on four hits in five innings. He struck out six and walked two. Ryan Helsley, the fourth St. Louis reliever, earned his 36th save.

Tampa Bay went 0-for-11 with runners in scoring position and left 10 men on base.

Rays starting pitcher Taj Bradley (6-6) allowed five runs on nine hits in 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings. He walked three and struck out three.

Royals 8, Red Sox 4

Bobby Witt Jr. homered twice and drove in four runs, leading Kansas City past visiting Boston to salvage the finale of a three-game series.

Cole Ragans (9-7) allowed four runs (one earned) on six hits and two walks over 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings for Kansas City. The left-hander struck out seven and collected his fourth win over his last five starts.

Boston starter Kutter Crawford (7-9) tossed 3 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings, allowing six runs on five hits and four walks with three strikeouts. He allowed Witt's first home run, a one-out solo shot in the first to open the scoring.

Crawford has surrendered 13 homers in his last four starts and leads the majors with 27 home runs allowed.

Witt and Vinnie Pasquantino, who are tied for third in the American League with 84 RBIs, both supplied two in the Royals' five-run fourth inning.

Brewers 8, Braves 5

Blake Perkins had three hits, including a go-ahead two-run single, to lead visiting Milwaukee over Atlanta.

The Brewers have won the first two games of the three-game series. Atlanta has lost four in a row.

Milwaukee rallied for three runs in the sixth inning to take a 6-4 lead. Gary Sanchez tied the score with an RBI single and Perkins delivered a two-out single to drive in a pair.

Perkins finished with three RBIs and was one of four Brewers with three hits. Joey Ortiz was 3-for-4 with two RBIs, while Jackson Chourio and Rhys Hoskins were both 3-for-5. Hoskins extended his hitting streak to 12 games.

Milwaukee had 16 hits for the second straight game.

Padres 9, Pirates 8, 10 innings

Xander Bogaerts broke a 10th-inning tie with an RBI single and San Diego scored three times in the frame before holding on for a win over host Pittsburgh.

Facing reliever Colin Holderman (3-5), Bogaerts brought in automatic runner Luis Arraez with a hit to left for a 7-6 lead. Manny Machado lined out to score Ha-Seong Kim, and Bogaerts came home on an error by Pirates catcher Yasmani Grandal at the plate.

San Diego's Jackson Merrill, who went 4-for-6, tied it 6-6 in the ninth with his second home run of the night. The Padres went on to record their

fourth straight win and their 13th victory in the past 15 games.

In the bottom of the 10th, Oneil Cruz started as the automatic runner and scored after reliever Tanner Scott (7-5) walked Michael A. Taylor, Andrew McCutchen and Bryan Reynolds in succession. Taylor came in on a wild pitch from reliever Adrian Morejon, who replaced Scott.

With two runners on, Morejon retired the next three batters to pick up his first career save.

**Yankees 5, Angels 2, Game 1
Angels 8, Yankees 2, Game 2**

Zach Neto hit a grand slam to cap a six-run second inning and visiting Los Angeles cruised to a victory over New York in the second game of a doubleheader.

Neto finished with a career-high six RBIs in the nightcap as the Angels earned a split. The Yankees took the opener 5-2 behind five scoreless innings from rookie Luis Gil.

Mickey Moniak started the scoring in the big inning against New York rookie starter Will Warren (0-1) with an RBI single under first baseman DJ LeMahieu's glove. Nolan Schanuel drew a two-out, bases-loaded walk on a full count before Neto connected.

Warren was one strike away from finishing the inning, but Neto hit a full-count sinker 412 feet into the Los Angeles bullpen beyond the left field fence.

Neto added to the Angels' lead by lining a two-run double in the fourth for an 8-1 lead. The shortstop surpassed his previous career high of four RBIs that he set against the New York Mets on Saturday.

In the first game, rookie Luis Gil survived five walks in five scoreless innings as the Yankees recorded a victory over the Angels.

The Yankees won for the eighth time in nine games after dropping 23 of 33 from June 15-July 26 thanks to Gil's gritty effort.

Gil (12-5) won his third straight decision while pitching in cool and rainy conditions at times. He allowed just two hits, with both coming in the second, as Anthony Rendon opened the inning with a single and Jo Adell added a two-out hit.

Mets 5, Rockies 3

Francisco Lindor hit a tiebreaking, two-run single in the ninth inning, Jesse Winker added a two-out RBI hit, and New York beat Colorado in Denver.

Lindor and Francisco Alvarez had two hits each, while Winker singled three times for New York.

Jose Butto (5-3) earned the win with two innings of scoreless relief.

The game was tied 2-2 when Alvarez tripled off the scoreboard in right field with one out in the ninth. Harrison Bader entered as a pinch runner before Victor Vodnik (3-2) walked Ben Gamel and Tyrone Taylor to load the bases with one out.

Tigers 6, Mariners 2

Tarik Skubal pitched seven strong innings in his return to Seattle as Detroit defeated the host Mariners.

Wenceel Perez and Jake Rogers homered for the Tigers, who will try to sweep the three-game series Thursday night.

Cal Raleigh homered for the Mariners, who lost their third game in a row and fell a half-game behind the Houston Astros in the American League West.

Raleigh nearly had a second homer, but Tigers center fielder Parker Meadows robbed him with a leaping catch at the wall with a runner on to end the eighth inning to preserve a 3-2 lead.

Phillies 9, Dodgers 4

Kyle Schwarber hit three home runs and tied a career high with seven RBIs as visiting Philadelphia rolled to a victory over Los Angeles to win two out of three in a series between the top two teams in the National League.

Schwarber hit his 11th leadoff homer of the season to match his Phillies record. He now has eight home runs in his past 11 games and 27 on the season. He added a two-run double in the fifth.

Philadelphia rookie right-hander Tyler Phillips (4-1) gave up four runs on six hits over five innings after lasting just 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings against the Seattle Mariners in his previous start.

The Phillies arrived at Los Angeles with a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -game NL lead on the Dodgers and departed up 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ games.

MLB

WEDNESDAY'S BOX SCORES

Oakland 3, Chicago White Sox 2

CHW020 000 00x- 2 7 0
OAK000 000 30x- 3 6 2

Chicago	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Vargas dh	4	0	0	0	0	2	100	
Baldwin 2b	4	0	0	0	0	2	206	
Robert Jr. cf	4	0	0	0	2	207		
Vaughn 1b	4	1	1	0	0	2	236	
Benintendi lf	4	1	2	0	0	210		
Sosa 3b	4	0	0	0	0	274		
Sheets rf	3	0	2	0	0	215		
a-Fletcher pr-rf	1	0	0	0	0	182		
Lopez ss	3	0	1	0	0	1	237	
Robinson c	3	0	1	0	0	1	167	
Totals	34	2	7	2	0	8		

Oakland	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Butler rf	3	0	0	1	0	0	241	
Andujar lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	295	
Cameron lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	182	
Bleday cf	4	0	1	0	0	0	240	
Rooker dh	3	1	1	0	0	1	291	
McCann c	3	0	0	0	1	2	276	
Toro 3b-1b	2	1	1	0	0	1	250	
Alvarez 1b	3	1	1	0	1	1	269	
Schuemann ss	0	0	0	0	0	0	249	
Gelof 2b	3	0	2	1	0	1	196	
Hernandez ss-3b	3	0	1	0	0	1	371	
Totals	28	3	6	3	3	5		

a-ran for Sheets in 7th.
E: Butler. **2B:** Vaughn (24), Lopez (11), HR: Benintendi (11). **RBI:** Benintendi 2 (38), Butler (37), Alvarez (2), Gelof (37). **CS:** Bleday (2). **SF:** Butler. **Runners left in scoring position:** Chicago 4 (Vargas, Robert Jr., Lopez, Robinson), Oakland 3 (Andujar, Gelof, Hernandez). **RISP:** Chicago 1 for 5, Oakland 2 for 7. **GIDP:** Hernandez. **DP:** Chicago 1.

