

Many people not getting most out of their savings

Savers aren't earning interest that matches pace of inflation. Here's what you can do. **In Money**

Cleveland's Jarrett Allen an open book off NBA court

Member of Cavaliers' Core Four is defender of rims and supporter of bookstores. **In Sports**



'Andor' embraces galactic stress

Season 2 of "Star Wars" series, starring Diego Luna as a Rebel spy, ups the action and anxiety for its characters and the audience. **In Life**

USA TODAY

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TOMOHIRO OHSUMI/GETTY IMAGES FOR DISNEY

Real ID deadline has states scrambling

DMVs struggle to meet last-minute demand

Jeanine Santucci  
USA TODAY

After years of delays, the final, very real deadline to have a Real ID while flying in the United States is right around the corner, and some states are in a scramble to make sure everyone has a compliant ID.

Real ID, a standard for travel identification first passed by Congress in 2005, will be a requirement to fly domestically starting May 7 after multiple delays from the original deadline in 2020. Anyone who wants to get on a plane will need either a Real ID or another compliant document like a passport starting that date or risk facing delays or denial to board altogether.

Though Real IDs have been available in most states for years, travelers could still use standard driver's licenses or state IDs to fly within the country. The Department of Homeland Security estimated that by May 2025, somewhere between 61% and 66% of ID holders would have Real IDs.

Real ID, an identification standard passed by Congress in 2005, will be a requirement to fly within the United States starting May 7.

The good news is that in some states like Florida, most people with licenses already have Real IDs because anyone who got a new license or renewed a license there since 2010 has gotten the Real ID. Of all Marylanders with state IDs, 99% have Real ID.

But in many states, the Real ID roll-out has been optional; some people have chosen a standard license, which might require fewer documents or a lower fee. They will now need to upgrade if they plan to travel by air domestically. Now that the deadline is creeping up, a last-minute scramble is overwhelming some Department of Motor Vehicle offices. In some states, DMVs have added special Real ID-only appointments to satisfy demand, and in others, appointments are hard to come by altogether.

Anticipating a surge of customers looking for Real IDs, several states have extended their DMV hours or set aside special appointment times for the final push before the deadline.

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles started offering walk-in appointments for Real ID-seekers at all its locations, the agency announced. As of April 8, about 57% of IDs in the state were Real IDs, the USA TODAY Network in New England reported.

Oklahoma and California have extended DMV hours at some locations to serve Real ID customers. Eighteen California locations will open an hour early at 7 a.m. through June 27 on every day of the week except Wednesdays, reported the Victorville Daily Press. In Oklahoma, some of the

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Pope Francis' attempt to alter church authority spurred revolt

Critics viewed his bureaucratic changes as a slippery slope



Pope Francis, who died April 21, waves from the Popemobile at World Youth Day celebrations in Rio de Janeiro in 2013. BUDA MENDES/GETTY IMAGES

Liam Adams  
Nashville Tennessean | USA TODAY NETWORK

The battle over Pope Francis' reforms opened with a coordinated attack against guidance that eased restrictions on divorced and remarried parishioners receiving communion.

Four conservative bishops challenged Francis' guidance in a document titled "Amoris Laetitia" in a July 2017 letter, issuing a "correction" to "protect our fellow Catholics."

"Heresies and other errors have in consequence spread through the Church," the four bishops wrote.

Francis set out to reshape how the church operates, but not what it teaches. "Amoris Laetitia" was the first major attempt at that. The document emerged from a lengthy discernment process that included public

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IN NEWS

**Pope's final hours:** Vatican shares details on his last words.

**Catholics divided:** People express different priorities they want to see in next leader.

IN OPINION

**A moral compass to follow:** Francis renewed my faith in the Catholic Church.

**Breaking tradition for right reasons:** Will progress be reversed?

Store owners feel helpless as price hikes near



Salah Salah, who owns Hilal Groceries in Des Moines with his parents, says not even his vendors can help him with his biggest challenge in light of tariffs, figuring out what supplies to order and how much. CODY SCANLAN/USA TODAY NETWORK

International groceries brace for tariffs impact

Christopher Cann  
and F. Amanda Tugade  
USA TODAY NETWORK

WHEATON, MD – For over 30 years, Lenny Ung has prided himself on providing the ingredients needed to cook Southeast Asian cuisine to the residents of this leafy suburb north of Washington.

Walking down the colorful aisles of Hung Phat Grocery, Ung pointed out some of his customer's favorites: shiitake mushrooms from China, Japan's Kewpie mayonnaise and fish sauce



Ung

told USA TODAY. "We don't want things to change, but there's nothing we can do."

Across the United States, small, family-owned international grocery stores are bracing for increased prices after Trump imposed a 10% universal import

from Vietnam. But, he said, because of President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs, it may soon be too expensive to keep some of these staples on his shelves.

"It's frustrating," he told USA TODAY. "We don't want things to change, but there's nothing we can do."

tax and a staggering 145% duty on Chinese imports.

For stores like Hung Phat Grocery – which imports more than 90% of its products – the tariffs could cause seismic shifts to their business, impacting not only how much their items cost but what they continue to carry.

There's also great uncertainty as Trump seeks negotiations with China and begins talks with other countries whose larger tariffs were delayed by 90 days. Some of the threatened duties

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'Manosphere' pulls young men into a black hole

Online forums can cross line into hate, misogyny

Rachel Hale  
USA TODAY

As a college student, Michael McKenzie had an average social life – he studied with friends from his accounting classes, played drinking games at parties and watched

"Cheers" as a comfort show with his roommates on Sunday evenings.

The one thing that eluded him for years, though, was a girlfriend.

McKenzie, now 27, tried Tinder and Bumble, but his swiping rarely resulted in dates. When he mustered up the confidence to approach girls at parties, they politely declined.

So when he came upon the videos of YouTuber Kevin Samuels, the creator's blunt discussion about relationships –

that "a high value man starts with money" and that "the place of a man in society has been devalued" – felt like a "glimmer of hope."

Every time he watched one of Samuels' videos, YouTube would recommend three or four more from similar creators. The theories repeated in Samuels' circle – like "the wall" theory that women older than 35 and unmarried are "leftovers"

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# ICE denies activist’s request to be at birth

Wife had their first child this week in New York

Eduardo Cuevas  
USA TODAY

NEW YORK – Mahmoud Khalil’s wife gave birth to their first child on April 21 while Khalil, the former Columbia University graduate student and pro-Palestinian activist, is still held in an immigration detention center.

Noor Abdalla said in a statement that she requested Immigration and Customs Enforcement to allow her husband, 30, a legal permanent resident, to attend the birth of their son. She said they denied his temporary release from a Louisiana ICE facility more than 1,000 miles away.

“My son and I should not be navigating his first days on earth without Mahmoud,” Abdalla, 28, a U.S. citizen, said in a statement. “ICE and the Trump administration have stolen these precious moments from our family in an attempt to silence Mahmoud’s support for Palestinian freedom.”



Noor Abdalla, wife of activist and former Columbia grad student Mahmoud Khalil, holds a photo of their wedding day. CAITLIN OCHS/REUTERS

A spokesperson for the family declined to disclose the son’s name, though said he was born at a New York hospital. ICE didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

In emails obtained by USA TODAY, Khalil’s lawyers told ICE officials on the morning of April 20 that Abdalla went into labor eight days earlier than expected.

Lawyers requested a two-week furlough for Khalil that “would be both reasonable and humane so that both parents can be present for the birth of their first child,” an email read. They offered a GPS ankle monitor and scheduled check-ins during this time.

Less than an hour later, Melissa Harper, ICE’s field office director in New Orleans, responded and said that after consideration of information and reviewing the client’s case, the request was denied.

On March 8, federal immigration agents arrested Khalil while he and Abdalla, who was then eight months pregnant, were returning home from dinner. Abdalla recorded the video of agents detaining him in their university-owned apartment building lobby in New York City. Khalil, who is Palestinian, though he was born and raised in Syria, has been held in ICE detention since then.

The Trump administration has said it stripped him of his legal status in the country and detained him for his role in pro-Palestinian student protests at the Ivy League campus. Khalil had participated in protests since then, which drew the attention of pro-Israel groups that had called for revoking his legal status.

Federal officials say he participated in “antisemitic protests and disruptive activities” that “undermine U.S. efforts to combat anti-Semitism.”

Khalil hasn’t been charged with a crime. He has denied accusations of antisemitism.

*Contributing: Hannan Adely and Ricardo Kaulessar, The Bergen Record; Reuters*

# Francis

Continued from Page 1A

input and an assembly of bishops, known as a synod.

But to critics, these bureaucratic changes were a slippery slope to doctrinal erosion.

Francis, born as Jorge Mario Bergoglio and who died April 21 at age 88, leaves a legacy in which an institution that operates under a strict hierarchy made room for women and laity to voice concerns and for bishops to rigorously debate how to best implement church teaching. But those adjustments provoked traditionalists to mount a resistance that rallied supporters using ideological grievances, not ecclesiological ones.

Francis’ posture on issues such as LGBTQ+ inclusion and immigration have frustrated conservative Catholics in the United States and led many to become more loyal to the Republican Party and leaders like Vice President JD Vance, a Catholic convert, instead of the Vatican.

“What is the most surprising thing about so many of the Catholic conservatives is they’ve been saying ‘well the pope isn’t saying what I think the pope is saying, therefore he’s not really the pope,’” Cathleen Kaveny, a professor of theology and law at Boston College, which is affiliated with the same Jesuit Catholic order that Francis belonged to. “That suggests the pope isn’t a Holy Father or an authority, but more like a snowplow that you put on your own ideological train that you use it to push people out of the way.”

Before Francis, liberals often protested the more orthodox leadership of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. But Kaveny said the conservative backlash against Francis was different because it often called into question the legitimacy of the pope’s authority.

Doubt about the pope’s authority seeded deeper levels of questioning, leading some conservatives to disregard other policies that were inspired by the Second Vatican Council. The Second Vatican Council, a policymaking assembly that convened 60 years ago, aimed to make the church more accessible to a wider audience – a goal that many have compared to Francis’ legacy. But cynicism toward those reforms have driven a conservative fervor for independence from Catholic authority.

The Rev. Thomas Reese, a Jesuit priest and a columnist for Religion News Service, said that independence is ironic because the conservative bishops who attacked Francis were upset over the disruption to an earlier model in which a select few church leaders consulted the pope, who had the final say.

“It’s interesting,” Reese said. “The pope gave people the freedom to speak and criticize, and the conservatives took that freedom and used it to criticize him for making it possible to criticize.”

## ‘Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable’

“Amoris Laetitia” triggered a conservative uprising more for what it said about Francis’ vision to elevate historically underrepresented perspectives.

“What he was trying to do, if I had one sentence to describe Pope Francis, is comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable,” Kaveny said. Francis, drawing from his experiencing ministering to low-income Argentinians during his time as Buenos Aires archbishop, was committed to the ideal of mercy. It’s from that same source he was critical of capitalism and environmental degradation early in his tenure as pope.

But this commitment to a bottom-up view of discourse in the church began in earnest with the 2016 Synod on the Family, which led to “Amoris Laetitia.” Even before the bishops convened for the synod – essentially a time for bishops to workshop church teaching and policy and then vote on what guidance to relay to the pope – Francis encouraged regional episcopal leaders to solicit public input and compile that feedback in a document for the synod to consult.

Ultimately, in “Amoris Laetitia,” Francis advised priests to consider the unique circumstances of divorced and remarried parishioners to help decide whether to grant communion.



Pope Francis sits with Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke, an outspoken critic based in the United States, at the Vatican in 2023. PROVIDED BY VATICAN MEDIA VIA REUTERS

Beforehand, only divorced couples who received a church-sanctioned annulment were eligible to participate in sacraments. Annulments were rare, often because of the difficult process for obtaining one.

Francis foreshadowed such attentiveness to lay peoples’ concerns within his first year as pope, when he outlined his vision for his papacy in a November 2013 document titled “Evangelii Gaudium.” In “Evangelii Gaudium,” a Latin phrase that translates to “Joy of the Gospel,” Francis supported a “decentralization” of church hierarchy and pushed against “structures that give us a false sense of security, within rules that make us harsh judges,” according to National Catholic Reporter.

But traditionalists felt sidelined by that message, and the 2016 events surrounding guidance for divorced and remarried Catholics was early evidence of that.

“The pope gave people the freedom to speak and criticize, and the conservatives took that freedom and used it to criticize him for making it possible to criticize.”

The Rev. Thomas Reese  
Religion News Service columnist

“What does appear to be clear is that efforts seem to be in place to prevent traditional voices having any sort of a key influence,” Edward Pentin, a writer for the conservative leaning National Catholic Register, said in an August 2018 column. “Some believe this is simply the culmination of an agenda that’s been pushed since before Francis’ election: to legitimize not so much heterodoxy as homosexual relationships within the Church.”

## ‘Quite revolutionary’

Conservatives reasoned, and grew increasingly anxious, that Francis would push the boundaries on LGBTQ+ inclusion if he was already willing to do the same on permissions for divorced and remarried Catholics.

Over time, the pope’s posture on LGBTQ+ inclusion did in fact change and it subsequently mobilized these traditionalists. Francis was less combative toward LGBTQ+ Catholics and in 2023 said priests could bless same-sex unions.

Conservative bishops and outspoken critics of Francis based in the United States – namely Cardinal Raymond Burke, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganó and Bishop Joseph Strickland, among others – responded by rallying allies in the pews, which bolstered an emergent Catholic right led by clerical and political figures. That movement eventually contributed to the strong Catholic support for President Donald Trump and Vance in November’s election.

As conservatives in the United States were getting riled up about real or perceived changes over LGBTQ+ inclusion in the church, far more substantive maneuvers were underway at the Vatican. It began with Francis issuing a new apostolic constitution that reordered Vatican agencies and expanded criteria to allow women to run those agencies. Then, the pope gave women and lay people the power to vote in a synod.

“That was quite revolutionary,” said Reese, author of the 1998 book “Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church.”

These changes in synod participation preceded the 2023 Synod on Synodality. Francis also led the charge on an extensive public outreach campaign ahead of the 2023 synod to solicit public input, a strategy he started with the 2016 Synod on the Family but on a much larger scale.

These changes between 2016 and 2023 were a huge difference from synods under Francis’ predecessors, Reese said.

“Under Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, the synods were more like Soviet legislatures,” Reese said. “You came and praised the great leader. There was no challenging the leader.”

## ‘Accomplished a discussion’

Conservatives were in full revolt by the 2023 synod.

In addition to the changes around LGBTQ+ inclusion, 2021 restrictions on a certain traditionalist liturgy outraged a contingent of Catholics who developed a cynicism about Francis’ reforms mirroring that of the Second Vatican Council. Then, the constitutional revisions and synodal rule changes to give women more authority fueled conservative concerns about women’s ordination as deacons.

Ultimately, a vote on that matter during the 2023 Synod on Synodality resoundingly defeated a motion to allow women’s ordination as deacons. But the concern was enough to lead five conservative bishops in advance to critique Francis in a formal complaint known as a “dubia,” which was the same type of attack against “Amoris Laetitia” in 2017.

A leading figure behind both those attacks was Burke, who church leadership ultimately stripped of his Vatican salary and apartment in 2023. Around that same time, the Vatican ousted Strickland from his post overseeing the Tyler, Texas, diocese and charged Viganó with inciting schism.

“I regard the accusations against me as an honor,” Viganó said in a June 2024 letter, referring to his rejection of Francis’ authority and of the Second Vatican Council. “No Catholic worthy of the name can be in communion with this ‘Bergoglian church,’ because it acts in clear discontinuity and rupture with all the Popes of history and with the Church.”

The church ultimately excommunicated Viganó, who had also become a vocal proponent of Trump and rightwing conspiracy theories. These disciplinary judgments turned Burke, Strickland and Viganó into martyrs in the eyes of their supporters, and was additional confirmation that Francis was silencing traditionalists at the expense of other perspectives.

Even if these changes are as revolutionary as conservatives fear, Kaveny said they’re impermanent. “I would want to see the actual Canon Law implementing it,” she said.

Kaveny alluded to the history of the Second Vatican Council reforms, which didn’t have much bearing on Catholic life for nearly two decades until the passage of the 1983 Code of Canon Law. This ratification happened under a different pope than the one who convened the Second Vatican Council. Likewise, whomever succeeds Francis could either push to enshrine what the late pope set out to do or completely dismantle those modifications.

“He accomplished a discussion,” Kaveny said, noting how bishops still have the most influence aside from the pope. “Francis allowed and encouraged people to express their views and to say, ‘nobody is excluded from the table.’ But the power still is where the power is.”

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# Views mixed on main issues for next pope

## Progressive, conservative camps both make push

**Karissa Waddick, Margie Cullen, Peter D. Kramer, Caitlyn Kelleher and Katie Landeck**  
USA TODAY

As Catholics mourn Pope Francis and reflect on the pontiff’s legacy as a reformer, questions are emerging about who might follow the 266th leader of the church.

Cardinals from across the globe will soon gather under a shroud of secrecy at St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City to decide who’s best equipped to solve the challenges facing the Catholic Church and guide 1.4 billion Catholics around the world. But where will the next pope come from? Where will he stand on wide-reaching Catholic debates?

Ordinary members of the church won’t get a say in the decision. But when asked about what priorities they would want from a new pope, Catholics who spoke to the USA TODAY Network just hours after Francis’ death were deeply divided.

Some expressed a desire for Francis’ successor to build on the progress he made, particularly around the inclusion of women and LGBTQ+ people. Others said they wanted the next pope to maintain the church’s more conservative policies on topics like abortion.

**A progressive pope?**

During his decade-long tenure at the top of the Catholic Church, Francis became known as the “People’s Pope” for championing the poor and reforming some of the church’s traditions that critics called archaic.

Francis said in a 2018 interview with Reuters that President Donald Trump’s decision to pull out of the Paris climate agreement had pained him “because the future of humanity is at stake.”

The pope also sparred with political leaders over their treatment of immigrants. On Easter, in his last public ap-

pearance, the pope called for peace and asked officials “not to yield to the logic of fear.”

He passed a measure allowing women to serve in administrative roles for the first time and urged the acceptance of LGBTQ+ people, saying in 2023 that “being homosexual isn’t a crime.”

Though he never fully bucked church teachings on the two issues, it wasn’t the first time he spoke out about them.

“Homosexual people have a right to be in a family,” Francis said in a 2020 documentary that called for same-sex couples to be protected by civil union laws. “They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it.”

In Massachusetts, which is home to one of the largest Catholic populations in the country, residents overwhelmingly told the USA TODAY Network they hope the next pope will be similar to Francis.

“He transcended religion. He really welcomed everyone to the church,” said Carl Sawejko, 67, who founded a telecommunications company in southern Massachusetts called Sawejko Enterprises. He said he served as an alter boy at a church in Swansea, Massachusetts, as a child.

Others, including 28-year-old Julia Mitrano, a medical student at the University of Massachusetts, said they want a pope who will go further and push for sweeping changes in the church, including by recognizing same-sex marriage.

“I would love the next pope to be even more progressive than Pope Francis,” said Mitrano, who describes herself as an ex-Catholic.

The native of Nahant, Massachusetts, is among a not-so-small population of people in the United States who say they were confirmed in Catholicism but no longer practice. Many people who have left the church cite dissatisfaction with Catholic teachings, particularly around social issues like same-sex marriage, as a key reason.

A 2024 Pew Research study found

that a majority of U.S. Catholics believe women should be allowed to become priests (64%) and that the church should recognize the marriages of gay couples (54%).

“The Catholic Church is so behind times right now, and it already is so problematic that any, like, minuscule step forward I’ll take at this point,” Mitrano said. “Hopefully, eventually they’ll be more accepting of everybody else.”

**Someone who can understand the ‘complexities’ of the moment**

Not all Catholics who said they revered Francis told the USA TODAY Network they wanted his successor to work toward more progressive changes in the church.

Paulette Harrigal, 79, learned of the pope’s death at a church service in Westerville, Ohio, northwest of Columbus. She called the pope “a blessing.”

“I’m going to start praying for all the cardinals to make the right selection,” Harrigal said, adding that she would like them to select someone who is “very pro-life” and opposes revisiting church teachings on abortion.

Though he bucked some trends, Francis remained committed to church stances on abortion, calling it “homicide.” But he did write in 2016 to forgive people for what the church viewed as the sin of abortion.

The 2024 Pew Research survey found that a majority (59%) of people who opposed social reforms in the church attended Mass at least once a week. In contrast, a majority (56%) of people in favor of changes to church policies said they seldom, if ever, attended church.

Wil Tyrrell, a Franciscan friar who left the order in 2019 and now teaches religion at a private Catholic high school in New Orleans, said no matter who the next pope is, he will need to be able to guide the church’s different factions through confusing times.

“I think they need a moderate who can understand the complexity of the times,” Tyrrell said. “In the age of social

media, there is true and false and the difficulty is discerning which is which.”

Others who spoke to the USA TODAY Network were quick to point out areas where they believe Francis fell short – and where they hope a new pope can do better.

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), an advocacy group for survivors of church sexual abuse, urged the church to ensure that the next pope has never been connected to covering up sexual abuse, whether it be in individual churches or more broadly. It also demanded that the next pope institute a “zero tolerance law for sexual abuse.”

Francis’ papacy was marked by his struggle to restore credibility to a church rattled to its core by clergy sexual abuse scandals, even though the overwhelming part of the crimes took place before his election.

He took steps to address the scandals, including creating a Vatican summit on child protection. He created a rule requiring clergy to report sexual abuse to the church but made no police reporting requirement.

SNAP argues that those rules don’t go far enough.

“A month from today, we don’t want any other survivor to wake up and realize that someone who chose to protect their abuser is the next leader of the Catholic Church,” said Sarah Pearson, the organization’s spokesperson.

During a 2018 trip to Ireland – ground zero of the Catholic Church’s sex abuse crisis – Francis himself recognized failures among the church’s leaders.

“The failure of ecclesiastical authorities – bishops, religious superiors, priests and others – to adequately address these repugnant crimes has rightly given rise to outrage, and remains a source of pain and shame for the Catholic community,” he said in a speech to Irish government authorities. “I myself share these sentiments.”

*Contributing: Eduardo Cuevas, Julia Gomez, Jeanine Santucci, Doug Stanglin and Phaedra Trethan, USA TODAY; Reuters*



A picture of Pope Francis stands during Mass at the Virgen de Caacupe chapel in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on April 21. MATIAS BAGLIETTO/REUTERS

## Pope not always from nations with biggest Catholic numbers

**Ignacio Calderon and Suhail Bhat**  
USA TODAY

In the nearly 2,000-year history of the Catholic Church, most popes have come from Europe, even though there are countries in South and Central America, Asia and Africa with significant Catholic populations. Mapping the world’s Catholic population reveals that some countries – with Catholic communities larger than those in many European nations – have yet to see a pope from their ranks.

There have been 266 popes throughout history, of whom 4 in 5 were from Italy. A handful of popes came from North Africa and the Middle East, but they were elected in the early centuries of the church, during the time of the Roman and Byzantine empires.

“To have leadership that comes from around the world, we get to see depth of understanding of Catholic teachings,” said Neomi De Anda, a professor at the University of Dayton who studies Catholicism among Latin Americans.

“Not to say that it’s different around the world, but gives it a little bit of flavor, nuance and specificity that can sometimes help us see more deeply the teachings of the church.”

Pope Francis, who died April 21, a day after Easter, was the first from Latin America, a region where several countries have a Catholic supermajority. His birthplace, Argentina, is nearly two-thirds Catholic, home to more than 30 million Catholics.

But a review of Catholic populations by country shows that Brazil, Mexico and Colombia all have strong Catholic communities: 140 million, 101 million

and 38 million, respectively. Brazil’s Catholic population is larger than the combined Catholic populations of Italy, France and Spain.

In Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has the largest Catholic populations on the continent. In Asia, the Philippines stands out, with more than 85 million Catholics, or nearly 80% of the population, which makes it the third-largest Catholic population in the world after Brazil and Mexico. The United States is fourth on the list.

The Philippines, however, might be closer than ever this time. Cardinal Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle, 67, from Manila, is widely considered one of the leading candidates to succeed Francis.

All told, the other top candidates who could be elevated to the zenith of the Catholic Church are four Italians, one Spanish, one French, one Ghanaian and one Maltese.

De Anda said that while there is a “radical difference” between the primarily European leadership of the Catholic Church and its membership, Francis was a bridge between the two because of his Argentinian roots and Italian heritage. Having Francis – someone who shared cultural background with many Catholics – at the helm was a powerful way to show people they were being cared for, she added.

“The biggest impact is having someone who speaks a language – and not just an oral language or a spoken language but a cultural language – that we find among many Latin Americans,” De Anda said.

## Pope Francis to lie in state at St. Peter’s before April 26 funeral

**Thao Nguyen and John Bacon**  
USA TODAY

Pope Francis’ funeral will take place April 26 at 10 a.m. local time in St. Peter’s Square, the Vatican announced.

Francis, 88, died April 21 of a stroke and irreversible heart failure, the Vatican said, ending a 12-year reign marked by his legacy of reform and repeated clashes with world leaders over immigration and economic issues. He was the 266th occupant of the papacy, which dates back to the Apostle Peter.

The Vatican released photographs of Francis, dressed in his vestments and holding a rosary, lying in the chapel of the Santa Marta residence, where he lived during his papacy. Francis had requested a “simple wooden coffin.” The casket was open and lined with red cloth. Swiss Guards stood sentry nearby.

Just hours before Francis’ death, he had dazzled an Easter Sunday crowd in the square by blessing them from a balcony and then rolling among them in his popemobile to raucous cheers. He was hesitant about the popemobile trip and asked Massimiliano Strappetti, his personal health care assistant, “Do you think I can manage it?”

Strappetti told the Vatican News that Francis rested in the afternoon, had dinner and went to bed in his second-floor apartment at the Casa Santa Marta. At about 5:30 a.m. the first signs of illness appeared, and about an hour later, after a gesture of farewell, Francis fell into a coma. His time of death was recorded as 7:35 a.m.

The pontiff’s final words included “thank you for bringing me back to the square,” Strappetti said.

### Cardinals gather to plan

The death of a pope sets in motion a series of ancient rituals and rites that transition from one papacy to the next.

About 60 members of the Catholic hierarchy gathered April 22 in Vatican City for the General Congregation of the College of Cardinals, marking the beginning of a period of prayer, reflection and preparation for the funeral. The cardinals will gather in St. Peter’s Basilica for a Mass “invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in electing a

new pope,” according to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

They also are expected to review the day-to-day running of the church in the period before a new head is elected. Cardinal Kevin Farrell has been named cardinal camerlengo, the acting head of the church.

On April 23, Farrell will preside over the “rite of translation,” which begins at 9 a.m. local time with a moment of prayer. A procession will start at Santa Marta and pass through Santa Marta Square and the Square of the Roman Protomartyrs before reaching St. Peter’s Square and entering the Vatican Basilica.

There, at the Altar of the Confession, Farrell will preside over the Liturgy of the Word, part of a Mass, followed by a public visitation during which mourners will pay their respects.

On April 26, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, will preside over the funeral Mass, which will be celebrated by patriarchs, cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests from around the world, the Vatican said.

Francis’ body will be taken into St. Peter’s Basilica and then to Rome’s Basilica of St. Mary Major for entombment. In his will, the pontiff broke from tradition and asked for a “simple” tomb there instead of at the more common location of St. Peter’s Basilica, where many of his predecessors were laid to rest.

As tributes poured in, some world leaders confirmed they will attend the funeral, including President Donald Trump, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, and Javier Milei, president of Francis’ Argentina.

A conclave to choose a new pope usually takes place 15 to 20 days after the death of a pontiff, meaning it should not start before May 6. As of April 21, there were 252 cardinals, of whom 135 are electors, according to the Vatican. Cardinals over 80 are excluded from voting.

Francis’ death delayed the canonization of the world’s first millennial saint. The canonization service for Carlo Acutis, a British-born Italian who died of leukemia in 2006 at age 15, had been scheduled for April 27.

*Contributing: Christopher Cann and Karissa Waddick, USA TODAY; Reuters*



# Lawmaker demands answers on gay stylist

## Venezuelan asylum seeker was deported

Nick Penzenstadler  
USA TODAY

U.S. Rep. Robert Garcia wants answers from a private detention center contractor and the federal officials who handled the deportation of a 31-year-old gay Venezuelan asylum seeker featured in a USA TODAY story earlier in April.

Garcia, D-California, sent two formal oversight letters April 17 to the heads of CoreCivic, the contractor, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

As part of Garcia’s letter, he cited the investigative report that revealed a former Milwaukee police officer with credibility questions worked for CoreCivic. According to a court filing, Charles Cross Jr. was involved in the process to flag the Venezuelan as a suspected member of the notorious Tren de Aragua gang based on his tattoos.

By May 1, Garcia wants answers to his “grave concerns” regarding Andry José Hernandez, the makeup artist. He issued six questions aimed at understanding CoreCivic’s hiring, screening and training practices and whether the



Rep. Robert Garcia, D-Calif., has “grave concerns” about Andry José Hernandez’s deportation. PROVIDED BY IMMIGRANT DEFENDERS LAW CENTER

company works with ICE on gang determinations.

Hernandez was one of more than 200 Venezuelan migrants sent to El Salvador’s Terrorism Confinement Center on March 15. His attorneys have said Hernandez’s crown tattoos labeled “Mom” and “Dad” are common cultural symbols in his hometown of Capacho, Venezuela, associated with Three Kings Day cel-

ebrations.

While in detention at CoreCivic’s Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego, Hernandez was screened by Cross and another staffer, Arturo Torres. The results of that screening are documented on a CoreCivic questionnaire now part of a federal court record.

It’s unclear to what extent Hernandez was evaluated by federal agents or whether other corroborating evidence was used to accuse him of ties to the criminal group. Hernandez fled Venezuela last year because he claimed he was persecuted as a gay man – one of the protected groups allowed to claim asylum under U.S. law.

He passed a “credible fear” interview with a federal agent, but after Border Patrol officials questioned him about his tattoos he was transferred to ICE custody and sent to the detention center.

A CoreCivic spokesperson confirmed it received Garcia’s letter and planned to respond. CoreCivic insists that it does not enforce immigration laws and that any deportation orders are made by ICE.

Ryan Gustin, a spokesperson for the Nashville company, told USA TODAY it provides specialized training for employees who all must “clear a rigorous, federal background clearance process.”

Gustin said it screens all detainees for affiliation with gangs and other threat groups as a precaution but does not do those on behalf of ICE.

An ICE spokesperson said April 21 that it would respond to the letter “through official channels and by appropriate officials at the agency.” The Department of Homeland Security has declined to offer details on the Hernandez case but has said the department uses more than just tattoos to determine gang allegiance.

Cross, 62, was fired from his position as a Milwaukee police sergeant in 2012 after driving his car into a family’s home while intoxicated. He appealed the decision and resigned in the process, according to the department.

A misdemeanor criminal charge from 2007 landed him on the city’s Brady List, which prosecutors use to identify police who have been accused of lying, breaking the law or acting in a way that erodes their credibility to testify in court, according to Milwaukee County District Attorney records.

On April 21, Garcia and three other Democratic lawmakers traveled to El Salvador to get information on the detainees transferred to the country and advocate for their release.

# Harvard sues over attacks on school funding

Aysha Bagchi  
USA TODAY

Harvard University has sued the Trump administration, accusing it of unlawfully threatening the school’s “academic independence” and “path-breaking research.”

The lawsuit comes after the Trump administration announced it was freezing \$2.2 billion in funding to the school, which resisted demands to ban masks and diversity, equity and inclusion programs.

“This case involves the Government’s efforts to use the withholding of federal funding as leverage to gain control of academic decisionmaking at Harvard,” the university said in its lawsuit.

The White House and Justice Department didn’t immediately respond to requests for comment.

The lawsuit, filed April 21 in a Massachusetts federal court, says the government violated Harvard’s First Amendment right to free speech by freezing the \$2.2 billion and threatening additional cuts. Harvard can’t freely make decisions on faculty hiring, academic programs, and student admissions as a result of the threats, it said.

“In other words, the Government wielded the threat of withholding federal funds in an attempt to coerce Harvard to conform with the Government’s preferred mix of viewpoints and ideologies,” the lawsuit says.

In an April 11 letter to Harvard, Trump administration officials listed demands to meet if the university wanted to avoid funding cuts, including commissioning a government-approved auditor to ensure every university department, field and teaching unit is “individually viewpoint diverse.”

Trump officials also demanded the university stop any preferential hiring or admissions treatment on the basis of race, sex, religion or nationality.

And they said Harvard needed to hire a separate government-approved auditor to look into potential antisemitic harassment amid protests against Israeli military actions in Gaza after Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel.

In a statement accompanying the lawsuit, Harvard President Alan M. Garber said that there are “valid concerns about rising antisemitism” and that the university would soon be releasing reports on both anti-Israeli and anti-Palestinian bias.



Demonstrators rally in Cambridge, Mass., calling on Harvard to resist federal government interference, on April 12. NICHOLAS PFOSI/REUTERS



Alonso Magallanes talks with a customer in April at Tienda Mexicana in Des Moines. The store is among those that depend on imports for inventory and could be dramatically affected by tariffs. LILY SMITH/USA TODAY NETWORK

## Tariffs

Continued from Page 1A

would have hit Asian countries particularly hard, including Vietnam (46%), Thailand (36%), Cambodia (49%), South Korea (25%) and Indonesia (32%).

In the meantime, grocers selling international foods are trying to gauge how much distributors will raise prices and whether they should buy in bulk – a risk especially for perishable foods.

“We’re very worried,” Ung said.

### Stores may have to substitute Chinese goods

In Pittsburgh, family-owned Lotus Food is weighing its options.

Half of what’s on the store’s shelves is imported from China, and with the escalating back-and-forth between the world’s two largest economies, some of those products – soy sauce and rice noodles, for example – may no longer be feasible to carry, said manager Joy Lu.

“Worst case, we don’t buy anything from China and we look for substitutes,” she said. “We’ll sell what we can from Thailand, Indonesia, Taiwan, Japan, Korea.”

Lu said most of the store’s suppliers have several weeks worth of inventory that isn’t affected by the tariffs. But after that, they’ll begin taking on the increased costs and raising prices in store. She expects it’ll hurt business as she and others have already seen customers spending less.

“Hopefully it’s short and China can negotiate, otherwise it’s going to be bad for everybody,” she said.

### Middle Eastern grocers brace for tariffs

It’s not only Asian grocery stores that are preparing for higher prices. At Halalco Halal Meat Groceries in Falls Church, Virginia, manager Awais Mohammed has been in constant con-

tact with vendors.

“We are asking them ‘Please, if you have to go up 10%, don’t do it right away,’” he said. “We want to give our customers time to balance their expenses.”

The market offers a wide range of food, from halal meat to pita bread, baklava, preserves and lentils. Most of the store’s items are imported from Turkey and Lebanon, both of which are subject to Trump’s universal 10% tariffs.

The uncertainty is also being felt at Hilal Groceries in Des Moines. Salah Salah, who owns the store with his parents, said his biggest challenge is figuring out what supplies to order and how much. Not even their vendors can help, he said.