Chicago	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Martin	6.0	2	0	2	1	4	82	3.65
Toussaint L, 0-2 H, 1	0.1	2	3	3	0	14	8.44	
Leone BS, 3	0.2	1	0	0	0	19	6.35	
Brebbia	1.0	1	0	0	1	14	5.98	

Oakland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Estes	5.0	6	2	2	0	4	96	4.70
Klein	1.0	0	0	0	1	9	2.84	
McFarland W, 2-1	1.0	1	0	0	1	11	4.10	
Ferguson H, 2	1.0	0	0	0	2	13	4.40	
Miller S, 16	1.0	0	0	0	0	13	2.16	

Inherited runners: Leone 2-0. **HBP:** Rooker. **Umpires:** HP-Hanahan, 1B-Hamari, 2B-Moscoso, 3B-Carapazza. T: 2:14. A: 6,964 (46,847).

N.Y. Yankees 5, L.A. Angels 2

Game 1
LAA000 000 200- 2 5 0
NYY210 200 00x- 5 9 0

L.A. Angels	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Schauer 1b	4	1	0	1	1	249		
Neto ss	4	1	1	2	1	256		
O'Hoppe c	5	0	0	0	0	273		
Calhoun dh	2	0	1	0	0	240		
Pillar lf	4	0	0	0	0	270		
Rendon 3b	3	0	2	0	1	0	237	
Moniak cf	4	0	0	0	0	272		
Drury 2b	3	0	1	0	1	3	252	
Adell lf	3	0	1	0	1	1	197	
Totals	32	2	5	2	7	10		

N.Y. Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Verdugo lf	5	2	2	1	0	0	235	
Soto cf	4	0	0	0	1	1	307	
Judge dh	3	1	2	1	2	0	324	
Wells c	4	0	2	1	0	249		
Chisholm Jr. 3b	4	0	0	0	0	4	265	
Volpe ss	4	0	1	0	1	2	261	
Grisham cf	4	0	1	0	1	1	191	
Rice 1b	2	1	0	0	2	1	197	
LeMahieu 1b	0	0	0	0	0	0	184	
Cabrera 2b	3	1	1	0	1	0	240	
Totals	33	5	9	5	7	8		

2B: Rendon (7), Verdugo (26), Wells (11), Volpe (22), Grisham (8). **HR:** Neto (15), Cabrera (7), RBI: Neto 2 (53), Verdugo (50), Judge (104), Wells (29), Volpe (45), Cabrera (33). **Runners left in scoring position:** L.A. Angels 5 (Schauer 2, Pillar, Rendon, Adell), N.Y. Yankees 7 (Verdugo 2, Volpe, Grisham 4). **RISP:** N.Y. Yankees 3 for 13.

L.A. Angels	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Daniel L, 1-3	3.1	7	5	2	4	83	6.04	
Marte	12.2	0	0	2	29	233		
Crouse	1.0	0	0	0	2	20	3.79	
Moore	2.0	0	0	0	1	21	5.11	

N.Y. Yankees	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Gil W, 12-5	5.0	0	0	0	6	107	3.06	
De Los Santos	1.0	1	1	2	0	21	2.70	
Cousins	1.0	2	1	1	0	24	2.57	
Weaver H, 19	1.0	0	0	0	2	21	2.81	
Holmes S, 24	1.0	0	0	0	2	13	2.70	

De Los Santos pitched to 1 batter in the 7th.
Inherited runners: Marte 1-0, Cousins 1-0. **IBB:** Moore (1). **WP:** Gil 2, Cousins. **Umpires:** HP-De Jesus, 1B-Arrieta, 2B-Wolcott, 3B-Parra. T: 2:50. A: 0 (46,537).

L.A. Angels 8, N.Y. Yankees 2

Game 2
LAA060 200 000- 8 13 1
NYY010 100 000- 2 9 0

L.A. Angels	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Schauer 1b	4	1	1	1	0	1	249	
Neto ss	5	1	3	6	0	0	261	
O'Hoppe dh	5	0	0	0	0	0	269	
Pillar lf	5	1	1	0	1	269		
Thais c	4	1	1	0	1	250		
Moniak cf	4	1	2	1	0	216		
Adell lf	3	1	1	0	1	1	359	
Leblanc 3b	4	1	1	0	1	167		
Stefanic 2b	4	1	3	0	1	304		
Totals	38	8	13	8	3	10		

N.Y. Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Torres 2b	5	0	1	0	0	0	235	
Soto lf	5	0	1	0	1	0	306	
Judge cf	3	0	1	0	1	0	324	
Verdugo lf	4	0	1	0	1	0	235	
Stanton dh	4	0	0	0	1	0	241	
Chisholm Jr. 3b	4	1	1	0	2	263		
Volpe ss	4	0	0	0	0	258		
LeMahieu 1b	4	1	2	1	0	0	192	
Narvaez c	2	0	1	0	0	0	300	
Totals	34	2	9	2	3	4		

E: Adell. **2B:** Neto (24), Moniak (12), Stefanic (2), Stanton (12), Chisholm Jr. (1), LeMahieu (5). **HR:** Neto (16), RBI: Schauer (39), Neto (6), Moniak (33), Torres (43), LeMahieu (22). **CS:** Neto (7). **SF:** Torres. **Runners left in scoring position:** L.A. Angels 3 (O'Hoppe, Pillar, Leblanc), N.Y. Yankees 4 (Torres, Soto, Chisholm Jr. 2). **RISP:** L.A. Angels 3 for 12, N.Y. Yankees 2 for 8. **GIDP:** Stanton. **DP:** L.A. Angels 1, N.Y. Yankees 1.