“You call our big vendors, like: ‘Hey, what’s going on? Do I need to buy a lot of this stuff and store it?’ And they’re like, ‘We don’t know.’”

### The latest financial challenge for specialty food grocers

Before the tariffs, grocers and consumers were already contending with higher prices for basic items like eggs and beef.

In the past year, the price of food went up 2.5%, according to the U.S. consumer price index, which tracks inflation. In March the cost of meat, poultry, fish and eggs rose 1.3%, primarily fueled by the bird flu outbreaks that have forced farmers to destroy more than 10 million egg-laying hens across the country to prevent the spread of the disease.

Philavanh and Roza Katembo run Tanganyika Grocery Store, a shop specializing in African products in Des Moines. They said because of rising wholesale prices, they have had to raise theirs to break even or make a profit.

They previously sold 22-pound bags of corn flour, often used to make fufu, a starchy West African dish, for \$25. Now, they’re \$40. The price of cassava leaves at the store has doubled from \$5 to \$10.

At La Tienda Mexicana, one of Des Moines’ first Mexican grocery stores when it opened more than 30 years ago,

owner Alonso Magallanes says he has noticed a decline in customers over the past few months.

“I think people are trying to save the most money they can just in case something happens,” said Magallanes, standing behind the checkout counter.

He also suspects some of his customers are afraid of the Trump administration’s anti-immigration policies. Tattered signs taped to street lights near Magallanes’ small store read: “Don’t open for ICE,” referring to Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

### ‘We just have to hold tight’ despite 20% drop in revenue

It’s been a hard few months for Hung Phat Grocery.

Since January, the specialty shop has seen a 20% drop in revenue, which Ung credits to shoppers spending less and the mass layoffs of federal workers, a customer base he had long relied on. Tariffs, he said, are just the latest upheaval.

“We just have to hold tight,” Ung said. “I tell my employees, ‘We will make it through together.’”

Ung opened Hung Phat Grocery more than 30 years ago, after the success of a rice noodle kitchen he started with his brother across the street. Today, he runs the five-aisle store with his wife, his son and about three other employees who he said are like family.

That family also includes his customers, many of whom are immigrants reliant on Hung Phat Grocery for a taste of home and ingredients they can’t find at larger American supermarkets.

Because of this close bond, Ung said raising prices is a torment. He speaks with his customers on a daily basis, hears their concerns and knows many are operating on fixed budgets. While he’s absorbing what he can for now, prices will have to go up if nothing changes.

“I pray for negotiations,” he said. “This is making everybody crazy.”

*Christopher Cann reports for USA TODAY, and F. Amanda Tugade reports for the Des Moines Register.*



# Walmart gunman enters a guilty plea

23 people were killed in mass shooting in Texas

Christopher Cann and Aaron Martinez  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The gunman who killed 23 people in a racist attack at an El Paso Walmart in 2019 will spend the rest of his life in prison after pleading guilty to one of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history and the worst domestic terror attack on Hispanics the country has ever seen. Patrick Crusius, 26, entered a guilty plea to capital murder and 22 counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon on April 21. Wearing a bulletproof vest, he stared straight ahead as the El Paso County District Attorney James

Montoya read out the names of the nearly two dozen people killed in the massacre. District Court Judge Sam Medrano told the gunman that as he spends the rest of his life in prison, his name and hatred will be forgotten. “On Aug. 3, 2019, you traveled nine hours to a city that would have welcomed you with open arms, but you brought hate,” Medrano said. “Now, as you begin to spend your life in prison, know your mission failed. You didn’t make this community weaker, you made it stronger.” He will be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole as part of a deal that allowed him to avoid the death penalty. Montoya said last month that he was offering Crusius the deal in

an effort to bring the case to a close for the victims’ families. Crusius has already received 90 consecutive life sentences after pleading guilty to federal hate crimes and weapons charges in 2023. Federal prosecutors declined to pursue the death penalty. On the morning of the attack, the gunman, who drove nearly 700 miles from Allen, Texas, to El Paso, began shooting at shoppers in the Walmart parking lot. He continued into the store and shot nine people to death in a bank inside the store. He killed another nine people in the aisles of the supermarket. In total, he killed 23 people and injured dozens. He turned himself in to a Texas De-

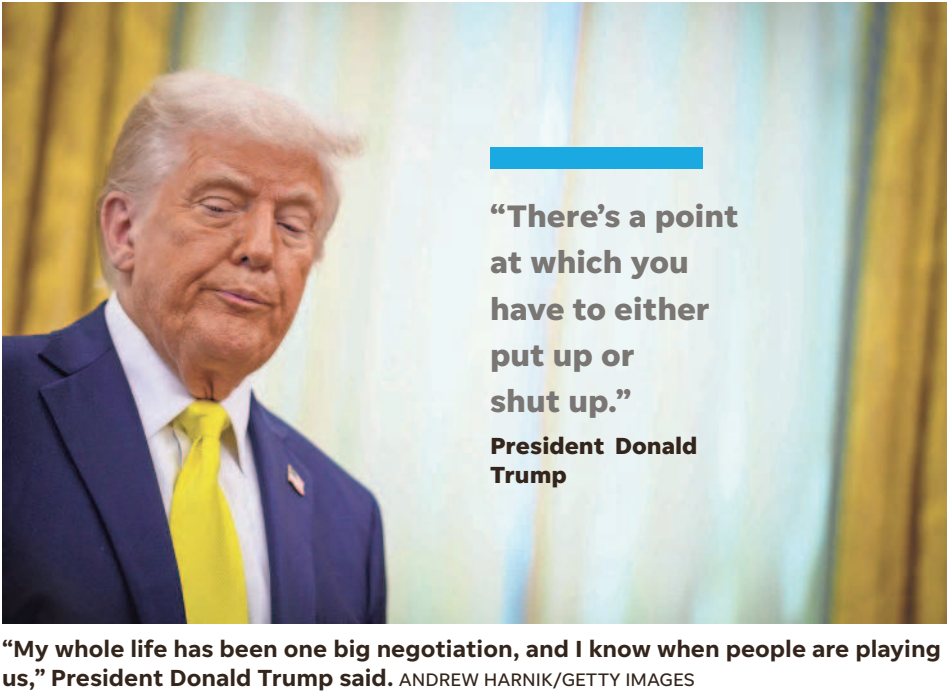
partment of Public Safety state trooper. He admitted to law enforcement that he carried out the attack to stop what he claimed was the invasion of Hispanics into the United States. U.S. and Mexican citizens were killed in the attack. Minutes before the shootings, he posted writings online in which “he characterized himself as a white nationalist, motivated to kill Hispanics because they were immigrating to the United States,” according to the Justice Department. “Crusius admitted to selecting El Paso, a border city, as his target to dissuade Mexican and other Hispanic immigrants from coming to the United States.” Christopher Cann reports for USA TODAY; Aaron Martinez reports for the Austin American-Statesman.

# Trump considers ending peace talks

He’s frustrated by pace of Russia-Ukraine dealings

Francesca Chambers  
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – With talks stalling, President Donald Trump is weighing whether to abandon his efforts to achieve a peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine. The president has grown increasingly frustrated as negotiations have dragged out and is nearing his limit, three sources familiar with the situation said. They spoke anonymously because they were not authorized to speak on the record. Trump famously promised during his White House campaign to end the war in one day. He then gave himself a longer timeline, saying in January that he expected a deal within six months. His special envoy to Ukraine set a goal of negotiating an agreement during the first 100 days of Trump’s term. But a month after Russian President Vladimir Putin effectively rejected a U.S.-proposed unconditional ceasefire, which Ukraine accepted, in favor of a narrow agreement on energy infrastructure, Trump has determined that a peace deal may not be possible and could instruct his administration to pull out of talks. “My whole life has been one big negotiation, and I know when people are playing us, and I know when they’re not, and I have to see an enthusiasm to want to end it,” Trump said Friday. “And I think I see that enthusiasm to want to end it. ... I think I see it from both sides.” The president had indicated, as he spoke to reporters on Air Force One, that his administration would not hold endless rounds of talks. “There’s a point at which you have to either put up or shut up,” Trump said April 12. And after a trip to Paris on April 18, where U.S. negotiators met with Europeans and representatives from Ukraine, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Trump was likely to move on within days if no real progress toward peace was made. “We’ve dedicated the – almost the entirety of the president’s first hundred days in office at the highest levels possible to trying to achieve a peace here,” Rubio said. “And if it’s going to happen, we want to help. But if it’s not going to happen, we need to know now because we have other things we have to deal with.” A White House official not authorized to speak on the record told USA TODAY that Trump’s domestic priorities would be a factor in the decision: The president is more likely to pull his team back if he feels the negotiations are getting in the way of his domestic policy agenda. In the Oval Office after Rubio’s remarks, Trump would not say whether he was prepared to walk away. But he affirmed Rubio’s comments and said that if “for some reason” one of the countries makes it very difficult, “we’re just going to say ‘You’re foolish, you’re fools, you’re horrible people, and we’re going to just take a pass.’” Former U.S. Ambassador to Poland Daniel Fried said it was not clear from Rubio’s remarks what moving on from peace talks would entail. “What does walk away mean? Walk away from Ukraine? Pull our support? Leave Ukraine to the mercy of the Russians?” said Fried, a fellow at the Atlantic Council. “Or does it mean walk away



from the talks and then decide to put more pressure on Putin and more military support for Ukraine? His language could be interpreted either way.” The administration also has not said publicly whether it would allow Ukraine to purchase weapons from the United States under such a scenario. Trump has threatened additional sanctions on Russia and secondary tariffs on its oil exports if Moscow refuses to engage in the peace process, but he has held off as Steve Witkoff, special envoy, has met privately with Putin. Retired U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Mark Montgomery, a former director for transnational threats at the National Security Council, said Russia has not been committed to the process because it has not felt enough pain from the United States. “There is a 0 degrees Kelvin chance that Putin is going to enter into a deal without a maximum level of pressure applied to him, whether it’s by sanctions, by increased military support, whatever,” Montgomery said. “Those are the kind of things that will move Vladimir Putin.” U.S. presents peace framework Ukraine accepted the temporary ceasefire proposal the United States put forward on March 11. The two sides then agreed in principle to a ceasefire on energy that was never fully implemented amid disputes over the terms. A halt in fighting in the Black Sea did not go forward after Russia said it wanted sanctions lifted on its some of its financial institutions to implement a maritime deal. With the prospects of a ceasefire dimming, the United States said it presented a framework peace agreement this week to Russia, Ukraine and Europe. The administration has not made the document public. In an interview that The Times of London published before the announcement, Trump special envoy to Ukraine Keith Kellogg suggested the country could “look like what happened with Berlin,” with British, French and other troops serving as a “reassurance force” in the western part of the country. Ukrainian troops could patrol an 18-mile demilitarized zone, he said, that would separate the western part of the country, which is under Ukraine’s control, from territory in the east now occupied by Russia. He said later on social media that he was discussing zones of responsibility for allied forces to patrol, without U.S. troops, after a ceasefire and was not referring to a partitioning Ukraine. Rubio told reporters as he left Paris that the blueprint the U.S. presented was broad and did not get into the specifics of potential security guarantees for Ukraine. Ukraine’s delegation, which included President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s top adviser, is taking the framework back to

Kyiv, he said. Rubio said he spoke to his Russian counterpart, foreign minister Sergey Lavrov, on the phone Thursday. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the negotiations “fairly complex” after Rubio’s remarks and said: “Russia is striving toward resolving this conflict, securing its own interests, and is open to dialogue. We are continuing to do this.”

Trump slammed Zelenskyy before the Paris talks for requesting air defense systems from the United States and suggested again that the Ukrainian leader had started the war, which began when Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022. “I’m not blaming him, but what I am saying is that I wouldn’t say he’s done the greatest job,” Trump said as he as met with Italy’s prime minister at the White House. “I’m not a big fan.” Trump told NBC he was “pissed off” at Putin at the end of March. He also told reporters he set a “psychological deadline” for Putin to agree to a ceasefire. As Witkoff prepared to meet with Putin in St. Petersburg, Trump said on social media April 11 that Russia had to “get moving” on negotiations to end the war. Brian Taylor, a professor at Syracuse University and author of “The Code of Putinism,” said the positions of Moscow and Kyiv are still “extremely far apart” as Russia fights to subjugate and control Ukraine. Leaders of Ukraine are pushing to maintain independence. He noted that in early April, Putin sent envoy Kirill Dmitriev to meet with Witkoff in Washington. “Putin isn’t really interested in a deal at this moment, but he is trying very hard to shift the blame for the lack of a deal onto Zelenskyy and Ukraine and also to entice Trump with this whole parallel line of discussions about the broader U.S.-Russia relationship.”



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An activist holds a “cancel student debt” sign as they rally in front of the White House in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 25, 2022. STEFANI REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

# Collection of defaulted student loans is set to restart on May 5

**Zachary Schermele**  
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – Since the COVID-19 pandemic, federal student loan borrowers have been mostly protected from the harshest consequences of not paying back their loans.

That’s about to change, and quickly. Linda McMahon, secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, said the federal government will resume involuntary collections for borrowers in default on May 5.

In two weeks, loan holders will start the process of taking money from the paychecks of borrowers who have missed their payments for 270 days or more. They’ll also start moving to collect from other federal payments, including tax refunds and Social Security benefits.

The change, which McMahon unveiled April 21 and has been expected for months, represents the last major cog in the wheel of the U.S. student loan repayment system to start spinning again since the pandemic.

Collections for defaulted borrowers – of which there are more than 5 million – have been paused since March 2020. Under President Joe Biden, monthly student loan bills resumed in the fall of 2023 after a yearslong break.

But collecting on loans, the harshest penalty for borrowers, still hadn’t restarted by the time President Donald Trump took office a second time. During the Biden administration, the Education Department pushed off recommencing involuntary collections until after the 2024 presidential election.

As court battles wage over the future of major repayment programs, much of the federal student loan system remains at a standstill. Just more than a third of borrowers (38%) are in repayment and current on their student loans, according to the Education Department. More

than 40 million Americans still owe on their federal student loans.

Roughly 2 million borrowers are in interest-free forbearance – meaning they don’t have to pay back their loans indefinitely – while the courts decide the legality of the Saving on a Valuable Education, or SAVE, plan. The Biden administration called the program, which bases monthly bills on borrowers’ incomes, the “most affordable repayment plan ever.”

On April 21, McMahon accused the Biden administration of misleading borrowers and said she would “shepherd the student loan program responsibly.”

“American taxpayers will no longer be forced to serve as collateral for irresponsible student loan policies,” she said in a statement.

Advocates for borrowers denounced the change. Mike Pierce, the executive director of the Student Borrower Protection Center, said federal law gives borrowers the right to make payments they can afford.

Yet many of the programs that make such affordability possible, he pointed out, have been paused by litigation or threatened since Trump took office.

“Since February, Donald Trump and Linda McMahon have blocked these borrowers’ path out of default and are now feeding them into the maw of the government debt collection machine,” he said. “This is cruel, unnecessary and will further fan the flames of economic chaos for working families across this country.”

All borrowers in default will be notified of their status by email over the next two weeks, Education Department officials said. The agency will urge borrowers in those emails to either pay their bills, enroll in an income-driven repayment plan, or sign up for loan rehabilitation or consolidation.

# Real ID

Continued from Page 1A

state’s ID centers in busy metro areas will stay open until 8 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays for the rest of the year for Real IDs, according to the Oklahoma.

In Pennsylvania, DMVs around the state are hosting “Real ID Days” on Mondays, when the locations are otherwise closed so they can see Real ID customers exclusively. Some of the locations can even process applications and issue the IDs at the time of service; at others, Pennsylvanians will submit their documents and wait for the ID to come in the mail. The next Real ID Day is April 28.

Illinois set up a Real ID-only walk-in “supercenter” in Chicago to handle the surging demand for appointments. Montgomery and Rensselaer counties in New York restricted their DMVs to county residents only to deal with the demand; locations are usually open to residents across the state, News 10 in Albany reported.

## Appointments are impossible to get in some places

People in New Jersey have become frustrated by a lack of available appointments at state Motor Vehicle Commission locations, according to NorthJersey.com, part of the USA TODAY Network. As the May 7 deadline approaches, appointments are nowhere to be found. On the afternoon of April 15, no Real ID appointments were available at locations statewide, the outlet reported.

The demand for Real IDs remains extraordinarily high, authorities in New Jersey said. About 3,500 new appointments for Real ID upgrades are added each morning on a rolling basis, said Jim Hooker, a spokesperson for the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

Every Thursday, for the “Real ID Thursday” program, about 4,600 appointments will be added as they roll over on the scheduler, Hooker said. Since the start of the program, Real ID Thursday has added more than 43,000 appointments.

“Why is it so difficult to get an appointment?” reads a banner on the Illinois secretary of state website. The answer: a rush on Real ID appointments. Because of the deadline, “our facilities and website have been overwhelmed with requests for Real IDs,” the site said. It urged people to check whether they need a Real ID right away or whether they can hold off until the surge passes.

Lines that wrap around blocks and hourslong waits have been reported at DMVs from Illinois to Tennessee to Pennsylvania, The Wall Street Journal reported.

In Florida, the tax collector’s office in Florida’s Miami-Dade County announced in March, weeks before the deadline, that it had uncovered a “network” of resellers booking hundreds of DMV appointments before turning them around to unsuspecting residents for a cost.

## How do you know if you have a Real ID? Look for the star

Real ID cards look slightly different depending on what state you’re in, but they all have some variation of the same star symbol stamped on the top portion of the card, usually in one of the corners.

The symbols are either a gold or black star shape, a gold or black circle with a star inside, or in the case of California, a bear with a star.