St. Louis 5, Tampa Bay 2

TB001 001 000- 2 8 2
STL102 200 00x- 5 9 0

Tampa Bay	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Diaz 1b	4	0	1	0	1	1	274	
Lowe 2b	5	0	0	0	1	2	262	
Lowe lf	4	0	0	0	1	1	095	
Moore cf	3	0	0	0	0	0	237	
a-Deluca ph-rf	1	0	0	0	0	0	186	
Carlson lf	3	0	1	0	1	0	273	
Siri cf	3	0	1	0	1	0	206	
Caballero ss	3	0	1	0	1	0	231	
Mead 3b	4	0	0	0	0	0	245	
Jackson c	2	1	1	0	0	0	110	
b-Rortvedt ph-c	2	0	1	0	0	0	254	
Totals	34	2	8	2	4	8		

St. Louis	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Winn ss	4	2	2	0	0	0	282	
Burleson 1b	4	1	2	2	0	0	278	
Contreras c	4	0	2	0	0	0	257	
Donovan lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	263	
Arenado 3b	4	0	2	2	0	0	268	
Nootbaar rf	4	0	0	0	1	2	228	
Carpenter dh	2	0	0	0	0	0	255	
Gorman 2b	3	1	1	0	1	0	201	
Scott II cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	208	
Totals	33	5	9	5	3	6		

a-lined out for Lowe in 8th. b-lined out for Jackson in 6th.
E: Siri, Lowe. **2B:** Lowe (13), Winn (20), Burleson (15), Arenado (17), Gorman (14). **RBI:** Lowe (41), Caballero (29), Burleson (2) (66), Contreras (30), Arenado 2 (50). **SB:** Lowe (3), Caballero (30). **SF:** Caballero. **Runners left in scoring position:** Tampa Bay 6 (Morel, Carlson, Mead, Jackson, Rortvedt 2), St. Louis 5 (Donovan, Nootbaar, Carpenter, Scott II 2). **RISP:** St. Louis 3 for 11.

Tampa Bay	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Bradley L, 6-6	4.2	9	5	3	3	92	3.07	
Biggs	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Rismussen	2.0	0	0	0	0	3	28.00	

St. Louis	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Fedde W, 1-1	5.0	4	1	1	2	6	93	5.40
Fernandez	1.0	2	1	1	0	2	2.86	
Romero H, 28	1.0	0	0	0	0	15	2.31	
Kittredge H, 29	0.2	0	0	0	1	1	3.08	
Helsley S, 36	1.0	0	0	0	1	2	2.72	

Inherited runners: Bigge 2-2. **Umpires:** HP-Blaser, 1B-Ceja, 2B-Gonzalez, 3B-Tichenor. T: 2:29. A: 31,401 (44,383).



The Marlins' Derek Hill hits a grand slam against the Reds during the first inning of Wednesday's game at LoanDepot park in Miami. RICH STORRY/GETTY IMAGES

Arizona 7, Cleveland 3

Game 1
ARI020 020 012- 7 7 0
CLE000 020 010- 3 8 0

Arizona	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Carroll rf	4	2	1	2	1	0	215	
Marte 2b	4	1	1	0	0	0	294	
Pederson dh	4	1	2	0	1	288		
Bell 1b	5	0	1	0	0	1	238	
Newman 1b	0	0	0	0	0	0	276	
Gurriel Jr. lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	263	
Suarez 3b	4	0	1	0	1	229		
Thomas cf	2	1	0	0	1	0	202	
a-Grichuk ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	269	
McCarthy cf	0	0	0	0	0	0	294	
Perdomo ss	4	1	2	0	1	275		
Herrera c	2	1	0	0	2	0	216	
Totals	34	7	7	6	5	8		

Cleveland	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Kwan lf	4	1	1	0	0	2	333	
Martinez cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	241	
Ramirez dh	3	0	1	1	0	282		
Naylor 1b								

OLYMPICS

TRACK AND FIELD

Australian Kennedy soars to pole-vault gold

Tokyo Games champion Moon takes silver for US

Lori Ewing
REUTERS

PARIS — Australia's Nina Kennedy soared to the gold medal in the Olympic women's pole vault on Wednesday, a year after she shared top spot on the world championship medal podium with American rival Katie Moon.

The 27-year-old Kennedy, the first Australian woman to win the event, cleared a season's best 4.90 meters, fiercely pumping her fist several times after another epic battle with Moon.

"I wanted that outright gold medal," Kennedy told reporters. "I didn't want to share it this time. I became really confident in talking to the media, it was really scary, really vulnerable, to lay it all out there. I'm just really happy I got the job done."

Moon, the Tokyo gold medalist and two-time world champion, cleared 4.85m to claim silver. Canada's Alysha Newman went over the same height but was awarded bronze due to more missed jumps.

Kennedy and Moon decided to share gold at last year's world championships in Budapest after they both vaulted 4.90m. Moon defended the decision after scathing criticism on social media, saying the danger of vaulting increases as fatigue sets in.

Kennedy made sure there was no sharing on Wednesday at Stade de France, failing on her first attempt at 4.70 before flying over the next three heights with ease.

After Kennedy's successful attempt



Team USA's Katie Moon makes an attempt during the women's pole vault final on Wednesday at the Paris Olympics. The defending Tokyo Games gold medalist came close to a repeat, capturing the silver medal. ANDREW NELLES/USA TODAY SPORTS

at 4.90, Moon's only chance to steal victory was by clearing 4.95 but they both failed at that height.

Kennedy said she had a sneaking suspicion victory was in the bag after she cleared 4.90.

"I knew first-attempt clearances at those high bars were going to take the gold. I put all my focus into that exact

second, and that's how I won," she said.

Her victory was some redemption for the Tokyo Olympics in which a serious quadriceps injury contributed to her elimination in the preliminary round.

Since winning the 2018 Commonwealth Games title, the 30-year-old Newman had a string of frustrating seasons, punctuated by a serious

concussion suffered in 2021.

"It wasn't just my mental health, I had brain problems. I had a brain health issue," said Newman, adding her neurologist was in the crowd Wednesday.

"I wasn't happy. I didn't like the sport at that time, and it was a struggle for me. I needed to step away. I learned to love track again."



American Quincy Hall celebrates after winning the men's 400-meter final during the Paris 2024 Olympic Summer Games on Wednesday. KIRBY LEE/USA TODAY SPORTS

Hall

Continued from Page 1

career.

The American was still well adrift heading into the last 30 meters but somehow found the energy to drive past everyone and become the fourth-fastest man over the distance, behind world record holder Wayde van Niekerk (43.03), Michael Johnson (43.18) and Butch Reynolds (43.29). Hudson-Smith is now fifth.

Fourth-placed Jereem Richards set a Trinidad and Tobago national record of 43.78 and former Olympic champion Kirani James in fifth was also under 44 seconds in 43.87.

"I told you guys I was going to get a gold medal this year and I guess I just showed you I did it," Hall, who switched

from the 400 hurdles to focus on the flat, told reporters.

"I know I can win. I knew it today. That's what I've been doing my whole career. I don't give up. I just grit, I grind. I've got determination. Anything I think will get me to that line, I think of it. A lot of hurt, a lot of pain."

Hudson-Smith, 29, has world silver and bronze and now Olympic silver to his name after a long and often troubled career.

"Sometimes the journey is better than the outcome. My time is going to come," he said.

"I can't describe the feelings, they are so mixed. I was so close to getting the gold. I got an area record and PB."

"I am so grateful to have everyone that came to watch me. It has been a crazy journey. I am just going to keep building."

Basketball

Continued from Page 1NS

in for a layup as the final second ticked off the clock.

While the U.S. was able to ease to a comfortable win, they may not get away with such an uninspiring, lackluster effort against their final-four opponent Australia, who breezed past Serbia 85-67 and have some old scores to settle with the Americans.

Beaten by Serbia at the same stage of the 2016 Rio Games, Australia made sure there would be no repeat by methodically building a 26-19 first-quarter advantage and never let it go.

Getting retribution on Serbia accomplished one goal. Now the Australians have to quickly turn their sights on their old rivals the United States.