*Contributing: Karissa Waddick, USA TODAY; NorthJersey.com; USA TODAY Network-Florida; The Oklahoman; USA TODAY Network-New England; and the Victorville Daily Press*

# Manosphere

Continued from Page 1A

who decrease in value, or the idea that 80% of women are attracted to 20% of men – seemed to explain his bad luck.

In 2022, Samuels died from hypertension.

“I was in this nihilistic mindset at the time, nothing matters, life sucks, you kind of suffer, and then you die,” McKenzie says. “This 80/20 dogma was kind of like a confirmation bias of ‘the world’s not fair, and so you should kind of just give up.’”

McKenzie counts himself among a growing number of young men who were sucked into “the manosphere,” a digital collection of websites, videos and social media that promote male supremacy and advocate for traditional gender roles.

He found his way out. But for some young men, it’s not that simple.

Creators like Andrew Tate – a self-proclaimed “misogynist” charged with rape and human trafficking – and streamer Sneako, who once said “a woman’s worth is what she looks like and a man’s worth is your masculinity, is your respect,” provide a pipeline for men seeking advice about romantic rejection, physical self-esteem and economic insecurity to fall into radicalism and misogyny.

Some of those communities, like Pick up Artists, whose goals are to “pick up” women and seduce them, involve interaction with women, while incels, who consider themselves unable to find romantic or sexual intimacy, self-isolate from women and are aggressive toward their sexually active peers. Others who influence the manosphere range from fitness content creators whom people follow for bodybuilding advice, who share misogynistic comments, to influencers who focus on traditional gender roles.

## When sex equals success

When McKenzie started dating and having sex, he thought it would boost his self-esteem. Instead, he felt “unsure of himself.”

“At the time, I didn’t really see them (women) as people. I saw them as achievements to check off on a box that made me feel like a masculine dude, because I felt like I wasn’t really a man unless I was sexually successful,” McKenzie says.

Jonathan France was similarly frustrated with dating when he found YouTuber Wheat Waffles, who posts about “Looksmaxxing,” the process of maximizing one’s physical appearance through hygiene, fitness and style.

France, who is now 28, had spent \$500 on premium subscriptions on dating apps like Hinge and Tinder but often went weeks or months without a single match.

Joining communities on Reddit like r/IncelsWithoutHate, which was later banned, and the X account IncelsCo, whose pinned post reads that “modern women are the problem in dating,” solidified his belief that the only way to be in a relationship was to be attractive.

“That combination warmed my mentality to think: ‘OK, I’m just an unattractive guy. Women don’t like me because I’m unattractive, so then I need to dislike them because I’m unattractive,’” France says.

McKenzie and France never felt drawn to violence. But extreme fringes of the manosphere have orchestrated or praised violent attacks against women, a trend Netflix’s recent crime drama “Adolescence” highlighted by following the story of a 13-year-old boy who was radicalized by misogynistic culture online.

Those men in the manosphere who are most isolated from women and other men, like incels – a term for men who are involuntarily celibate – are more likely to take on extreme views or engage in violence, according to University of Wisconsin-Madison public affairs professor Mariel Barnes, whose research focuses on backlash to gender equality and the manosphere.

The man behind the 2014 Isla Vista killings, for instance, was a self-proclaimed incel who before the shooting published a manifesto and YouTube video announcing his “Day of Retribution” as a means of punishing women for their perceived lack of interest.

In March, it was found that a British man convicted of murdering his ex-girlfriend and two of her family members had searched for former kickboxer Andrew Tate’s podcasts in the 24 hours before the attack.

“If you are constantly consuming this content and you are isolated and women are responsible for the bad things that are happening to you, it’s very dehumanizing, right?” Barnes says. “You don’t see women as humans anymore, or as peers or as friends, and

that dehumanization gives you permission to treat them as less than human.”

France says he never intended for watching funny meme videos to turn into a media diet of anti-feminist content. But he was frustrated and angry, and as the YouTube algorithm kept pushing more videos, content he once would have considered extreme seemed more palatable.

“Wheat Waffles and Andrew Tate, I think all of those guys take advantage of that natural experience of not understanding women and warp it into hating women and seeing women as objects,” France says.

## An ‘industry’ of isolationism

The combination of technology and the natural insecurities that arise during teenage years creates a “perfect storm” for innocuous sports and health spaces to tune young men into radical content, says Gary Barker, president of Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice, an organization that advocates for healthy manhood.

“They’re going there with kind of innocent intentions, but without somebody else supporting them, that innocent intention can become a follower who drops their critical thinking,” Barker says.

Jesse Young, 30, who regularly engages with users looking for advice on r/incelexit, says he managed to avoid the pitfalls of the manosphere when he made female friends in college, which countered the beliefs he developed during a high school experience with minimal social interaction.

He doesn’t want to think about where he would have ended up without those friendships, and he believes it would be harder to avoid the manosphere now.

“It was just isolated people back then, whereas now it’s like a whole industry,” Young says.

Barnes says the manosphere started to coalesce online around 2008 and grew with the rise of blogging websites like Paul Elam’s “A Voice for Men” or Daryush Valizadeh’s “Return of Kings” site, which featured headlines like “When Her No Means Yes” and “The Intellectual Inferiority of Women.”

As short-form content platforms like TikTok, YouTube shorts and Instagram reels began offering monetization options for creators, the manosphere grew, including on streaming platforms like Twitch and chat boards like 4chan.

“The current version of the manosphere has become much more mainstream than it used to be,” Barnes says. “You don’t need to hide who you are anymore if you’re a raging misogynist.”

## Leaving the manosphere behind

When France’s brother died by suicide in the fall of 2019, he made a promise to himself to work on his mental health. He started therapy and anxiety medication, invested more time volunteering at his church and used hobbies like video games and Legos as outlets.

“I’ve had a lot more success after leaving the incel community behind and just realizing that your life isn’t really all that hopeless,” France says. “You realize, ‘I believed this for so long, how many years of my life did I lose?’”

Barker says spending time offline is an important part of deradicalization, but it’s not a case of “throwing the baby out with the bathwater” – there are meaningful connections that young men find in online support forums.

Both France and McKenzie joined online spaces to connect with others who have found their way out, such as Reddit forums r/ExRedPill and r/IncelExit.

It’s important for young men to develop a filter when scrolling online and think critically about the motives behind content creators who monetize from their advice, Barker says.

“If you’re feeling slightly ashamed of what you’re following online, that’s probably a good gut check that something there isn’t working,” Barker says.

McKenzie used weightlifting as a physical outlet, volunteered at his local food bank and served with AmeriCorps, a service program that gives people ages 18 to 26 volunteer opportunities around the country. He says putting his time and energy into helping others and learning valuable skills, like how to build houses, helped build confidence in his identity beyond his looks.

“I wish I would have known there’s other ways to be a great man, other than checking off the boxes of being rich, wealthy, attractive and having women’s favor,” McKenzie says.

Five years after his brother’s death, France says his mindset shift is just now paying off. Those leaving the manosphere shouldn’t expect the transformation to be immediate, he says.

“A lot of guys just aren’t willing to put that much time and effort in to get their mindset right because they just want instant results,” France says. “It doesn’t work like that. Mental health is always like a journey; it never really ends.”



OPINION

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How Pope Francis renewed my Catholic faith



**Elvia Díaz**  
The Arizona Republic  
USA TODAY NETWORK

My heart aches for a world without Pope Francis.  
His death on Monday at 88 was inevitable, yet it is still shocking and painful for Catholics everywhere.  
Francis was the first Latin American pontiff to lead the Vatican. His language and cultural affinity were important, of course, but that wasn't what touched my heart during his 12-year papacy.  
It was Pope Francis' unwavering devotion to the poor, the sick, the persecuted and the marginalized that gave me hope about humanity.  
He understood that those are the people around the world who need a voice, who need a helping hand, who need compassion.  
God knows we need a lot of that now more than ever.

My daughter asked why we went to Mass if I didn't believe in it

I had never heard of him until March 2013, when he was announced as the 266th pope.  
He replaced Pope Benedict XVI, whose resignation had stunned the universe but of whom I had no affinity.  
Immediately, Jorge Mario Bergoglio – who chose to be called Pope Francis after St. Francis of Assisi – captured my heart, my imagination and my hope for a more progressive church, or at least a church that listened to people's suffering over the usual politicking of the more than 2,000-year institution.  
I'm not the kind of Catholic who follows the Vatican's commands unquestioned. My daughter noticed as a teenager that I remained silent during our weekly Mass when the priest would pray for the end of contraception or other stances on which I disagreed.  
At some point, my daughter, who was attending Catholic school then, asked me why we went to Mass if I didn't believe in it.  
I'm not sure she bought my explanation. My faith, I told her, wasn't based on



Pope Francis meets with Vice President JD Vance on Easter Sunday at the Vatican. The 266th pontiff died Monday at the age of 88. DIVISIONE PRODUZIONE FOTOGRAFICA VIA REUTERS

the church itself.  
The Vatican is the institution that manages the faith and has historically done a terrible job by excluding women to the priesthood and often ignoring people's realities and suffering.  
Sunday Mass still gave me the spiritual connection I craved. The music, the smell of incense and the prayer sent me into a trance that's hard to describe to nonbelievers.  
Even so, some of the words uttered by the priest at the altar didn't resonate with my core beliefs.  
Something profound happened with Pope Francis.  
He exuded humility and compassion and committed himself to reforming the church to be inclusive instead of promoting the exclusion of people.  
He understood that times change but

that humanity doesn't – or shouldn't, anyway.  
A lot has been written about his progressive bent, including his outreach to LGBTQ+ Catholics, his defense of immigrants and his fight for the poor. Progressives, meanwhile, weren't entirely happy because they felt he should have done a lot more.  
But no other world leader has the kind of power over people's souls – Catholic or not – that he had.  
**Will U.S. vice president's audience with the pope change anything?**  
There's a reason why the most powerful men and women in the world made the pilgrimage to the Vatican to get an audience with him.  
Circumstantially, among the last in-

dividuals to the get an official audience with Pope Francis on Easter Sunday – a day before his death – was U.S. Vice President JD Vance.  
The Trump administration had waved off the pope's concerns over its legally questionable deportation plans. Will Vance have a change of heart now that he was one of the last world leaders to see Pope Francis?  
I won't hold my breath on the vice president.  
But I hope we can build on Pope Francis' moral compass and renew our faith in humanity.  
*Elvia Díaz is editorial page editor for The Arizona Republic and azcentral, where this column originally appeared. Email [elvia.diaz@arizonarepublic.com](mailto:elvia.diaz@arizonarepublic.com) or follow her on X, (formerly Twitter): @elviadiazl*

Pope Francis led church toward inclusion. Will progress die?



**Frank Cerabino**  
Palm Beach Post  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Although I've spent most of my life as a lapsed Catholic, and have generally regarded the mother church as a corrupt institution, the selection of Pope Francis was, to me, a bit of a miracle.  
Pope Francis, who died on Easter Monday at 88, seemed to embody not the church that existed but the church that wayward Catholics like me could admire. That was no small feat. Big institutions tend to be calcified and moribund – frozen against course corrections and impervious to self-reflection.  
Yet in March 2013, after five rounds of voting over the course of two days, a papal conclave bestowed its blessings upon a radical Jesuit cardinal from Buenos Aires, a humble man named Jorge Mario Bergoglio. Cardinal Bergoglio took the papal name "Francis" after the 13th century nobleman St. Francis of Assisi, who shunned the material wealth of his family to live in a hovel among the lepers and the poor.

Pope embodied humility, right down to his burial request

Pope Francis practiced humility throughout his leadership  
The newly elected Pope Francis wasted no time in living up to his name. He turned down the opulent lodging reserved for him in the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican to live instead at a guest house there.  
And when he first appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, he wore a simple white cassock rather than the jewel-encrusted bright colored vestments worn by previous popes.



The newly elected Pope Francis, a Jesuit cardinal from Buenos Aires, appears at the balcony of St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 13, 2013. VINCENTO PINTO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

**In March 2013, after five rounds of voting over the course of two days, a papal conclave bestowed its blessings upon a radical Jesuit cardinal from Buenos Aires, a humble man named Jorge Mario Bergoglio.**  
Meeting with church leaders, he symbolically stood in front of them rather than perching himself above them on his ornate throne.  
In the following 12 years, Pope Francis continued to embody that simple humility right down to one of his final requests – to be buried in a simple wooden coffin beyond the walls of the Vatican.  
Along the way, he preached tolerance for others, sometimes to the point of breaking with church orthodoxy and surprising his own followers.

When asked by reporters about the church's position on homosexuality as a sin, Pope Francis said: "If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has goodwill, who am I to judge? We shouldn't marginalize people for this. They must be integrated into society."  
He broke tradition in the church by going outside the Vatican to wash the feet of prisoners, women and the disabled as an Easter ritual.  
Although the pontiff ailed to admit women into the priesthood, he spoke about expanding the roles of women in the church.  
"A society that is not capable of (allowing women to have greater roles) does not move forward," Pope Francis told reporters three years ago. "I have noticed that every time a woman is given a position (of responsibility) in the Vatican, things improve."  
The pontiff was an environmentalist

who warned about the dangers posed by climate change in an encyclical that he authored.  
His advice on the waves of immigrants showing up at the U.S. southern border was to welcome them.  
"For an immigration policy to be good," Pope Francis said, "it must have four things: for the migrant to be received, assisted, promoted and integrated. This is what is most important, to integrate them into the new life."

Who will be the next pope?

The pontiff was an unapologetic socialist who opined in a magazine article that Jesus was closer to a communist than a capitalist.  
"If I see the Gospel in a sociological way only, yes, I am a communist, and so too is Jesus. Behind these Beatitudes and Matthew 25 there is a message that is Jesus' own. And that is to be Christian," Pope Francis said.  
"The communists stole some of our Christian values," he added.  
I suspect that in the coming days, the secretive conclave of cardinals at the Vatican will pick a new pope who will serve as a kind of course correction from Pope Francis.  
The church, I'm guessing, will swing back into its pre-Francis state.  
And that will be too bad.  
*Frank Cerabino is a news columnist with The Palm Beach Post, where this column originally appeared. He can be reached at [FCerabino@pbpost.com](mailto:FCerabino@pbpost.com)*

CORRECTION AND CLARIFICATION

A Friday opinion column misstated Gold Glover Curt Flood's position.





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MONEYLINE



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CAPITAL ONE AND DISCOVER MERGER IS APPROVED

U.S. banking regulators said on Friday they approved Capital One's \$35.3 billion purchase of Discover Financial Services, paving the way for the combined firms to become the nation's eighth-largest bank. The deal has been closely watched by financial executives, who see it as a litmus test for how quickly the Trump administration will approve mergers in a sector they see as ripe for consolidation. The Federal Reserve and Office of the Comptroller of the Currency said they approved a deal set to create the biggest U.S. credit card issuer by balances, and give Capital One control of Discover's card payment network.

VOLVO TO LAY OFF 800 AT THREE U.S. FACILITIES

Volvo Group plans to lay off as many as 800 workers at three U.S. facilities over the next three months due to market uncertainty and demand concerns in the face of President Donald Trump's tariffs, a spokesperson said on Friday. Volvo Group North America said it has told employees it plans to lay off 550-800 people at its Mack Trucks site in Macungie, Pennsylvania, and two Volvo Group facilities in Dublin, Virginia, and Hagerstown, Maryland. The company employs nearly 20,000 people in North America, according to its website.

FORD HAS HALTED SOME SHIPMENTS TO CHINA

Ford Motor Co. has stopped shipping several expensive trucks and sports cars made in Michigan and Kentucky to China as tariffs have shot up. The move was confirmed April 18 to the Detroit Free Press by two people familiar with the situation. The people, who asked to not be named because they are not authorized to share the information publicly, said the vehicles Ford has stopped shipping to China this week are: F-150 Raptor pickups, Mustang sports cars and Bronco SUVs built in Michigan, as well as Lincoln Navigators made in Kentucky. Trump has set tariffs on China that now exceed 145%. In reaction, China has pushed tariffs on imported vehicles as high as 150%, sources said. Ford spokeswoman Jess Enoch declined to comment on specific changes but in an email to the Detroit Free Press said, "We have adjusted exports from the U.S. to China in light of the current tariffs." Enoch told the Free Press that Ford still ships the Lincoln Nautilus, which is made in China, to the U.S.

KIDS CAN EAT FREE AT DISNEY WORLD NEXT YEAR

Kids can get free dining at Walt Disney World next year. Guests who buy Disney Dining Plans for the adults in their party will get free Disney Dining Plans for kids in the same group. Only children 3 to 9 are considered kids at Disney World and other theme parks. The plans are available only to guests at Disney's owned and operated hotels and must be purchased for everyone in the same party.



GARRET ROBERTS/USA TODAY NETWORK

Many in the U.S. aren't getting the most out of their savings

Daniel de Visé  
USA TODAY

The savings habits of many Americans give new meaning to the term "idle cash."

More than half of American savers are earning less than 3% interest on their accounts, according to a new survey from Vanguard. One quarter of consumers earn less than 1%.

Those interest rates matter, because of the frustrating math of inflation. Consumer prices rose 2.8% in the 12 months through February, and many observers expect higher inflation in the months ahead.

If your savings are earning less than 2.8%, and you adjust their value for inflation, you are probably losing money.