The U.S. are chasing an unprecedented 10th gold medal and eighth in a row with much of that success coming at Australia's expense.

Australia's Opals have won five Olympic medals in women's basketball but have yet to claim gold, losing to the U.S. in three consecutive finals (2000,

2004 and 2008).

"Most of us play in the WNBA, we face these players day in, day out," said Australian coach Sandy Brondello. "They're human. They're basketball players."

"Anything can happen at one time."

France swept past Germany 84-71 and into the semifinals riding the same wave of national pride that carried the men to the final four.

A day after helping lift their men to victory over Canada, another raucous flag-waving crowd poured into Bercy determined to do the same for the women, each basket bringing a rafter rattling roar.

Mission accomplished, French supporters can now plan for Friday when Les Bleues will face Belgium with a place in the gold medal game on the line.

Belgium delivered a quarterfinal surprise, booking their final four place by taking down unbeaten Spain 79-66.

"There's always a little bit of stress but the fact that we didn't crack under it feels great," said France's Gabby Williams. "Now we can kind of breathe a little bit easier, not too much. But it feels great to get to the semis."



Nigeria's Promise Amukamara (10) shoots against the United States' Alyssa Thomas in the quarterfinals on Wednesday in Paris. KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

OLYMPICS

ROUNDUP

Hildebrandt wins freestyle wrestling gold

REUTERS

PARIS — Sarah Hildebrandt of the United States put a chaotic morning behind her to win the women's 50kg freestyle event, while Japan's Nao Kusaka and Iran's Mohammadhadi Saravi won men's Greco-Roman gold at the Paris Olympics on Wednesday.

Hildebrandt was originally scheduled to meet Vinesh Phogat in the gold-medal match but the Indian was disqualified for being overweight.

Cuba's Yusneyls Guzman, who lost to Phogat in Tuesday's semifinals, was promoted instead and Hildebrandt prevailed 3-0 to win the gold after claiming bronze in Tokyo three years ago.

"My mind and body are not computing everything, especially with the chaotic morning I had with the change of opponent," Hildebrandt said at the mixed zone while nibbling a muffin.

"It was very strange, like 'Oh my god, I just won the Olympics'" she said of the assumption she had prevailed by forfeit. "So there had to be a reset. I took a nap, woke up, and it was like a fever dream."

Tokyo champion Yui Susaki of Japan and Feng Ziqi of China won bronze.

In the men's Greco-Roman style, in which holds below the waist are prohibited, Kusaka beat Demeu Zhadravey of Kazakhstan 5-2 to claim the 77kg gold.

Armenia's Malkhas Amoyan and Kyrgyzstan's Akzhol Makhmudov took bronze in the event.

In the 97kg, Saravi turned the form book upside down with a 4-1 win against Artur Aleksanyan of Armenia, who claimed the silver.

Cuba's Gabriel Rosillo and Uzur Dzhuzupbetov of Kyrgyzstan took bronze.

Artistic swimming

China won its first gold medal in artistic swimming following a lively acrobatic team routine that wowed the judges and produced a total score well ahead of the United States, which took silver.

Russia, the dominant force in artistic swimming, has been excluded from the Games and in its absence China pulled through to win gold with the U.S. taking silver and Spain claiming the bronze medal in the acrobatic team event.

Wearing red sequined swimsuits, the Chinese team tossed one swimmer high into the air, drawing applause from the crowd as she performed flips into the water.

The theme of China's acrobatic routine was "Light of Life," and the music served as a fierce backdrop to the performance as the singer chanted during portions of the song.

Paris marks the first time the acrobatic routine, which involves complex jumps, flips and tosses, has been introduced in Olympic artistic swimming.

The U.S. delivered an ethereal routine with the theme "the sorceresses," earning them their first medal in the team event since the Athens Games in 2004.

China scored a total of 996.1389 points with the U.S. 817.968 on 914.3421 and Spain third with 900.7319.

China, who were favorites to win the acrobatic team title in the lead-up to Paris, have an opportunity to win another gold when the duet artistic swimming event begins on Friday.

Teams from Russia and Belarus have been banned from taking part in the Games over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, with Belarus having been used as a staging ground.

Weightlifting

China's Li Fabin retained his 61kg Olympic weightlifting title with a dominant performance and a total lift of 310kg, coming up just short in a bid to break his own world record.

The three-times world champion led off with an Olympic record lift of 143kg with his third attempt in the snatch and all but assured himself of gold when he hoisted 167kg in his second attempt at the clean & jerk.

Theerapong Silachai of Thailand took a surprise silver medal in a thrilling finish after lifting an impressive 171kg in the clean & jerk for a total of 303.

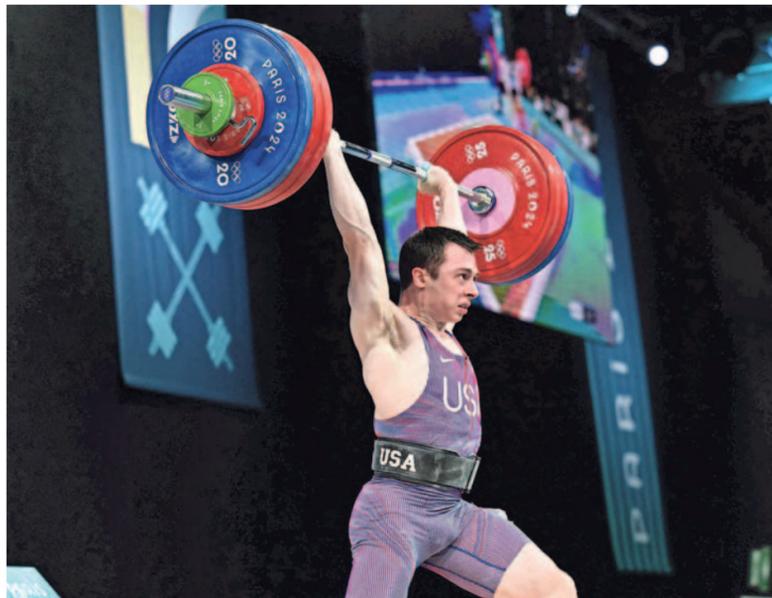
American Hampton Morris finished third for bronze with a total of 298 after failing in his last attempt at 178kg in the clean & jerk, a lift that would have bettered the world record of 176kg he set in Phuket, Thailand in April.

Track and field

Morocco's Soufiane El Bakkali re-



American Sarah Hildebrandt celebrates her gold medal in women's 50kg freestyle wrestling on Wednesday in Paris. SARAH PHIPPS/USA TODAY SPORTS



The United States' Hampton Morris competes in the men's 61kg weightlifting on Wednesday in Paris. MIGUEL MEDINA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

tained his Olympic men's 3,000 meters steeplechase title on Wednesday as American Kenneth Rooks took silver and Kenya's Abraham Kibiwot claimed bronze.

El Bakkali held his arms out wide as he crossed the finish in eight minutes 6.05 seconds to become the first back-to-back winner of the event since Finland's Volmari Iso-Hollo in 1932 and 1936.

World record holder Lamecha Girma of Ethiopia tripped over a barrier on the last lap and landed hard on the track, lying motionless long after the race had finished before medical staff carried him off on a stretcher.