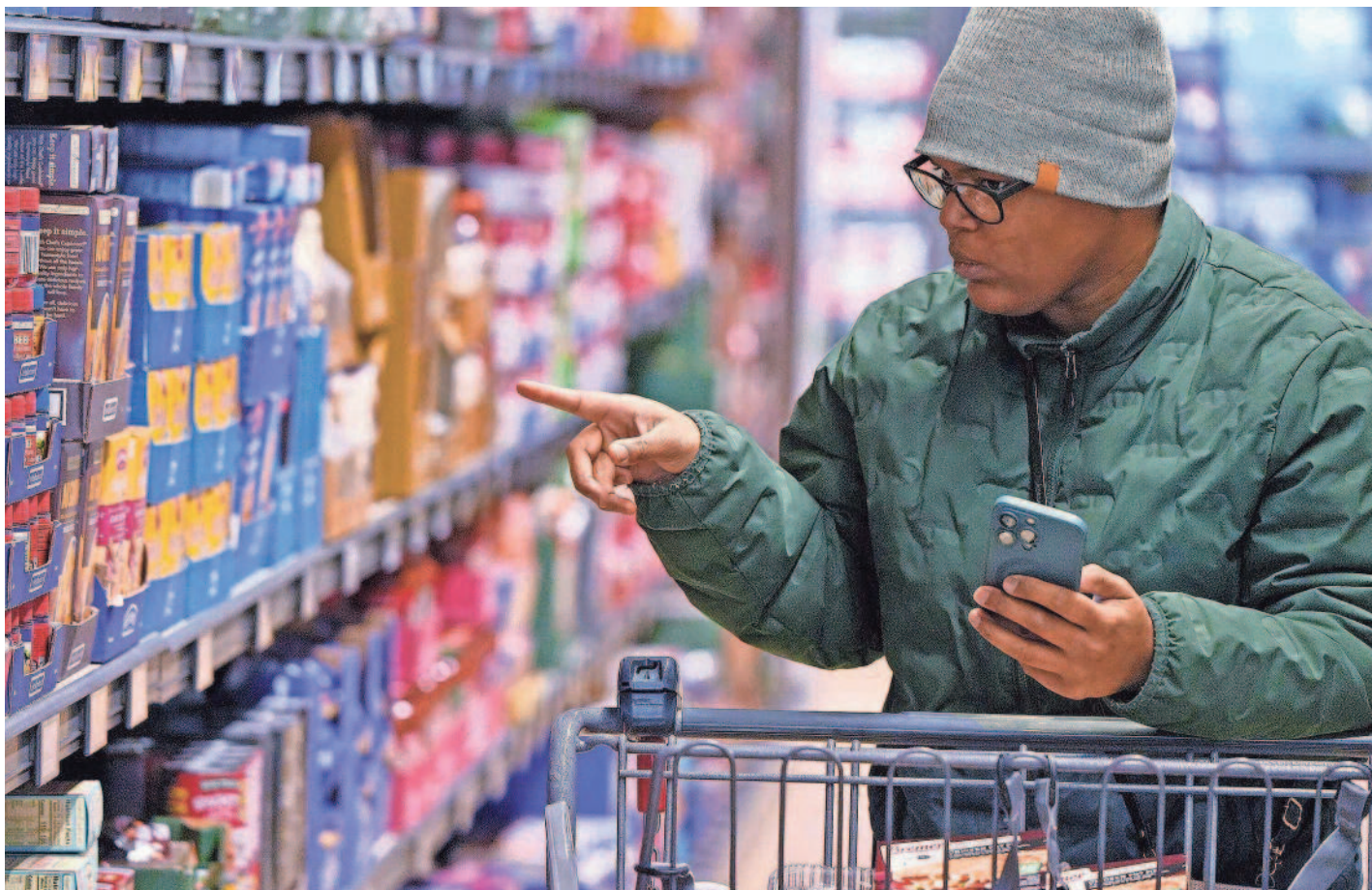
"In an inflationary environment, it is a sinful action not to get a strong return

on your cash," said Odysseas Papadimitriou, CEO of WalletHub, the personal finance site.

Savers struggle to keep up with inflation

Let's say you park \$1,000 in a savings account at an interest rate of 0.61%,

See SAVINGS, Page 2B



Jontayesha Brown searches through her choices as she grocery shops at the Aldi on Romig Road in Akron, Ohio, on Jan. 10. Trade disputes are a growing concern for consumers, a recent survey said MIKE CARDEW/USA TODAY NETWORK

Consumers' thinking mirrors COVID days

Tariffs turn many to wait-and-see view on spending

Betty Lin-Fisher  
USA TODAY

Tariffs – and uncertainty surrounding them and how prices will be affected – could spell the end of the "resilient consumer" as Americans are stressing more over rising costs and increasingly have a "wait and see" stance about spending, a new survey reports.

The study, by the Kearney Consumer Institute, found that consumers are wary of spending.

"What we're seeing, despite broad uncertainty, is a relatively steady level of stress, year over year, in North America," Katie Thomas, who leads the institute, an internal think tank at the global strategy and management consulting firm, said in a news release. "Even as consumers move from optimizing to sacrificing, they're maintain-

ing a 'wait-and-see' stance about spending."

The sentiment is similar to feelings during the pandemic, Thomas said.

The institute conducts a Consumer Stress Index quarterly. The survey provides insights into how consumers are feeling through questions it asks 2,000 U.S. consumers in a variety of income and demographic sectors.

Consumers show 'frustration'

Comparing year over year data from previous index surveys, shoppers are showing wariness, Thomas said in the news release.

"Given the consumer's feeling of total uncertainty about what's going to happen day-to-day, there's a lingering unease similar to 2020-2021," she said,

See STRESS, Page 2B

"Tariffs could be the end of true resilience of the consumer – all their savvy, thoughtfulness and optionality is no longer feasible in the face of making bigger cuts to their spend."

Katie Thomas  
Kearney Consumer Institute

Will tariffs still be a thing in 2028?

Uncertainty could linger for next several years

Daniel de Visé  
USA TODAY

It's hard enough to track President Trump's tariffs from one day to the next. Imagine trying to predict where import taxes will stand in 2028.

And yet, that's exactly what we asked four experts to do.

Trump has enacted a flurry of tariffs in the early days of his administration. Tax rates now range from zero (on certain exempted products, such as duty-free items from Canada and Mexico) to more than 100% (on many imports from China, among other



Container ships are seen docked at Kwai Chung Container terminal in Hong Kong on April 2. Donald Trump's wave of tariffs are stoking uncertainty on trading floors and global markets. PETER PARKS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

See TARIFFS, Page 2B



# Stress

Continued from Page 1B

the years of the COVID-19 pandemic. “Whether it’s defensive stocking up on eggs or wondering whether to buy that new iPhone, across the country and all sectors, we’re seeing a huge expression of confusion and frustration.”

People are questioning whether and what they should buy, Thomas said. “Tariffs could be the end of true resilience of the consumer – all their savvy, thoughtfulness and optionality is no longer feasible in the face of making bigger cuts to their spend.”

## Tariffs are concerning consumers

Trade disputes are a significant and growing concern for consumers, the Kearney survey said. In the poll completed in the third quarter of 2024, 36% of consumers were concerned about trade disputes affecting them personally. By the first quarter of 2025, the most recent survey, that number had surged to 54%. The survey was completed before the April tariffs were announced, Thomas said.

Consumers have been optimizing their spending for years, Thomas said, by making smart decisions to have the ability to still spend, particularly on discretionary items. “Tariff price increases could mean consumers hit a breaking point, and more will have to start eliminating products or categories altogether,” she said.

Consumers will always be stressed about something, however, Thomas said, and other areas of spending could benefit as consumers make different choices.

“Right now, they’re less stressed about the quality and sustainability of their food than they were at this time last year,” she said. “Even as they tighten their wallets, there will still be consumers who make stress purchases or go in for retail therapy. This may be good news for resale platforms such as thrift stores and used car marketplaces, which allow consumers to spend less without sacrificing quality.”

## Second report also says consumers are stressed

An unrelated index to the Kearney survey also shows some consumers are taking a defensive mode to spending.

U.S. middle-income consumers are adopting a defensive posture, according to the April Consumer Health Index from Bain & Company/Dynata, partly because of worries about the fate of the housing market. The outlook gauge of a middle-income group of consumers surveyed fell slightly, by 0.2 points, to a long-term neutral level, “in part reflecting the perceptions of financial health for the group are much more geared to the housing market and the price of houses which typically form their main assets, rather than by equity markets,” the company said in a news release.

The report also notes that saving intentions for middle-income Americans jumped by 2.4 points in April, while their intent to use debt fell 2.5 points.

“Middle-income earners are clearly adopting a defensive crouch,” said Brian Stobie, senior director in Bain & Company’s Macro Trends Group. “They are increasingly saving and scaling back intentions to use debt to levels below the long-term norms.”

Lower-income consumers showed the fewest signs of concern, the Bain/Dynata analysis found. The April outlook readings for the demographic continued a six-month uptrend, reflecting continued relative strength in the jobs

market. But the report cautioned that the positive results could change if economic volatility leads to a deterioration of the jobs market.

The index also showed the outlook scores for upper-income American consumers plunged by 11.8 points to 88.6. That was the sharpest drop except for that seen at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The drop reflects the impact of recent stock market upheavals on the demographic’s investment portfolios, which make up the large portion of the group’s overall wealth, the analysis found.

“With upper-income U.S. consumers representing more than half of discretionary consumer spending, the CHI report warns that if the equity market disruptions and the negative outlook for well-off Americans persist, their spending intentions would very likely be hit, dealing a significant blow to growth prospects for the U.S. economy,” the company said.

Report data also showed upper-income consumers spending intentions rose significantly by 2.1 points, but the analysis concluded that was because shoppers were spending to “front-run” tariffs by making purchases early, before prices rise.

# Savings

Continued from Page 1B

which is the current national average, according to Bankrate.

Over the next year, at that interest rate, your savings will grow to \$1,006. Consumer prices will almost certainly grow faster. At 3% inflation, an item that costs \$1,000 now will cost \$1,030 a year from now.

To keep pace with inflation, a saver must earn interest that matches or beats it. But many savers aren’t doing that, and the Vanguard survey is only the latest reminder.

The Vanguard analysis, published in March, found that 57% of consumers were earning less than 3% interest on their savings, while 24% were earning less than 1%. The survey reached a representative sample of 1,011 adults.

A previous survey, published in 2024 by Bankrate, found that two-thirds of savers were earning less than 4% interest.

Surveys by Santander Bank have found that only about one consumer in five is taking advantage of high-yield savings accounts. “We find that high-yield savings is used mostly by high-income customers,” said Swati Bhatia, head of retail banking and transformation at Santander.

## The average savings account pays about 0.5% interest

Across the banking industry, the overall average interest rate on a savings

account has hovered around 0.5%, according to Bankrate, the FDIC and other sources.

But many online banks offer savings accounts with interest rates of 3.5% to 4% or higher. Those rates have become standard on high-yield savings in the past few years, in response to the Federal Reserve’s dramatic campaign of interest rate hikes to curb inflation.

Online banks can offer some of the highest interest rates in the industry because they have lower overhead costs than big brick-and-mortar banks, industry experts say. “These accounts are literally within reach of anyone,” said Greg McBride, chief financial analyst for personal finance at Bankrate. “There’s over 4,000 banks in the country. You haven’t heard of them all.”

Openbank by Santander, a new digital bank, offers a high-yield savings account with 4.4% interest. Openbank has attracted \$3 billion in deposits in less than four months. Opening an account takes “five minutes, at most,” Bhatia said.

## Americans have been slow to embrace high-yield savings

Yet, surveys routinely show that American consumers have been slow to embrace high-yield savings. One reason is simple complacency.

“Many people keep their cash in traditional bank savings accounts, which often offer minimal interest rates, because they’re used to it. It’s what they’ve always done,” said Matt Benchener, managing director of Vanguard’s Personal Investor business.

Another reason: Savers aren’t used to high interest rates on bank accounts.

The Fed kept interest rates low for long stretches of the 2000s and 2010s, responding to the Great Recession and other economic shocks. Inflation was a non-issue through most of those years.

As a result, banking customers grew accustomed to reaping little or no interest on their savings. “We forget that we can get more competitive interest rates on our bank accounts, because we used to get no interest on our bank accounts,” Papadimitriou said.

Consumers may be reluctant to open an account at an online bank. Changing banks can be tricky. Savers may feel their money is somehow safer in a big corporate bank.

On closer inspection, however, the high-yield savings accounts recommended by WalletHub and Bankrate are generally FDIC-insured, and opening an account is fairly simple.

“There’s a fundamental misunderstanding of how easy this is,” McBride said. “Nothing changes about your day-to-day banking. You’re just sending your savings somewhere it’s going to be treated better.”

A high-yield savings account isn’t the only way to beat inflation and earn real interest on your savings.

Vanguard offers a savings account alternative called Cash Plus, with an annual interest rate of 3.65%, as of early April.

Here are two other options.

## Certificates of deposit

CDs spook some investors. In a 2023

survey by Forbes Advisor, 41% of Americans said they had never opened one.

When you open a CD, you agree to surrender your money to the bank for a set length of time.

In exchange, the bank generally offers you a higher rate of interest than you might get with an ordinary checking or savings account.

As of April, competitive CDs are offering rates of 4.5% or better for a term of a year or less, according to Investopedia.

Papadimitriou, of WalletHub, said he has been talking up CDs, because their rates are fixed. Bank interest rates, by contrast, can change overnight.

“And so, increasingly, I’m telling people to get certificates of deposit,” he said. “You are not subject to the games that banks like to play.”

## Money market accounts

Another alternative to high-yield savings is the money market account. They are offered by banks and credit unions, with federal backing.

Money markets “are another great savings vehicle,” said Benchener of Vanguard, but “many savers don’t understand how they work.”

Money market accounts combine features of savings and checking accounts, according to Investopedia. They can have high balance requirements, and their interest rates generally fluctuate.

Money market accounts were moribund through the low-interest years, but not today. Competitive rates can top 4%.

# Tariffs

Continued from Page 1B

trade targets).

Tariff policy seems to shift almost daily. It’s tough to predict where the rates will sit in a week, let alone in three years, at the end of Trump’s term.

But it’s a question worth asking. Consumers want to plan future car and iPhone buys. Retailers want to predict where prices are headed on clothing and computers. Manufacturers want to divine where to build their next factory.

We asked four economists and academicians to predict what Trump’s tariff policy may look like in 2028, and what factors might shape it.

Here’s what they told us. These are their comments in full, edited for clarity.

## Colin Grabow, associate director, Herbert A. Stiefel Center for Trade Policy Studies, Cato Institute

No crystal ball is needed to see that tariffs will almost certainly be higher in 2028 than when President Trump took office in January – the only question is by how much. Another outcome would be deeply surprising. For America, the tariff man cometh.

Between his first term and the early days of his second, Trump has managed to bury the United States under an avalanche of tariffs. The onslaught has been so extensive that the United States now has its highest average tariff rate in over a century – and more seem on the way. Digging the United States out of this mess will take some doing.

Unfortunately, few seem eager to grab shovels.

Congressional Republicans are highly reluctant to cross a leader who remains incredibly popular within the party, while Democrats have tradition-



**With tariff policies seeming to shift almost daily, it’s tough to predict where the rates will sit in a week, let alone in three years, at the end of Donald Trump’s term.**

TORK MASON/USA TODAY NETWORK FILE

ally been more supportive of protectionist policies favored by organized labor. Assembling a veto-proof coalition to restore sanity to U.S. tariff policy is a tall order.

Absent such an intervention, President Trump’s de facto tariff switch is likely to remain in the “on” position. Although some relief could be found in “deals” with certain countries, or as part of a market-calming exercise, a complete unwinding is deeply improbable.

## Josh Bivens, chief economist, Economic Policy Institute

In 2028, average tariffs could be 5% – about double their level when Trump took office. Or they could be 25%, or even higher than that.

The fact that nobody can say with any certainty where tariff rates will be is absolute poison for every business and family in America trying to make plans for their future.

Should you build a new factory? Buy a new home? Take out loans for your kids’ college? Choose a different industry to work in? All these crucial decisions depend on the state of America’s interconnectedness with the rest of the world.

Until this is clarified – and truly clarified, not subject to the ever-changing whims of one man – all Americans will be held in limbo, and this will crush economic growth.

Most economic policies create winners and losers. The Trump tariff policy is almost entirely creating losers, unless some insiders are timing their stock market purchases around advanced knowledge about new announcements and pauses. What was once unthinkable dumb and corrupt now seems entirely possible.

## Bernard Yaros, lead U.S. economist, Oxford Economics

It’s difficult, if not impossible, to know where tariffs will end up in 2028. However, a safe bet would be to assume that the significantly higher tariffs on China will remain in effect, as decoupling from the world’s second-largest economy seems to be one of the administration’s clearest goals amid the chaotic rollout of reciprocal tariffs this month.

Sector-specific tariffs on steel, aluminum, motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts, and others will likely stick as well. Yet, it’s probable that the across-the-board reciprocal tariffs on all countries other than China and all products outside certain sectors will either get significantly watered down or go away by 2028.

The administration could water down these reciprocal tariffs via further exemptions, targeted toward consumer goods, in a bid to mitigate the inflationary impact.

On the other side of the 2026 mid-terms, you could craft a scenario in which enough lawmakers on both sides of the aisle turn against the reciprocal tariffs and a supermajority in both chambers of Congress overrides a presidential veto to vote down the reciprocal tariffs.

## Robert Gulotty, associate professor of political science, University of Chicago

In 2028, the Trump administration will be in campaign mode and may be trying to take actions that limit blowback from tariffs.

In the previous Trump administration, this meant using ad hoc authorities to allocate billions of dollars of cash to farm communities affected by Chinese retaliation.

My research with Anton Strezhnev suggests that those efforts moved voters in the 2020 election, particularly in rural communities. They will likely try again.

We also saw reversals on the tariffs themselves, as exemptions on steel and aluminum were granted to Canada and Mexico in advance of the approval of a renegotiated NAFTA.

However, I worry new cash disbursements and targeted tariff exemptions will have little effect on the overall state of trade policy for the U.S.

Unless things dramatically change by 2028, the world will have gone through four years of dramatic and unpredictable policy swings. Measures of formal trade restrictions, like the average tariff, mean little for firms that cannot guess whether their customers will face a tax or not.

There may be an appetite for some kind of global deal to reduce this uncertainty, but who would bother negotiating a treaty with a government that is unconstrained by scraps of paper?



# White House egg event won't affect supply

Easter event used sizes not meant for retailers

**Betty Lin-Fisher**  
USA TODAY

Children and families used a reported 30,000 real eggs at the White House Easter Egg Roll on April 21 as retail egg prices remain higher than normal and egg supplies continue their recovery amid a bird flu crisis.

Wholesale egg prices have continued to drop, as they have since mid-March, but the steep decreases have not yet fully been reflected at the grocery store. The eggs used at the White House event were donated by farmers and are not in sizes meant for retail and grocery channels, the American Egg Board said.

The annual White House tradition dates back to 1878 when Rutherford B. Hayes issued an order that allowed children to roll eggs down the White House lawn after banning them from using the White House grounds as a playground two years earlier.

## What is the White House Easter Egg Roll?

The White House South Lawn is opened once a year for families and children chosen in an online lottery to roll colorfully painted eggs and join in other activities. President Donald Trump, in remarks during the roll, said about 42,000 guests were expected throughout the day.

Families with children under 13 joined Trump, the first lady, White House staff and their families for the 147th edition of the egg roll.

In a controversial twist that has raised ethics concerns, the 2025 egg roll is the first to be open to corporate sponsorships. Some Trump opponents suggested it was an ethics violation. Proceeds from companies that paid for their names to be attached to the event benefit the nonprofit White House Historical Association, lead organizer of the egg roll.

The country's largest tech companies make up some of the corporate spon-



**A volunteer lays out dyed eggs at the White House Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House on April 21 in Washington, D.C. The event used a reported 30,000 eggs.** CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

sors, according to a list released by the White House, including Amazon, Meta and YouTube.

## Why were real eggs used?

NBC News reported that the egg roll would use real eggs even as bird flu continues to cause supply constraints that have sent prices soaring.

"They were saying that for Easter, 'please don't use eggs. Could you use plastic eggs?' I say we don't want to do that," NBC quoted Trump as saying in early April.

The 30,000 real eggs, or 2,500 dozen, are donated every year by egg farmers represented by the American Egg Board.

In a news release, American Egg Board President and CEO Emily Metz said the eggs for the White House event would "not create additional strain on the nation's egg supply or egg prices."

The eggs represent a small percentage of the nearly 9 million dozen eggs, or 108 million eggs, sold at retail stores each day, Metz said.

"Additionally, the eggs used for the White House Easter Egg Roll will be in

sizes small and medium, which are not meant for the retail and grocery channels," she said.

## What's going on with egg prices?

The price of eggs has continued to be volatile, even as wholesale egg prices in recent weeks have declined and demand for eggs increased with the Passover and Easter holidays. The rise in prices and supply constraints have been largely driven by the outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza, or bird flu.

But egg prices at the grocery store, prices reported in some data reports like the consumer price index and prices on the wholesale market don't always match, USA TODAY reported.

For instance, the latest consumer price index, released April 10 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, shows the highest price for a dozen large grade A eggs since the price hikes began.

But that price and the CPI cost of eggs overall, which was up 5.9% in March, may not accurately reflect the drop in wholesale prices that started in the middle of the month. The index is an

average of data collected through the month and retail prices were higher at the beginning of March, one expert said.

Additionally, retailers may not have dropped prices of eggs proportionately with the drop in the wholesale egg market, which may have to do with retailers wanting to take advantage of worries about scarcity to keep prices high, particularly with the demand for Easter, some experts say.

## What's the latest on egg prices?

According to the CPI, the average U.S. city price of a dozen large Grade A eggs at retail stores, not seasonally adjusted for March, was \$6.23. That's up from \$5.90 in February and \$4.95 in January.

In the latest weekly report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on April 18, the average wholesale price of loose, white large shell eggs was \$3.14 a dozen, up slightly from \$3.08 a dozen reported on April 11 but lower than the \$3.26 a dozen reported April 4.

The CPI is a lagging indicator, and it takes some time for wholesale prices to be reflected in the grocery store, industry experts have told USA TODAY. Plus, some retailers are using pricing strategies to keep egg prices elevated or aren't reducing prices to match lower wholesale costs as quickly as other goods, some said.

How much you pay for eggs varies widely depending on where you live. Data gathered by USA TODAY shows the prices on April 21 at several retail stores in Wildwood, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis, for instance, are lower than the U.S. city average reported in the March CPI, released April 10.

Prices for a dozen large Grade A eggs at an Aldi, Costco, Kroger, Target, Sam's Club, Walmart and Whole Foods on April 21 ranged from a low of \$4.19 at Whole Foods to a high of \$5.49 at Aldi. The Whole Foods price was taken from the grocer's website, and the Aldi price was from Instacart. Instacart prices are set by the grocer. The high and low prices match the prices gathered April 10.

*Contributing: John Heasley, James Powel, Joey Garrison and Bart Jansen*

# Trump's Fed blast spurs dollar's spiraling plunge

President wants Powell to lower interest rates

**Hannah Lang and Rae Wee**  
Reuters

The dollar tumbled to its lowest level in three years as investor confidence in the U.S. economy took another hit over President Donald Trump's attacks on the Federal Reserve chairman, potentially putting the central bank's independence under threat.

Trump ramped up his criticism of Fed Chair Jerome Powell on April 21 via social media, calling him a "major loser" and demanding that he lower interest rates immediately.

Against a basket of currencies, the dollar slid as low as 97.923 =USD, its lowest since March 2022. The currency also fell to a decade-low against the Swiss franc CHF=EBS, while the euro EUR=EBS broke above \$1.15.

White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett said April 18 that the president and his team were studying whether they could fire Powell, just a day after Trump said Powell's termination "cannot come fast enough" as he called for the Fed to cut interest rates.

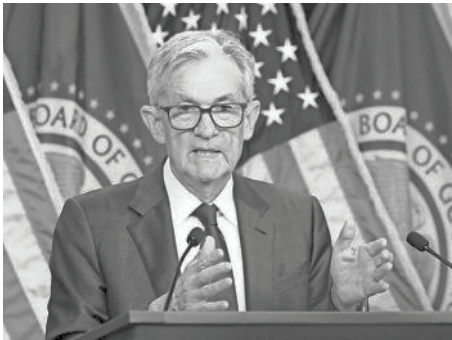
Trading was thin with most European markets and those in Australia and Hong Kong closed for Easter Monday. Most markets globally were closed April 18 for a holiday.

"Powell does not report directly to Trump, so (Trump) cannot actually fire him. He can only be removed from office under certain procedures, which one would think have a higher barrier," said Vishnu Varathan, head of macro research for Asia ex-Japan at Mizuho. "But can the president move the cogs and wheels to undermine the perceived independence of the Fed? Sure, he could."

Against the Swiss franc CHF=EBS, the dollar sank more than 1.5% to a 10-year trough of 0.8063, while the euro EUR=EBS peaked at \$1.1535, its highest since November 2021.

The dollar also hit a seven-month low against the yen JPY=EBS. CFTC data showed net-long positions on the Japanese yen hit a record high for the week ended April 15.

"If the central bank's dual mandate –



**Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell speaks during a news conference in Washington on Jan. 29. He is facing growing criticism from President Donald Trump.** KEVIN LAMARQUE/REUTERS

preserving price stability and fostering full employment – is diluted with a new set of objectives defined by the White House, policymakers could find themselves unable to tighten policy dramatically in the face of a sudden increase in prices," Karl Schamotta, chief market strategist at Corpay in Toronto, said in a research note.

Sterling GBP=D3 rose to its highest since September at \$1.34, and the Australian dollar AUD=D3 scaled a four-month high of \$0.6430. The New Zealand dollar NZD=D3 reclaimed the \$0.6000 level for the first time in more than five months.

"It's really a buffet for any dollar bear ... from the heightened uncertainty around the self-harm from tariffs to the loss of faith even prior to the Powell news," Varathan said.

Trump's sweeping tariffs and uncertainty over his trade policies have sent global markets into a tailspin and darkened the outlook for the world's largest economy, in turn weakening the dollar as investors pull money out of U.S. assets.

Elsewhere, the onshore yuan CNY=CFXS rose to a two-week high before paring some of those gains. Its offshore counterpart CNH=D3 similarly touched a one-week top of 7.2911 per dollar.

China kept its benchmark lending rates steady for the sixth successive month, matching expectations. But markets are betting on more stimulus being rolled out soon in the face of the escalating China-U.S. trade war.

# MSC cruise ship's Cliffhanger takes guests over deck's edge

Swing provides thrilling ride for ship's passengers

**Nathan Diller**  
USA TODAY

My stomach dropped as my seat lurched backward, pointing me toward the shoreline. On the Cliffhanger swing attraction aboard MSC Cruises' newest ship, MSC World America, there was just a T-shaped bar between me and the open air.

The four-minute ride started slowly, with a red machine resembling a claw lifting me up and out over the railing of Deck 20. Then the swings got bigger.

"Don't look down," a fellow rider said. I heeded that warning, keeping my eyes trained on the line's private island in the Bahamas, Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve.

My racing heart slowed as I watched the sweeping view of aquamarine water and white-sand beaches on a sunny spring day, though I held the metal bars of the swing tight with both hands. In what felt like just a few seconds, the motion subsided, and my seat retreated to the deck.

I went again the next day.

"You don't think about a swing as something that's going to be thrilling," William Monts de Oca Rivera, MSC's head of guest experience innovation, said in a news briefing during a preview cruise in early April. "But when that is 160 feet above the water and the ship is in the middle of the ocean, you're going to feel something."

Cliffhanger is one of several rides and other activities on the cruise line's newest U.S. flagship, which set sail on its maiden voyage from Miami on April 12.

## Who can ride Cliffhanger?

Passengers must meet height and weight requirements to ride (they have to be at least 47.24 inches tall – just under 4 feet – for example). Minors need to be supervised by an accompanying adult.

A maximum of four people can ride at once.

## How much does Cliffhanger cost?

The ride costs \$5 per person.



**The High Trail Ropes Course is high above an outdoor deck on MSC World America.** ANTHONY DEVLIN/GETTY IMAGES FOR MSC CRUISES

## What other new activities does MSC World America have?

Other new onboard activities include:

- **The Harbour:** World America boasts the first outdoor activity park of its kind in MSC's fleet. In addition to Cliffhanger, guests can traverse the High Trail Ropes Course, where they can glide midair on two Sky Rail ziplines; climb into a shark's head and drop 11 stories on the Jaw Drop @ The Spiral dry slide; choose from three water slides at the Harbour Aquapark; and ride bumper cars and more.
- **LEGO activities:** Parents and kid-salike can show their construction skills in the LEGO Family Zone, a dedicated space for toy brick building. Passengers can put those abilities to the test at the LEGO Family Game Show – billed as a first at sea – where teams compete for Master Builder status. Dancing LEGO characters make their way through the ship once every sailing at a LEGO parade.
- **"Dirty Dancing in Concert":** Dancers, singers and other musicians perform songs from the beloved movie starring Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey during the roughly 45-minute show, complete with the iconic lift. Guests can get in on the dancing at a themed after-party. Longer matinee showings are performed alongside the film.

*The reporter on this story received access to this event from MSC Cruises. USA TODAY maintains editorial control of content.*



# 50★States

News from across the USA

**ALABAMA Montgomery:** A new option for travel among the Southeast will be available to Alabama residents by the end of the year. GOGO Charters, a luxury charter bus and mini-bus transportation service, is expanding its operations to the Southeast.

**ALASKA Fairbanks:** The city’s first annual ScaleFest, a reptile and exotics expo, saw a large turnout on April 19, KTUU reported.

**ARIZONA Phoenix:** Artificial-intelligence stalwart Nvidia is working with partners in Arizona and Texas to manufacture chips and build factories that, for the first time, will produce the company’s supercomputers entirely in the United States. The AI leader said it has commissioned more than 1 million square feet of manufacturing space to make and test its Blackwell chips at the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. plant in Arizona and at two Texas factories for making AI supercomputers.

**ARKANSAS Little Rock:** The American Red Cross announced that a new shelter has opened in Monticello to aid flooding victims, KATV reported.

**CALIFORNIA Sacramento:** California wildlife officials detected an invasive species in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that threatens numerous ecosystems in the northern part of the state. On April 16, officials announced the Golden Mussel Task Force, a statewide interagency group aimed at curbing the spread of the invasive species.

**COLORADO Windsor:** Future Legends sports complex managing member Jeff Katofsky has sued the town over its denial of issuing temporary certificates of occupancy that would allow for the lawful operation and construction of the 100-acre project, continuing a series of legal battles engulfing the beleaguered site.

**CONNECTICUT West Haven:** Officials said an arrest has been made after the body of a woman was found dismembered in her home in March, WFSB reported.

**DELAWARE Newark:** High rates of respiratory illnesses following the most severe flu season since 2009 prompted ChristianaCare to establish a telephone line to meet the surge. The line received more than 1,200 calls in its seven weeks of operation from February through April 11, helping Delawareans manage their symptoms at home and connecting them with virtual primary care or urgent care when needed so that emergency departments weren’t overwhelmed.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington:** Police said an investigation is underway after a missing woman was found dead in a dumpster, WUSA reported.

**GEORGIA Effingham County:** Residents in Effingham County are growing weary as they wait to learn whether 425 acres on Rahn Station Road will be rezoned from agricultural to industrial for a 4 million square foot development. The item was postponed from the April 1 county commissioner meeting and has been rescheduled to August.

**HAWAII Lihue:** After a six-year hiatus, the Kauai Police Department announced that its Junior Police Academy, a five-day summer program that provide hands-on introduction to a career in public safety, will return in June for ninth to 12th grade students, Hawaii News Now reported.

**IDAHO Boise:** Treefort Music Fest reported that this year’s event saw a significant increase in attendance compared with last year’s, making it the biggest in the festival’s history, Idaho Press reported.

**ILLINOIS Springfield:** A recent report supports ending subminimum wages in Illinois. The report, done by One Fair Wage, found financial stability for tipped restaurant workers is coming harder and harder to live off of.

**INDIANA Indianapolis:** Gov. Mike Braun signed a bill to prevent college students from using their state university-issued ID as a form of identification at the voting booth – what Republicans call an election security measure and Democrats call an effort to suppress voter turnout among young people. Senate Bill 10 is one of several bills in recent years aimed at tightening up restrictions around elections and voting, as has been a trend among conservative states since the oft-criticized 2020 election.

## HIGHLIGHT: FLORIDA



This Maserati MC20 set an autonomous speed record by reaching 197.7 mph at the Kennedy Space Center Launch and Landing Facility. PROVIDED BY MASERATI

**Cape Canaveral:** Revving up to extreme speed, the Maserati MC20 screamed down the center of NASA’s old space shuttle landing strip – with nobody in the driver’s seat. The sensor-equipped supercar shattered the autonomous driving speed record by reaching an eye-watering 197.7 mph at NASA’s Launch and Landing Facility – one of the world’s longest runways – at Florida’s Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral. AI software piloted the vehicle, with “a driving robot” powering the delicate movements of the steering wheel. Indy Autonomous Challenge was in charge of the car.

**IOWA Des Moines:** Families of those who were killed in unsolved crimes or disappeared without a trace joined Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird to announce a new playing card deck that will be given to inmates with the goal of gaining new information on their loved ones’ cases. The deck of cards features 52 cold cases from across the state, including homicides, missing people and unidentified remains, Bird said in the April 16 news conference at the Des Moines Police Department. The decks will be distributed to inmates in Iowa’s nine state correctional facilities.

**KANSAS Topeka:** New revenue projections show the state government budget faces a \$731 million hole in four years, at the end of fiscal year 2029.

**KENTUCKY Louisville:** Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts Allison Ball is launching an investigation into the Kentucky Office of Medical Cannabis following a series of complaints from the public about the medical marijuana business application processes and some of the department’s general procedures.

**LOUISIANA Baton Rouge:** Republican U.S. Rep. Julia Letlow, Louisiana’s only woman in Congress whose influence continues to grow in Washington, has opened a district office back home in the state’s capital city to reflect the new boundaries that frame her 5th Congressional District.

**MAINE Kennebunk:** The Kennebunk Police Department is partnering with the Maine National Guard’s Counterdrug Task Force to spearhead a tri-community initiative aimed at preventing or delaying young people from stepping into the dangerous path toward addiction.

**MARYLAND Salisbury:** In major economic news for Salisbury, Amazon has announced it will open a distribution center in the city.

**MASSACHUSETTS Provincetown:** In a rare and unexpected discovery, researchers from Provincetown on April 17 were the first to spot a previously unknown North Atlantic right whale calf in Cape Cod Bay, bringing the total count of the 2024-2025 calving season to 11.

**MICHIGAN Flat Rock:** Huron-Clinton Metroparks is considering what to do with a nearly century-old dam it owns on the Huron River in Flat Rock – including potentially removing it. But that’s an option that has many in the nearby community not willing to go with the flow.

**MINNESOTA St. Paul:** U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi suggested the Justice Department is considering legal action against Minnesota for allowing transgender athletes to participate in girls’ and women’s sports, Minnesota Reformer reported.

**MISSISSIPPI Senatobia:** For the second time in a month, a global technology leader in North Mississippi is expanding, spending tens of millions of dollars and creating more than a hundred jobs. ABB, through the Mississippi Development Authority, announced it is investing more than \$40 million to expand its operations in Senatobia.