Volleyball

European champions Poland stormed into the men's volleyball final with an extraordinary five-set win over the United States, giving themselves a chance of winning a first gold medal since 1976.

Wilfredo Leon was Poland's hero with 26 points as the European side weathered an American comeback midway through the match to win 25-23 25-27 14-25 25-23 15-13.

France will have the opportunity to win back-to-back gold medals in Olympic men's volleyball after the hosts dispatched world champions Italy in straight sets in Wednesday's second semifinal at a packed South Paris Arena 1.

Trevor Clevenot was France's creative all-round star after he top-scored with 17 points, including two blocks, while Earvin Ngapeth chipped in with 15 as the hosts won 25-20 25-21 25-21.

But it was their defensive performance to stop Italy's lethal attack that ultimately saw them through to the final where they will face Poland, who beat the United States in a five-set thriller earlier on Wednesday.

Italy will look to win another bronze when they face the United States for third place on Friday. The gold medal match will be played on Saturday.

Boxing

Cuba's Erislandy Alvarez broke the hearts of a delirious French crowd when he beat local favorite Sofiane Oumiha by split decision in the men's lightweight boxing final.

Alvarez's win meant that Cuba's boxers, who had won just one bronze medal in Paris before Wednesday's final, avoided their worst performance since the 1968 Olympics in Mexico when they collected only two silvers.

Oumiha, already a silver medallist in Rio in 2016, paid the price for a poor opening round, which Alvarez won 5-0.

Triple world champion Oumiha, back in the amateur rings after a brief spell in the professional ranks where he won all his five fights, won two rounds 3-2 but the overall decision was 3-2 in favor of Alvarez.

Canada's Wyatt Sanford and Georgian Lasha Guruli claimed the two bronze medals on offer after losing their semifinal bouts against Oumiha and Alvarez respectively.

In the other final on Wednesday, Ukraine's Oleksandr Khyzhniak beat Kazakhstan's Nurbek Oralbay by a split decision to win middleweight gold.

Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, one of two boxers at the center of a gender dispute, beat Turkey's Esra Yildiz by unanimous decision in the women's featherweight semifinals and faces Poland's Julia Szeremeta in the final.

Defending super heavyweight champion Bakhodir Jalolov of Uzbekistan won his semifinal by unanimous decision.

He takes on Spain's Ayoub Ghadfa in the final.

Skateboarding

Australia's Keegan Palmer held off American Tom Schaar to defend his title from the Tokyo Games and become the first back-to-back gold medalist in the men's park skateboarding event.

Palmer whipped through the concrete bowl in an opening run packed

with tricks to grab the lead with a score of 93.11, which would ultimately prove enough as Schaar was unable to stay attached to his board in his final run.

Brazilian Augusto Akio took bronze at the event at La Concorde.

Climbing

Poland's world-record holder Aleksandra Miroslaw clinched the gold medal in women's speed climbing, in the sport's Olympic debut as a stand-alone event.

The 30-year-old had been the clear favorite after breaking her own world record twice in the lead-up to the finals, climbing the 15-metre wall in 6.06 seconds two days ago.

At the Le Bourget venue on Wednesday, she did the vertical run in 6.10 seconds, beating China's Deng Lijuan in a photo finish.

The silver medallist set her personal best in the race, with 6.18s.

Poland's Aleksandra Kalucka won the bronze medal with a time of 6.53s.

Table tennis

Sweden fought back from a two-match deficit to beat fourth-seeded Japan in a men's team table tennis semifinal and secure a medal.

Japan opened with a 3-1 doubles win, before Tomokazu Harimoto added a valuable point by defeating singles silver medallist Truls Moregard.

Sweden, though, did not give up. In two 3-1 games, Kristian Karlsson defeated Shunsuke Togami and Moregard overcame Hiroto Shinozuka, putting the onus on teammate Anton Kallberg, who faced the higher-ranked Harimoto in the fifth match.

Harimoto won the first two games with scores of 11-5 to put Japan just one game away from the final but then Kallberg made an unexpected and strong comeback. Playing aggressively, he took the next two games to level with Harimoto.

In the deciding game, Kallberg capitalized on some unforced errors by Harimoto during intense backhand rallies. At 9-9, Kallberg prevailed, taking the fifth game 11-9, as the 21-year-old Harimoto sank to his knees.

Earlier in the day, French teenager Felix Lebrun overcame Brazilian Hugo Calderano for the second time in four days to clinch a crucial point that helped France to beat Brazil and advance to the other semifinal, where they will face China.

Both China's men's and women's cruised into the semifinals with 3-0 victories.

The women's team easily defeated Taiwan, while the men's team knocked out fifth-seeded South Korea earlier in the day.

Taekwondo

South Korea's Park Tae-Joon won the Olympic gold medal in the men's taekwondo flyweight division, beating Azerbaijan's Gashim Magomedov who withdrew from the match in the second and claimed silver.

Park, who won the World Championship title in the 54kg category last year, officially won only one round 9-0. When the match stopped, he was leading 13-1 in the second round.

Magomedov declared defeat, following several breaks to the game due to an apparent injury to his left leg.

France's Cyrian Ravet and Tunisia's Mohamed Khalil Jendoubi won the bronze medals.

Cycling

The United States won the gold medal in the Olympic track cycling women's team pursuit for the first time as they beat New Zealand in the final.

Britain defeated Italy to take the bronze medal.

For American Kristen Faulkner it was her second gold medal of the Games after she won the women's road race.

Faulkner and team mates Jennifer Valente, Lily Williams and former road time trial world champion Chloe Dygert built up a healthy lead and victory looked a formality.

They struggled to stay together in the final laps, however, and there were anxious moments as New Zealand closed the gap before the U.S. clinched victory in a time of 4:04.306 ahead of the Kiwis in 4:04.927.

There were emotional scenes at the finish as the Americans celebrated having been runners-up in 2012 and 2016 and third at the 2020 Games.

OLYMPICS

COMING UP

What's happening on Day 13 of Paris Games

Rohith Nair
REUTERS

PARIS — The Olympics are in their home stretch with four days left at the Paris Games and more than 30 medals will be up for grabs on Thursday.

Medals will be awarded in athletics and sailing while finals will also be held in boxing, taekwondo, wrestling and track cycling.

Marathon swimming is set to get underway amid concerns over water pollution in the river Seine.

Sprint double for Lyles?

Newly-minted world's fastest man Noah Lyles takes to the track again as he aims to complete the prestigious sprint double by adding the 200-meters title to his 100m victory last week.

If he succeeds, Lyles will be the first American to achieve the sprint double since Carl Lewis in 1984.

In what could be a good night for the United States, Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone is the hot favorite to win a 400m hurdles final that is also expected to be lightning fast.

A world record is not unlikely for the Olympic champion who has already broken her own record three times.

Former boxing champs vie for medals

Two boxing golds are up for grabs, with France's Billal Bennama facing 2016 champion Hasanboy Dumatov in the flyweight final and China's Chang Yuan taking on Turkey's Hatice Akbas in the women's bantamweight.

Cindy Ngamba, who ensured a first-ever medal for the refugee Olympic team by reaching the women's middleweight semifinals, meets Panama's former world champion Atheyna Bylon for the bronze.

Egypt vs. Morocco for soccer bronze

Egypt and Morocco clash in Nantes for their countries' first-ever podium finish in the men's football tournament.