**MISSOURI Springfield:** For the 13th year in a row, Missouri tops the list as home of the most “problem” dog breeders, according to advocacy group Humane World for Animals – formerly the Humane Society of the United States. The list, called the “Horrible Hundred,” details violations or concerns at 100 commercial breeding operations across the country. Of the establishments included, 26 were in Missouri.

**MONTANA Bozeman:** Police Chief Jim Veltkamp said 13 officers were playing a type of “bingo game” that involved checking off actions listed on the bingo card, including making specific types of arrests and carrying out a search warrant on a vehicle, KRTV reported.

**NEBRASKA Lincoln:** A study found that it would cost \$20 million to make the historic Mayhew Cabin and John Brown’s Cave site in Nebraska City a viable attraction again, Nebraska Examiner reported.

**NEVADA Las Vegas:** Officials said the body of a veterinarian who has been missing since April 6 was found in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, KLAS reported.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE Jackson:** A skier was killed April 20 when he went off a New Hampshire trail, according to police and the ski resort where it happened.

**NEW JERSEY Newark:** Biologists from the New Jersey Institute of Technology are celebrating the discovery of a remarkably well-preserved fossil of a dirt ant encased in 16-million-year-old amber from the Dominican Republic. The fossil was so well-preserved that researchers could see details such as specialized dirt-collecting hairs on its legs and head.

**NEW MEXICO Las Cruces:** City Council updated the city’s animal ordinance with a more comprehensive approach to address overpopulation concerns, empower Animal Control Officers in their duties and attempt to reduce unnecessary euthanasia.

**NEW YORK New York:** The Trump administration has announced that it is seeking to hand over the reconstruction planning of New York Penn Station to Amtrak and take it away from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which has been leading the effort for the last few years.

**NORTH CAROLINA Hendersonville:** The Arbor Day Foundation recently named Hendersonville a 2024 Tree City USA in honor of its commitment to plant, grow, and maintain trees to benefit its community.

**NORTH DAKOTA Fargo:** Doug Burgum, North Dakota’s former two-term governor, is selling his condo in downtown Fargo. The three-bedroom, four-bathroom penthouse is about 19,200 square feet and listed for \$1.9 million.

**OHIO Columbus:** Ohio has seen a drop in the number of fatal accidents under the state’s distracted driving law, according to the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Traffic fatalities are down 4%, the average number of crashes is down 8% and injuries are down 3% since the law took effect, according to the OSHP.

**OKLAHOMA Okmulgee:** An attorney accused of helping her lover commit a triple murder is now a key witness for the prosecution against him, according to court records that are now sealed from public view. The extraordinary secrecy about the deal comes in a case that has received national and international attention.

**OREGON Salem:** The leader of the Oregon Public Defense Commission was fired and replaced amid an ongoing public defender crisis.

**PENNSYLVANIA Adams County:** The Gettysburg Foundation has donated \$472,376 to the Gettysburg National Military Park, according to a community announcement. The funds, raised through museum and visitor center operations, will support preservation, education and visitor engagement projects.

**RHODE ISLAND Providence:** Physician group Anchor Medical Associates is closing at the end of June, forcing thousands of Rhode Islanders to look for new primary care doctors.

**SOUTH CAROLINA Clemson:** A professor at Clemson University is facing criminal charges related to the distribution of child sexual abuse material.

**SOUTH DAKOTA Pierre:** South Dakota banned TikTok from state government. Now state government wants to bring TikTok to South Dakota. Gov. Larry Rhoden said on his official Facebook page April 16 his administration is working with Reid Rasner, a Wyoming entrepreneur and billionaire vying to purchase popular social media platform TikTok from Chinese company ByteDance, to “explore bringing the company to South Dakota.”

**TENNESSEE Memphis:** LeMoyne-Owen College is launching a program to keep some of its students debt-free after graduation. The college will pay back up to \$20,000 a year of some student loans, LeMoyne President Christopher B. Davis announced during his inauguration speech on April 18.

**TEXAS Lewisville:** A Texas commissioner was injured and her husband was killed after police said they were allegedly stabbed by their grandson.

**UTAH Salt Lake City:** The Salt Lake City Police Department said its efforts to revitalize the Jordan River Parkway Trail that began in early April is producing faster-than-expected result, KUTV reported.

**VERMONT Burlington:** After decades of work, wild lake trout have been restored in Lake Champlain and there’s no longer a need to stock the lake with hatchery-reared fish, the Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative said in a news release.

**VIRGINIA Elkton:** The Elkton Police Department said a Grottoes man has been charged after he reportedly sexually abused a minor and was caught with child sexual abuse images, according to a Facebook post by the agency.

**WASHINGTON Thurston County:** A Washington state handyman is facing charges in connection with the death of a missing woman whose remains were buried and partially encased in concrete underneath a shed he allegedly built, authorities said.

**WEST VIRGINIA Charleston:** West Virginia Republican Sen. Shelley Moore Capito asked U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert Kennedy Jr. to reinstate programs aimed at protecting coal miners that were hit with layoff notices.

**WISCONSIN Madison:** Divisions among Republican lawmakers are materializing again this legislative session over measures that would limit competition among companies building new power transmission lines in Wisconsin – a proposal that has drawn heavy lobbying this session. The legislation, known as the Right of First Refusal, or ROFR, would allow the owners of already established transmission lines to build more lines that connect to their existing ones without having to compete with out-of-state companies for the projects.

**WYOMING Cheyenne:** The only abortion clinic in Wyoming can resume offering those services after a judge halted the enforcement of two new abortion laws in the state, WyoFile reported.

*From USA TODAY Network and wire reports*





Boise State player and Heisman Trophy finalist Ashton Jeanty is considered the top running back prospect in the draft. TROY BABBITT/IMAGN IMAGES

# Draft ‘flat-out loaded’ with running backs

Jarrett Bell USA TODAY

There’s a whole lot of buzz about running backs as the clock ticks toward the 2025 NFL Draft. And so many reasons for the hype. • Ashton Jeanty is the Great Superstar Hope of this year’s crop, bolstered by the 2,601 rushing yards and 29 touchdowns he ripped off last season for Boise State. He surely fits the profile of a top-five talent – speculation is flowing that Jeanty is a target for trading up – and is the tip of the iceberg for the deepest pool of running backs in years.

Perhaps Jeanty – instead of unicorn Travis Hunter, projected No. 1 overall pick Cam Ward, Shedeur Sanders or quarterback-seeking edge rusher Abdul Carter – will ultimately prove to be the biggest prize of the draft that kicks off in Green Bay on April 24.

Maybe. Maybe not. That’s part of the intrigue. Mock drafts will soon get flushed down the toilet and in time the wisdom (or lack thereof) by decision-makers will be revealed.

Then there’s the Saquon Barkley factor. The New York Giants, who picked Barkley No. 2 overall in 2018, deemed him too expensive to keep over since-released quarterback Daniel Jones. Too bad. Barkley took his talents to the Philadelphia Eagles last season and with a Super Bowl trophy now in the mix, added quite a layer to the debate about running back value ... while the G-men without him were bad enough to secure the third pick.

With Barkley’s fresh impact, it sure

“I think the position’s become more dynamic. For a while ... the market maybe was suppressed. People were not looking at them as weapons.”

**Brandon Beane**  
Buffalo Bills general manager, during the NFL Scouting Combine

seems like a good time to be a stud running back.

What’s a running back worth? That’s a riveting subplot for this draft, 30 years since the Cincinnati Bengals made Ki-Jana Carter the last running back taken No. 1 overall. Sure, quarterback is football’s most important position. Yet, as amplified each January on the road to the Super Bowl, impact running backs are so essential to the mission.

The value is embodied by examples such as Barkley, Derrick Henry, Bijan Robinson, Christian McCaffrey and Alvin Kamara.

Here’s something else to consider: While running backs increasingly take on a larger role in the passing game, the NFL just had a season with its fewest passing attempts per game (32.7) by teams since 2008. Meanwhile, although running quarterbacks account for some of this, the 119.8 rushing yards per game

See BELL, Page 2C

# Jarrett Allen a Cavs’ cog but also a bookworm

Jeff Zillgitt  
USA TODAY

Late in the NBA season at the end of a five-game West Coast trip, Cleveland Cavaliers center Jarrett Allen had free time in Portland, Oregon.

He did what he often does on the road: He sought a bookstore. This time he stopped at Powell’s Books, the famous and massive city of books.

He first went to the rare books collection and then visited the sci-fi section.

“I have always wanted to visit the rare books room,” Allen told USA TODAY Sports. “That stuff was so intriguing to me when I went in there – books from the 1400s.”

Maybe it’s the Tattered Cover in Denver.

Or right before the 81st game of the regular season while in New York, Allen visited The Strand, known for its “18 miles of books.”

He left with Martha Wells’ “All Systems Red.”

He’s also reading “The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue,” by V.E. Schwab.

Allen said he is strictly a purveyor of physical books, no e-reading device.

“I want to have a big (library) collection when I get older. I keep all the books that I read, so I want to be able to look back and be like, ‘Oh, I remember when I read that back in 2017.’ That’s the fun in it for me.”

Jarrett Allen, defender of rims, supporter of bookstores and reader of books.

“I love basketball, but I think there’s only so much I can do in one day in any type of thing that I do,” Allen said. “My whole thing is if I’m able to step away from basketball and reset my brain, I can come back even stronger and give more of myself to basketball.”

It works for the 27-year-old Allen who is in his eighth NBA season.

A vital member of Cleveland’s Core Four along with Donovan Mitchell, Darius Garland and Evan Mobley, Allen

See ALLEN, Page 2C



Cavaliers center Jarrett Allen averaged 13.5 points and 9.7 rebounds this season. DAVID RICHARD/IMAGN IMAGES

# In Vols breakup, UCLA emerges the only winner



Blake Toppmeyer  
Columnist  
USA TODAY NETWORK

There’s only one winner in the Nico Iamaleava-Tennessee breakup, and it’s neither of those parties.

UCLA won this divorce. Everyone else lost.

The saga reached a can’t-make-this-up conclusion on April 21, when Tennessee secured a transfer quarterback to replace Iamaleava – and it’s the quarterback UCLA nudged aside in favor of the Tennessee turncoat.

Joey Aguilar is expected to transfer to Tennessee, four months after he transferred from Appalachian State to UCLA. Bruins coach DeShaun Foster got a look

at Aguilar this spring and decided he’d rather have Iamaleava as his starter.

So, there you have it. Tennessee dines on UCLA’s scraps.

Oh, and UCLA also reportedly plans to add Iamaleava’s brother, Madden, a true freshman quarterback who would transfer in from Arkansas.

Iamaleava emerged a loser. So did Tennessee. Only UCLA upgraded its situation, acquiring a talented quarterback on a cut-rate deal.

Nico is left with reputational damage to remedy. His camp engaged in negotiation stupidity when Iamaleava jilted an upper-tier SEC program coached by a proven quarterback developer in favor of a worse team.

Iamaleava tried to leverage Tennessee for a raise, and when that didn’t

See TOPPMAYER, Page 2C



UCLA football coach DeShaun Foster gained a quarterback but lost a quarterback this week. ROBERT HANASHIRO/IMAGN IMAGES



# Toppmeyer

Continued from Page 1C

work, he absorbed a significant pay cut to transfer to UCLA, while moving from a state without a state income tax to one with a wallet-stinging tax rate. Dave Ramsey would cringe.

Tennessee fans celebrated a brief victory lap as Iamaleava’s fate unfolded, while retaining hopes that coach Josh Heupel would plunder a quarterback upgrade.

Alas, Tennessee couldn’t pry loose a premier quarterback at the eleventh hour, and Heupel landed on a quarterback who completed 18 of 41 passes against Clemson last season.

Tennessee’s pickup of Aguilar ranks as the 86th-best transfer quarterback acquisition of the offseason in the 247Sports rankings. UCLA’s bargain buy of Iamaleava ranks first, although Miami and Carson Beck might like a word.

## Tennessee’s Josh Heupel wins news conference, loses offseason

After Tennessee refused to cave to Iamaleava’s quest for a lofty raise, Heupel declared “no one is bigger than” the program. Heupel won the news conference that day, but he’s losing the offseason.

Good luck finding a scout who would say the Vols wound up with the more talented quarterback in this switcheroo.

Tennessee’s transfer class ranks among the SEC’s worst. The Vols would do well to apply the cost savings of swapping Iamaleava for Aguilar to sweeten the roster with a few last-minute additions. Their depth chart is inferior to last season’s that got Tennessee to the first round of the College Football Playoff.

Aguilar will compete with redshirt freshman Jake Merklinger, Tennessee’s third-string quarterback in 2024, and true freshman George MacIntyre for the starting job.

Aguilar’s experience looms large, but peg Tennessee’s quarterback situation within the bottom 25% of the SEC following this quarterback swap with UCLA.

The purpose here isn’t to knock Aguilar. How could you not pull for the guy after UCLA pulled the rug out from under him?

Learning Heupel’s warp-speed spread offense in just four months before the season opener will challenge Aguilar. His career completion rate won’t turn heads, but he led the Sun Belt Conference in passing yards last season.

Don’t ignore Heupel’s history. Hendon Hooker was an average quarterback for Virginia Tech. He developed into a star for Heupel after transferring to Tennessee. Heupel worked with Hooker for two seasons. Aguilar has one season of eligibility remaining – a season he’d planned to use at UCLA.

## Nico Iamaleava, UCLA make for duplicitous duo

Coaches are quick to bemoan their lack of roster control. Players enjoy two transfer periods, during which they can freely move from school to school, but coaches contribute to this free agency carousel with their thirst for transfer solutions.

When Aguilar transferred to UCLA, he told ESPN it would “be amazing” to play for his home-state school and that he looked forward to the Bruins coaching staff developing him.

“Excited to see him take command of the team,” Foster said of Aguilar three weeks ago.

So much for that. Iamaleava and Foster are made for each other, a duplicitous duo.

But, hey, if nice guys finish last, where does that leave loyal guys? Not in Westwood.

The Vols stood on principle when backed into a corner. They rid themselves of a money-hungry quarterback but emerged with a damaged roster.



Quarterback Nico Iamaleava has found his school destination for the 2025 season by transferring to UCLA. ANDREW NELLES/THE (NASHVILLE) TENNESSEAN

# Bell

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were second-most since 1989.

“Let’s not kid ourselves,” Atlanta Falcons coach Raheem Morris said during the recent NFL league meetings. “I can’t believe we’re talking about the devaluation at the position and all those things.”

“I think the position’s become more dynamic,” Buffalo Bills general manager Brandon Beane said during the NFL Scouting Combine, alluding to the mismatches that can be created. “For a while ... the market maybe was suppressed. People were not looking at them as weapons.

“Some of the names you guys have talked about – Saquon, McCaffrey, Kamara, those guys – they can line up and play wide receiver, they can line up in the backfield. And so there is more value to those positions.”

Beane, whose offseason has included stalled contract talks with his 2022 second-round pick, running back James Cook, said someone asked about his philosophy for drafting a running back in the first round.

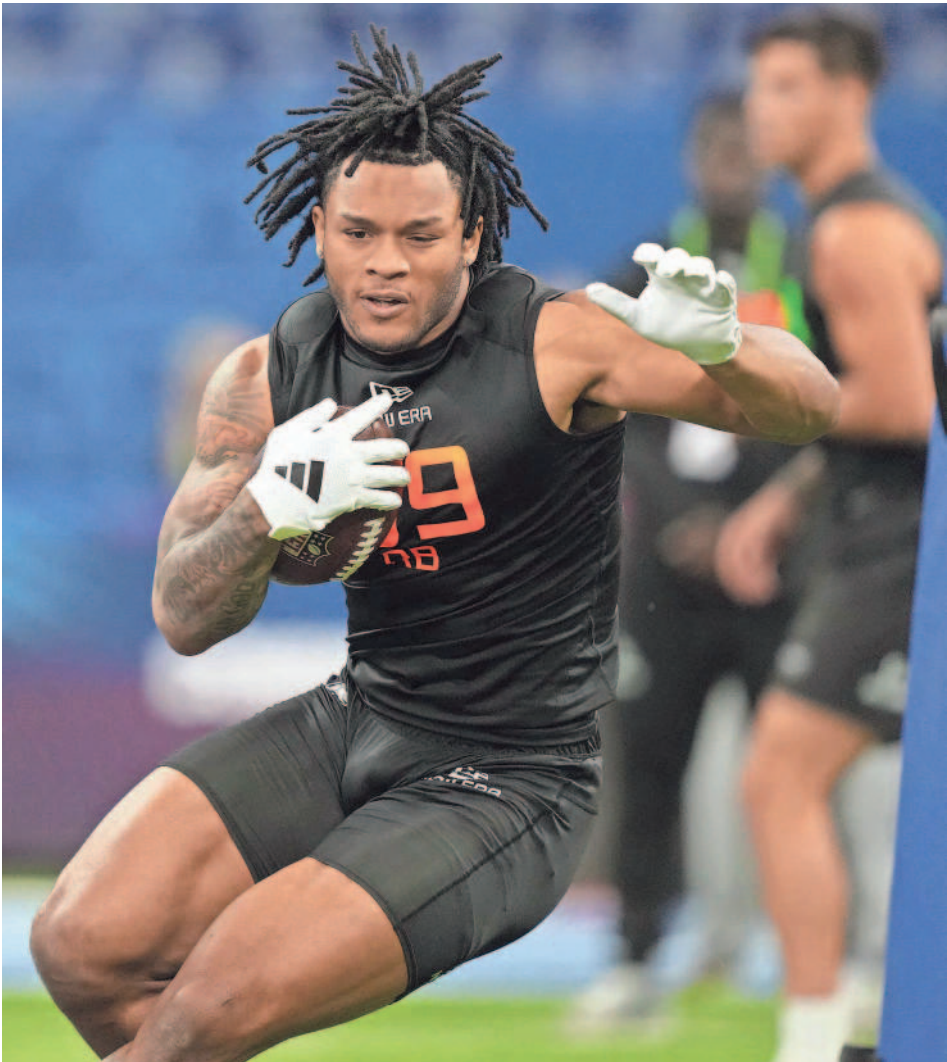
“I’m like, ‘I probably wouldn’t draft a running back that is 3 yards-and-a-cloud-of-dust,’ but if it’s a weapon like some of these guys we’re talking about, heck yeah I would,” Beane said.