Egypt was close to knocking out hosts France but ultimately lost 3-1 in extra time, while Morocco fell 2-1 to Spain in the semifinals.

Jones looks for 3rd taekwondo gold

Britain's Jade Jones will seek a third



The United States' Noah Lyles races in the men's 200-meter semifinals on Wednesday during the Paris 2024 Olympic Summer Games at Stade de France. KIRBY LEE/USA TODAY SPORTS

gold medal in the women's featherweight category, aiming to put away her dismal performance at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics where she was beaten in her first bout by the then Refugee Team athlete Kimia Alizadeh.

Iran-born Alizadeh will compete again at these Olympics but under the Bulgarian flag and starts off with a first bout against her former roommate Nahid Kiyanchandeh.

China's 2022 world champion Zongshi Luo is one to watch while men's world champion Yushuai Liang will also aim for top spot on the podium and Ulugbek Rashitov, the first Uzbekistan athlete to win gold in taekwondo in Tokyo, is also a contender.

Wrestling win streak on the line

In the women's 53kg freestyle, Japan's Akari Fujinami will look to extend her record 130-match win streak to

claim her first Olympic gold.

Ukraine's Zhan Beleniuk will be out to defend his title in the men's 87kg Greco-Roman event, while Cuba's Luis Orta will seek a second successive gold having moved up to the 67kg from 60 in Tokyo.

Finucane seeks 2nd track cycling medal

Action continues in the velodrome with Britain's Emma Finucane one of the favorites to win the women's keirin after already picking up a gold in the team sprint.

Carrington in hunt for 7th medal

The first medals in the sprint disciplines are up for grabs and Lisa Carrington, New Zealand's most successful Olympian, will look to add to her impressive haul of five golds and a bronze

when she takes part in the women's kayak four 500m final.

Varfolomeev under pressure in rhythmic gymnastics

Germany's Darja Varfolomeev, ranked the top rhythmic gymnast in the world, will compete with nine others to qualify for Friday's individual all-around final. She faces stiff competition from gymnasts from Bulgaria and Italy, which have typically been successful at the Olympics. Varfolomeev is under pressure to deliver as Germany has not medaled at rhythmic gymnastics since the sport's Olympic debut in 1984.

Another climbing record?

American Sam Watson will be looking to repeat his world record-setting run up the 15-meter wall in the speed climbing final.

WOMEN'S GOLF

Bright start for Boutier boosts French hopes

Gus Trompiz
REUTERS

GUYANCOURT — France's Celine Boutier delighted the home crowd by taking a first-round lead at the Olympic women's golf competition on Wednesday, with her slick putting setting her apart from some of her rivals who toiled on a tricky course south of Paris.

Treated to a rendition of the Marseillaise by excited French fans as she teed off, the world No. 7 and major winner kept her cool to notch up eight birdies and a lone bogey to post a 7-under round of 65.

"It was easy to be carried away by the emotions and all that, and it was nice to see so many people, but it's true that afterwards I had to really focus," Boutier told reporters.

The 30-year-old said her putting went as well as she could have wanted, with the pick of her scoring shots an 18-foot chip from off the green into the 16th hole to take her to 7 under.

Playing alongside Boutier, American world No. 2 Lilia Vu revelled in the atmosphere and was pleased with a 2 under clubhouse total that put her in a tie for third place.

"This is really fun for me. I mean, they're cheering for me too, so I'm trying to keep up with Celine," she joked.

Boutier is seeking to outdo Victor Perez who thrilled French fans with a dazzling final round on Sunday to take fourth place in the men's competition.

The women's tournament will follow the same format as the men's contest won by American Scottie Scheffler, with 60 participants teeing off for a 72-hole, stroke-play contest over four days at Le Golf National.



France's Celine Boutier hits her tee shot on the 12th hole in the first round of women's individual stroke play during the Paris 2024 Olympic Summer Games on Wednesday at Le Golf National. KATIE GOODALE/USA TODAY SPORTS

Other early leaders included South Africa's Ashleigh Buhai, second at 4 under, and Colombia's Mariajo Uribe, who will retire after the Paris Games, part of a four-way tie for third place at 2 under.

Tokyo gold medalist Nelly Korda, the world No. 1, shot a level-par round of 72 after recovering from three early bogies, with the American, like others, saying

the greens were tricky to read.

"Overall, it just took a little bit to adjust but I adjusted well on the back nine," Korda said.

Britain's Charley Hull was near the bottom of the leaderboard with a 9 over.

The world No. 11 put her performance down to rustiness after a shoulder injury, brushing off the idea that an Olympic

ban on smoking had disadvantaged the player known for puffing on courses.

Perrine Delacour, France's other representative, said the emotion of hitting the first tee-shot of the competition drained her and contributed to a disappointing 7 over.

SCOREBOARD



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All times Eastern

MLB

American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	68	47	.591	-
N.Y. Yankees	68	47	.591	-
Boston	61	52	.540	6
Tampa Bay	57	56	.504	10
Toronto	52	62	.456	15½

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	67	47	.588	-
Minnesota	63	50	.558	3½
Kansas City	64	52	.552	4
Detroit	55	60	.478	12½
Chicago	28	89	.239	40½

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	59	55	.518	-
Seattle	59	56	.513	½
Texas	54	61	.470	5½
L.A. Angels	50	64	.439	9
Oakland	48	68	.414	12

National League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	68	46	.596	-
Atlanta	60	53	.531	7½
N.Y. Mets	60	54	.526	8
Washington	52	63	.452	16½
Miami	43	72	.374	25½

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	64	49	.566	-
St. Louis	59	56	.513	6
Pittsburgh	56	57	.496	8
Chicago	57	60	.487	9
Cincinnati	55	59	.482	9½

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Dodgers	66	49	.574	-
Arizona	63	52	.548	3
San Diego	63	52	.548	3
San Francisco	58	58	.500	8½
Colorado	42	73	.365	24

Tuesday's Scores	
Arizona at Cleveland, PPD Rain	
Cincinnati 8, Miami 2	
San Diego 6, Pittsburgh 0	
Washington 11, San Francisco 5	
L.A. Angels at N.Y. Yankees, PPD Rain	
Toronto 5, Baltimore 2	
Milwaukee 10, Atlanta 0	
St. Louis 4, Tampa Bay 3	
Chicago Cubs 7, Minnesota 3	
Houston 4, Texas 2	
Boston 6, Kansas City 5	
Colorado 6, N.Y. Mets 3	
Chicago White Sox 5, Oakland 1	
Detroit 4, Seattle 2	
Philadelphia 6, L.A. Dodgers 2	

Wednesday's Scores	
Arizona 7, Cleveland 3	
Chicago Cubs 8, Minnesota 2	
Houston 6, Texas 4	
Oakland 3, Chicago White Sox 2	
N.Y. Yankees 5, L.A. Angels 2	
Arizona 5, Cleveland 3	
Miami 6, Cincinnati 4	
San Diego 9, Pittsburgh 8	
San Francisco 7, Washington 4	
Baltimore 7, Toronto 3	
Milwaukee 8, Atlanta 5	
L.A. Angels 8, N.Y. Yankees 2	
St. Louis 5, Tampa Bay 2	
Kansas City 8, Boston 4	
N.Y. Mets 5, Colorado 3	
Detroit 6, Seattle 2	
Philadelphia 9, L.A. Dodgers 4	

Thursday's Games	
San Francisco (Harrison 6-5) at Washington (Montz 2-4), 12:05 p.m.	
Milwaukee (Heras 5-8) at Atlanta (Morton 6-6), 12:20 p.m.	
San Diego (Vasquez 3-6) at Pittsburgh (Ortiz 5-2), 12:35 p.m.	
N.Y. Mets (Peterson 5-1) at Colorado (Gomber 3-7), 3:10 p.m.	
Cincinnati (Greene 8-4) at Miami (Tyler 0-2), 6:10 p.m.	
L.A. Angels (Anderson 8-10) at N.Y. Yankees (Cortes 5-9), 7:05 p.m.	
Baltimore (Kremer 4-8) at Toronto (Gausman 9-8), 7:07 p.m.	
Tampa Bay (Bez 0-1) at St. Louis (Gibson 7-4), 7:15 p.m.	
Philadelphia (TBD) at Arizona (Montgomery 7-5), 9:40 p.m.	
Detroit (TBD) at Seattle (Woo 5-1), 9:40 p.m.	

Friday's Games	
Cleveland (Bibee 9-4) at Minnesota (Ober 11-5), 2:10 p.m.	
L.A. Angels (Soriano 6-7) at Washington (Parker 6-6), 6:45 p.m.	
Baltimore (Eflin 7-7) at Tampa Bay (Littell 5-7), 6:50 p.m.	
Texas (TBD) at N.Y. Yankees (Rodon 12-7), 7:05 p.m.	
Oakland (Spence 7-7) at Toronto (Berrios 9-9), 7:07 p.m.	
Houston (Blanco 9-6) at Boston (Houck 8-8), 7:10 p.m.	
San Diego (Perez 2-5) at Miami (Cabrera 2-3), 7:10 p.m.	
Chicago Cubs (Tailon 7-6) at Chicago White Sox (Crocket 6-8), 8:10 p.m.	
St. Louis (Mikolas 8-9) at Kansas City (Lorenzen 5-6), 8:10 p.m.	
Cleveland (TBD) at Minnesota (TBD), 8:10 p.m.	
Cincinnati (Spiers 4-3) at Milwaukee (Civale 2-8), 8:10 p.m.	
Atlanta (Schwelenbach 4-5) at Colorado (TBD), 8:40 p.m.	
Philadelphia (Wheeler 11-5) at Arizona (Nelson 8-6), 9:40 p.m.	
Pittsburgh (Keller 10-5) at L.A. Dodgers	

(Flaherty 8-5), 10:10 p.m.
N.Y. Mets (Quintana 6-7) at Seattle (Miller 8-7), 10:10 p.m.
Detroit (TBD) at San Francisco (Ray 2-1), 10:15 p.m.

Leaders
American League
Batting Average – Witt Jr., Kansas City .343; Kwan, Cleveland .334; Judge, New York .322; Guerrero Jr., Toronto .317; Soto, New York .310; Devers, Boston .304; Altuve, Houston .303; Alvarez, Houston .300; Diaz, Houston .296; Duran, Boston .294.

Home Runs – Judge, New York 41; Santander, Baltimore 32; Ramirez, Cleveland 29; Henderson, Baltimore 29; Soto, New York 28; Rooker, Oakland 28; Devers, Boston 25; Seager, Texas 24; Naylor, Cleveland 24; Raleigh, Seattle 23. **RBI** – Judge, New York 103; Ramirez, Cleveland 94; Pasquantino, Kansas City 82; Naylor, Cleveland 81; Rooker, Oakland 81; Witt Jr., Kansas City 80; Soto, New York 78; Perez, Kansas City 75; Santander, Cleveland 75; Guerrero Jr., Toronto 72.

Stolen Bases – Caballero, Tampa Bay 29; Thomas, Cleveland 28; Hamilton, Boston 28; Garcia, Kansas City 27; Duran, Boston 27; Witt Jr., Kansas City 25; Ramirez, Cleveland 24; Rengifo, Los Angeles 24; Chisholm Jr., New York 24; Moore, Seattle 20.

Wins – Lugo, Kansas City 13; Rodriguez, Baltimore 13; Rodon, New York 12; Burnes, Baltimore 12; Skubal, Detroit 12; Valdez, Houston 11; Gil, New York 11; Ober, Minnesota 11; Lively, Cleveland 10; Lopez, Minnesota 10.

ERA – Skubal, Detroit 2.57; Burnes, Baltimore 2.63; Lugo, Kansas City 2.72; Blanco, Houston 2.98; Singer, Kansas City 3.03; Kirby, Seattle 3.04; Gilbert, Seattle 3.05; Anderson, Los Angeles 3.05; Houck, Boston 3.09; Crochet, Chicago 3.19.

Strikeouts – Skubal, Detroit 162; Crochet, Chicago 162; Ragans, Kansas City 159; Ryan, Minnesota 145; Lopez, Minnesota 144; Gilbert, Seattle 143; Kikuchi, Houston 141; Castillo, Seattle 139; Rodon, New York 137; Burnes, Baltimore 132.

National League
Batting Average – Ohtani, Los Angeles .306; Arraez, San Diego .305; Profar, San Diego .302; Marte, Arizona .300; Bohm, Philadelphia .298; Ozuna, Atlanta .297; Garcia Jr., Washington .289; Freeman, Los Angeles .287; Reynolds, Pittsburgh .286; Contreras, Milwaukee .283.

Home Runs – Ohtani, Los Angeles 34; Ozuna, Atlanta 32; Marte, Arizona 28; Harper, Philadelphia 25; Hernandez, Los Angeles 25; Schwarber, Philadelphia 24; Walker, Arizona 23; Alonso, New York 23; Lindor, New York 22; De La Cruz, Cincinnati 20.

RBI – Ozuna, Atlanta 86; Ohtani, Los Angeles 81; Bohm, Philadelphia 78; Marte, Arizona 78; Adames, Milwaukee 75; Hernandez, Los Angeles 74; Walker, Arizona 71; Profar, San Diego 71; Harper, Philadelphia 69; Freeman, Los Angeles 67.

Stolen Bases – De La Cruz, Cincinnati 58; Turang, Milwaukee 33; Ohtani, Los Angeles 32; Young, Washington 26; Lindor, New York 23; Stott, Philadelphia 23; Yelich, Milwaukee 21; Doyle, Colorado 21; Crow-Armstrong, Chicago 21; Kim, San Diego 20.

Wins – Sale, Atlanta 13; Cease, San Diego 11; Gray, St. Louis 11; Wheeler, Philadelphia 11; Nola, Philadelphia 11; Rea, Milwaukee 10; Suarez, Philadelphia 10; Keller, Pittsburgh 10; Glasnow, Los Angeles 9; Webb, San Francisco 9.

ERA – Sale, Atlanta 2.71; Wheeler, Philadelphia 2.77; Greene, Cincinnati 2.83; Suarez, Philadelphia 2.87; Imanaga, Chicago 3.06; Keller, Pittsburgh 3.20; King, San Diego 3.26; Sanchez, Philadelphia 3.27; Manaea, New York 3.30; Fedde, St. Louis 3.34.

Strikeouts – Cease, San Diego 176; Glasnow, Los Angeles 164; Sale, Atlanta 155; Gray, St. Louis 153; Peralta, Milwaukee 149; Greene, Cincinnati 149; Wheeler, Philadelphia 148; King, San Diego 144; Flaherty, Los Angeles 140; Nola, Philadelphia 134.

OLYMPICS

Medal Leaders Through Aug. 7				
Nation	G	S	T	Total
United States	263532	93	93	352
Peoples Rep. of China	252317	65	65	317
France	131620	49	49	181
Great Britain	121720	49	49	170
Australia	181211	41	41	122
Japan	12131	31	31	62
Italy	910	27	27	937
Republic of Korea	11	8	26	45
Netherlands	9	5	20	34
Canada	6	4	19	29
Germany	8	5	17	30
Brazil	2	5	14	21
Spain	2	3	11	15
New Zealand	3	6	10	19
Romania	3	4	8	15
Hungary	3	2	8	13
Sweden	3	2	8	13
Ireland	4	0	7	11
Ukraine	2	2	7	11
Switzerland	1	2	7	10
Greece	1	1	7	9
Croatia	2	1	6	9
Israel	1	4	6	11
Kazakhstan	1	2	6	9
Poland	1	4	6	11
Belgium	2	0	3	5
Jamaica	1	3	3	7
Thailand	1	2	3	6
Kenya	1	1	3	5
Chinese Taipei	1	0	4	5
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	0	2	5	7
Hong Kong, China	2	0	4	6
Georgia	1	2	4	7
South Africa	1	2	4	7
Kyrgyzstan	0	1	4	5
Philippines	2	0	3	5
Denmark	1	2	3	6
Ind. Neutral Athletes	1	0	3	4
Cuba	1	0	3	4
Islamic Republic of Iran	1	0	3	4
Uzbekistan	1	0	3	4
Armenia	0	2	3	5
Mexico	0	2	3	5
Lithuania	0	1	3	4
Turkiye	0	1	3	4
India	0	0	3	3
Tajikistan	0	0	3	3

Aug. 6 Results		
Athletics		
Women's 200m Final		
1. Gabrielle Thomas, United States, 21.83 points.		
2. Julien Alfred, Saint Lucia, 22.08.		
3. Brittany Brown, United States, 22.20.		
4. Dina Asher-Smith, Great Britain, 22.22.		
5. Daryll Neita, Great Britain, 22.23.		
6. Favour Ofilii, Nigeria, 22.24.		
7. Mckenzie Logg, United States, 22.42.		
8. Jessica Gbai, Côte d'Ivoire, 22.70.		

Men's 1500m Final		
1. Cole Hocker, United States, 3:27.65 points (OR).		
2. Josh Kerr, Great Britain, 3:27.79.		
3. Yared Nuguse, United States, 3:27.80.		
4. Jakob Ingebrigtsen, Norway, 3:28.24.		
5. Hobbs Kessler, United States, 3:29.45.		
6. Niels Laros, Netherlands, 3:29.54.		
7. Narve Gilje Nordas, Norway, 3:30.46.		
8. Pietro Arese, Italy, 3:30.74.		
9. Stefan Nillessen, Netherlands, 3:30.75.		
10. Neil Gourley, Great Britain, 3:30.88.		
11. Timothy Cheruiyot, Kenya, 3:31.35.		
12. Brian Komen, Kenya, 3:35.59.		

Basketball		
Men's Quarterfinal: Germany 76, Greece 63		
Men's Quarterfinal: Serbia 95, Australia 90		
Men's Quarterfinal: France 82, Canada 73		
Men's Quarterfinal: United States 122, Brazil 87		

Beach Volleyball		
Men's Quarterfinal: EHLERS/WICKLER 2, BOERMANS/DE GROOT 0		
Men's Quarterfinal: AHMAN/HELLVIG 2, EVANDRO/ARTHUR 0		
Women's Quarterfinal: MARIAFE/CLANCY 2, ESMEE/ZOE 1		
Women's Quarterfinal: HUBERLI/BRUNNER 2, HUGHES/CHENG 0		

Boxing		
Men's 71kg - Semifinal: Asadkhujja MU'YINKHUAJEV 3, Omar JONES 2		

Men's 71kg - Semifinal: Marco Alonso VERDE ALVAREZ 3, Lewis RICHARDSON 2
Women's 50kg - Semifinal: WU Yu 4, Nazym KYZIABAY 1

Women's 50kg - Semifinal: Buse Naz AKIROGLU 5, Aira VILLEGAS 0
Women's 66kg - Semifinal: Imane KHELIF 5, Janjaem SUWANNAPHENG 0
Women's 50kg - Semifinal: YANG Liu 4, CHEN Nien Chin 1
Women's 60kg - Final: Kellie HARRINGTON 4, YANG Wenlu 1

Cycling Track
Men's Team Sprint, Finals - For Places 7-8: Canada 43.944, China 42.532
Men's Team Sprint, Finals - For Places 5-6: Germany 42.280, Japan 42.078
Men's Team Sprint, Finals - For Bronze: France 41.993, Australia 41.597
Men's Team Sprint, Finals - For Gold: Great Britain 41.814, Netherlands 40.949

Field Hockey
Men's Semi-final: Netherlands 4, Spain 0
Men's Semi-final: Germany 3, India 2

Handball
Women's Quarterfinal: Denmark 29, Netherlands 25
Women's Quarterfinal: France 26, Germany 23
Women's Quarterfinal: Sweden 36, Hungary 32
Women's Quarterfinal: Norway 32, Brazil 15

Soccer
Women's Semi-final: United States 1, Germany 0
Women's Semi-final: Brazil 4, Spain 2

Table Tennis
Men's Team Round of 16: China 3, India 0
Men's Team Round of 16: Korea 3, Croatia 0

Women's Team Round of 16: Germany 3, United States 2
Women's Team Round of 16: China 3, Australia 0
Men's Team Quarterfinal: Japan 3, Chinese Taipei 1

Women's Team Quarterfinal: Korea 3, Sweden 0
Men's Team Quarterfinal: Sweden 3, Germany 0
Women's Team Quarterfinal: Japan 3, Thailand 0

Volleyball
Women's Quarterfinals: Türkiye 3, China 2
Women's Quarterfinals: Brazil 3, Dominican Republic 0
Women's Quarterfinals: United States 3, Poland 0
Women's Quarterfinals: Italy 3, Serbia 0

Water Polo
Women's Quarterfinal: Spain 18, Canada 8
Women's Quarterfinal: Netherlands 11, Italy 8
Women's Quarterfinal: Australia 9, Greece 6
Women's Quarterfinal: United States 5, Hungary 4

Aug. 7 Results
Athletics
Men's 400m Final
1. Quincy Hall, United States, 43.40 points.
2. Matthew Hudson-Smith, Great Britain, 43.44.
3. Muzala Samukonga, Zambia, 43.74.
4. Jereem Richards, Trinidad and Tobago, 43.78.
5. Kirani James, Grenada, 43.87.
6. Christopher Bailey, United States, 44.58.
7. Samuel Ogazi, Nigeria, 44.73.
8. Michael Norman, United States, 45.62.