The 2023 draft, with two first-round running backs, illustrated that point. The Falcons took Robinson eighth overall, and in two seasons he produced 3,350 yards from scrimmage and 23 touchdowns. Four picks after Robinson’s selection, the Detroit Lions drafted Jahmyr Gibbs, which generated much second-guessing of GM Brad Holmes’ pick. Holmes knew better. Gibbs tied for the NFL lead with 16 rushing TDs in 2024 and in teaming with David Montgomery for a 1-2 punch was the league’s fifth-leading rusher with 1,412 yards. In two seasons, he’s tallied 3,190 yards from scrimmage and 31 TDs. Now that’s some value.

Will that recent history serve as a harbinger for this year’s draft?

After Jeanty, the next-highest rated running back is North Carolina’s Omarion Hampton, hailed for his complete package of skills. There are also high marks for two Ohio State runners, Quinshon Judkins and TreVeyon Henderson, Iowa’s Kaleb Johnson, and so on.

Yet here’s the rub: While there’s no shortage of teams that could be tied to using first-round picks on running backs – the Las Vegas Raiders (picking



Running back Omarion Hampton was the leading rusher the past two seasons in the ACC while playing for North Carolina. KIRBY LEE/IMAGN IMAGES

sixth overall), Chicago Bears (10th), Dallas Cowboys (12th) and Denver Broncos (20th) among them – there’s the reason that more than two running backs have been taken in the first round just three times in the past 15 drafts. Last year none went in the first round and just one running back was picked in the first two rounds. The consensus all-rookie running back from 2024, Tampa Bay’s Bucky Irving, was a fourth-round pick.

Other positions, such as edge rusher or offensive tackle, still represent much more of a premium. So, even though there are 10 running backs listed on USA TODAY’s Big Board of the top 101 draft prospects, it’s a stretch to expect this will be the Year of the Running Back.

If the crop is so deep, teams may lean toward so-called premium positions earlier in the draft while figuring they can fill running back needs later. We’ll see. The laws of supply and demand are in play, too, right along with the projected shorter life span for running backs.

Then again, Todd McShay, the long-time draft analyst, contends, “Talent trumps trends.”

McShay, who analyzes the NFL draft for The Ringer and Spotify, told USA TODAY Sports’ Chris Bumbaca that he considers this draft setting up as a “perfect storm” for impact running backs because the deep crop aligns with a resurgence at the position.

“This class is just flat-out loaded with talent,” McShay said. “In 25 years of doing this, I haven’t seen this much high-end talent.”

The 30 running backs drafted in 2017 were the most this century. McShay noted of a crop that included McCaffrey and Leonard Fournette. He expects this year’s haul might top that.

“The amount of talent and guys that can contribute and do different things at varying levels that we’ll see come off the board into the fifth round,” McShay said, “but through the first four rounds especially, is going to be remarkable.”

Yet exactly when the big run on running backs occurs – Opening Night or day two? – will say a lot about whether much has changed in the NFL when it comes to the value of that position that teams can’t afford to be without.

# Allen

Continued from Page 1C

averaged 13.5 points, 9.7 rebounds, 1.9 assists and nearly one steal and nearly one block and shot a career-high league-best 70.6% from the field this season. He also was instrumental in making Cleveland the No. 8 defense and No. 1 offense during the regular season.

He is one of seven players to register 70 steals and 70 blocks and recorded 40 double-doubles and contested 766 shots, which was third-best this season. Mobile at 6-foot-9, Allen provides defensive versatility, guarding on the perimeter or in the paint.

In Cleveland’s Game 1 victory against Miami in their first-round Eastern Conference series in the NBA playoffs, Allen had 12 points, 11 rebounds (six offensive), three steals and one block.

“The rap on Jarrett coming out of college was that he didn’t love basketball, and that scared some people away,” first-year coach Kenny Atkinson told reporters this season. “That couldn’t be farther from the truth. He’s just got a lot of other interests. He’s an intellectual guy, a smart guy, reads a ton, plays all the video games. But you shouldn’t underestimate his toughness and grit. That’s growing. ... Now that his physical strength has caught up to his agility and athleticism, you’re starting to see him in his prime.”

Allen played for Atkinson in Brooklyn and had an idea of what to expect including the prospect of playing fewer minutes per game during the regular season and utilizing depth.

Allen’s minutes decreased this season, but the Cavs won 64 games, the most a non-LeBron James Cavs squad has won in franchise history. They earned the No. 1 seed, three players made the All-Star team (Mobley, Garland, Mitchell) and multiple players are up for season-ending honors, including Ty Jerome for Sixth Man of the Year and Atkinson for Coach of the Year. Mobley, Garland and Mitchell are All-NBA possibilities.



Cavaliers center Jarrett Allen is building a collection of every book he has bought and read. MATT MARTON/IMAGN IMAGES

“We all want to be a superstar, and I understand with my role, it’s not the most glorious,” Allen sad. “But I know I get the satisfaction from my team and my players and honestly everybody around the league that understands how my position helps the team win. Basically my job is to try to make things as easy as possible for guys like Darius, Donovan and Evan to be able to show their talents and their skills on the court.”

Allen gets his opportunities offensively and makes the most of them. He averaged just 7.8 shot attempts but made 5.5 in 2024-25. Allen, who played in all 82 games, was one of seven players to attempt fewer than eight shots per game with fewer than one 3-point attempt per game and still average double-figures in points.

Atkinson likes to create spacing with shooters on the perimeter which opens up driving lanes to the basket. But Allen is not a 3-point shooter. So, during the summer, he spent time with Texas Pro Academy, a basketball training and development center in Austin. Allen worked on positioning and where he can be most effective offensively.

Setting screens for Garland and Mitchell and cutting to the rim where he can catch passes for easy shots was part of the answer. He was 411-for-557 on shots at or near the rim, according to NBA shot chart data. Allen made 159 dunks, and Garland assisted on 30% of Allen’s made shots.

“I’ve been playing with these guys for about three years now, so we know each other’s tendencies very well,” Allen said. “I know how to set the right screen for Darius, I know how to set a different screen for Donovan. The longer you play with players like that, the easier things come naturally.”

Game 2 against Miami is April 23 in Cleveland.

“Just dial into all the things that made us great in the regular season,” Allen said. “It’s easier said than done. But we know that there was a time during the regular season when we played, we were unbeatable. We won 10 games in a row three times this season (including 15-0 to start the season).

“Just trying to find that success and replicating it early in the playoffs so we can get on a roll like that and have it carry us however far we’re going to go.”



# Draft night moves to keep an eye on

Nate Davis  
USA TODAY

As of the morning of April 22 – two days and change before the 2025 NFL Draft commences in Green Bay, Wisconsin – all 32 of the teams own their first-round picks.

Don't presume that will remain the case.

Yet don't necessarily expect movement prior to then, either, given the general lack of star power among this year's incoming college prospects.

"Quarterbacks really drive a lot of predraft trades," says former Giants vice president of player personnel Marc Ross, now an analyst for NFL Network. "Since there isn't this great group of quarterbacks, there aren't these teams doing that now – trading up and (going to) get your guy or trying to secure a place to get a quarterback. And then after the quarterbacks, don't see a ton of other impact players."

Still, clubs and general managers will likely get trigger-happy at some point April 24. Never during the common draft era (since 1967) have all of the league's teams used their organic Round 1 selections in a single draft – and the wheels that would keep that streak intact are doubtless already in motion.

"What you do is strategize throughout the week (of the draft) and say, 'Here's a group of players that we really like, we have them rated high. If the board starts falling to us, if the draft starts falling to us,'" said Ross, "then you start making moves on draft day. But you talk about all these things prior to the draft."

Then it simply becomes a matter of supply and demand, though it seems the league's personnel bosses generally prefer to trade back.

"You pick up extra choices, I think that's the way to do it – stockpiling picks, having extra resources, even next year," longtime ESPN draft guru Mel Kiper Jr. told USA TODAY Sports. "If you have a group of players bunched together, and you feel like you can get one of that group by moving down, you can do it. I'm always an advocate for moving down."

The personal philosophy of Kiper, who has covered the draft for more than four decades, is to try to amass 10 to 12 picks – more rolls of the dice that might produce a late-round gem like Tom Brady or Brock Purdy. Conversely, trading up not only strips a team of current or future draft capital, it puts a spotlight on the GM making the deal as well as the player he's targeting ... though that can work out, too – *if* you climb for, say, Patrick Mahomes instead of Paxton Lynch.

"Trading up – hey, it's worked for a lot of teams. When you see a guy sliding, go get him – be aggressive and just go get him," says Kiper, who cites Philadelphia EVP/GM Howie Roseman and Baltimore's Eric DeCosta as masters of manipulating the board. "Don't let somebody else just take him. Moving up, moving down – when the situation's right, either way, you've got to be aggressive."

Kiper cites the Bears and Falcons – for different reasons – as teams that could be active. He also opined that TE Tyler Warren (Penn State) and Michigan's Colston Loveland as players who could spark transactions.

Here are 12 teams to keep an eye on, in terms of movement potential, as well as a few veterans who *might* also help facilitate a deal:

## Cleveland Browns and New York Giants

Two teams very much in the same boat. They select second and third overall, respectively, both in need a new franchise quarterback ... yet neither is likely to overdraft one that high given the presence of Colorado WR/CB Travis Hunter and Penn State OLB/DE Abdul Carter – both considered among this draft's few premium talents. However, the Browns and Giants are also slotted atop the second round – 33rd and 34th overall, respectively – which means either (or both) can very easily jump back into Round 1, presumably to target a quarterback like Colorado's Shedeir Sanders or Ole Miss' Jaxson Dart.

## New Orleans Saints

They're in a comparable, if less desirable, position to New York's and Cleveland's. The Saints, who initially select ninth overall, also need a quarterback – apparently an even more prominent issue given the sudden deterioration of 34-year-old incumbent Derek Carr's shoulder. Yet if GM Mickey Loomis passes with his first opportunity, he still owns five subsequent picks between Rounds 2 and 4 with multiple in the third and fourth – meaning he can also



Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and All-Pro outside linebacker Micah Parsons, due \$24 million in 2025, have been in discussions about a new contract. KEVIN JAJRA/J/IMAGN IMAGES

feasibly pick a second time in the first time and maybe even skip the Browns and/or Giants if a QB scramble ensues later in the proceedings.

## New England Patriots

They would doubtless love it if the Browns or Giants opted for a QB early – meaning Carter or, especially, Hunter and his dual-threat abilities would be sitting there when the Pats pick fourth overall. The talent deficiency in Foxborough makes it unlikely the Patriots would trade out of the fourth spot otherwise – particularly given the need to better support second-year QB Drake Maye, both in terms of weaponry and protection. Yet with four of the top 77 selections, might the Pats come up for another prime blocker or receiver?

## Chicago Bears

While no club currently has multiple first-rounders, perhaps no one presently owns more premium ammunition than GM Ryan Poles – he has a pair of early Round 2 slots, 39th and 41st overall, in addition to the No. 10 selection. He has been busy remaking second-year QB Caleb Williams' supporting cast this offseason and, if nothing else, has the flexibility to continue doing so in a significant manner – whether that's coming up for a specific player or maybe spinning off one of these picks for a top-shelf choice in 2026.

## Seattle Seahawks

They have multi-direction flexibility similar to Chicago's, GM John Schneider armed with five of the top 92 slots following the offseason trades of WR DK Metcalf and QB Geno Smith. Seattle needs help in the trenches and might even consider a quarterback despite the recent signing of Sam Darnold ... and/or could try to spin some of these assets into future drafts.

## Dallas Cowboys

As much flash as this franchise generates and the overexposure it gets, owner (and de facto general manager) Jerry Jones is often pretty conservative during the draft, where "America's Team" has generally performed rather well in recent years. (Jones is more inclined to trade his mid-rounders for backup quarterbacks.) Yet coming off a 7-10 season that led to former HC Mike McCarthy's departure – and another pretty quiet approach to free agency – could Jones get a little nutty later this week, especially as much as the Cowboys have been linked to Boise State RB Ashton Jeanty, who played his high school ball near Dallas' Frisco, Texas, training facility? The Cowboys have 10 picks, though seven come after Round 4. But they might have the ultimate bargaining chip in All-Pro DE Micah Parsons, who is entering the final year of his contract and due \$24 million in 2025. Just sayin' ... food for thought, especially for a team careening dangerously toward what Jones hates most – irrelevance.

## Atlanta Falcons and Washington Commanders

Each team has five picks – tied for

second fewest in this draft – neither with a third-rounder. It's self-evident why each club might want to add inventory, and Washington's spot near the back of Round 1 (29th overall) could be especially attractive to clubs desiring to move back in for a quarterback or other player.

## Minnesota Vikings

They have the fewest selections (four) of any club and aren't scheduled to participate in Rounds 2 or 4. Yet given how many bodies they added via free agency, it could make sense to part with the 24th overall pick to diversify the overall portfolio.

## Los Angeles Rams

HC Sean McVay and GM Les Snead have never been afraid of wheeling and dealing, whether it pertains to picks, established veterans or a combination thereof. This year's second-rounder was spent last year to move up for DE Braden Fiske in Round 2 of the 2024 draft. Yet the Rams, scheduled to pick 26th, now find themselves as the likely favorites to win the NFC West in 2025 as the 49ers and Seahawks recalibrate. Might that mean Snead and McVay are proactively on the move?

## Philadelphia Eagles

It's Roseman, y'all. He'll be playing chess, and his contemporaries know it. Doesn't mean he won't find trade partners and/or won't chase a player like DB Cooper DeJean in the second round and/or a pair of University of Georgia defenders in the first. The defending champs will pick at or near the bottom of the first four rounds but then have their final four selections in Round 5, providing a nice means to consummate prospective negotiations, and could also use TE Dallas Goedert as a carrot.

## Players who could be traded?

Here are 10 veterans who might find themselves on the move, whether as part of draft deals or post-draft cost-cutting measures:

**Green Bay Packers CB Jaire Alexander:** The two-time Pro Bowler has missed at least 10 games in three of the past four seasons, has occasionally been a locker room distraction and is owed \$37 million over the final two years of his contract. Don't be surprised if the Pack try to replace and displace the 28-year-old.

**Baltimore Ravens TE Mark Andrews:** Will his disastrous performance in last season's playoff loss at Buffalo also be the three-time Pro Bowler's final one in a Baltimore uniform? DeCosta has equivocated about Andrews' future – understandable, to a degree, given he's owed \$11 million in the final year of his contract (a \$4 million bonus already paid) – and at a time when fellow TE Isaiah Likely, who's nearly four years younger, needs an extension of his own.

**Atlanta Falcons QB Kirk Cousins:** Trading their highly compensated backup quarterback would mean \$37.5 million in dead cap money this season for Atlanta. The alternative is paying him \$27.5 million to sit behind Michael Penix Jr. Seems like there's some kind of financial and compensatory compromise

to find here so Cousins, 36, can play elsewhere. But don't expect the Falcons to dump him for nothing or eat a ton of cash so he can simply leave.

**Jacksonville Jaguars RB Travis Etienne:** He had a career-low 812 yards from scrimmage in 2024. Etienne is due \$6.1 million going into the final year of his rookie contract – at a time when the Jags are entering a draft rich in running backs, including Jeanty and Omarion Hampton. Something might have to give here.

**Eagles TE Dallas Goedert:** He's owed \$15.5 million in the final year of his contract, much of it tied up in a bonus Philly could decline to pay. And similar to Etienne's situation, a tight end-heavy draft could make Goedert eminently replaceable.

**Cincinnati Bengals DE Trey Hendrickson:** It's pretty clear the Bengals don't want to trade the 2024 sack leader and Defensive Player of the Year runner-up. Of course, they don't want to pay him what he's worth, either, given he's owed a bargain-basement \$16 million in the final year of his deal. Doesn't really seem like Hendrickson, 30, will get moved for anything less than a first-round pick, but stranger things have happened ... like the Bengals ponying up for a pair of star wideouts on the same day.

**Cowboys DE Micah Parsons:** Again, *highly* improbable Jones lets his best defender get away – especially in a buyer's market given all the talented edge rushers available in this draft. Still, paying QB Dak Prescott, WR CeeDee Lamb and, apparently, Parsons at or near the top of their positional markets simultaneously is tantamount to salary cap malpractice. But Jones will almost surely commit it – and negotiations with Parsons are in the nascent stages – barring a ridiculous offer for him that would somehow restore Dallas as an immediate contender.

**Pittsburgh Steelers WR George Pickens:** You could argue his game and volatility are a little too similar to Metcalf, his new teammate. Yet Pickens' salary – \$3.7 million in the final year of his rookie deal – is completely dissimilar to Metcalf's bag and might make the sometimes immature 24-year-old enticing trade bait from a team currently scheduled to pick once in the draft's first 82 spots.

**Miami Dolphins CB Jalen Ramsey:** The seven-time Pro Bowler, 30, is apparently headed toward a mutual divorce with his third NFL team. Ramsey is signed through 2028. However, he doesn't have any guarantees beyond the upcoming season – a contractual parameter that might make him easier to move if the Fins can find the right dance partner. And while Ramsey is a decade older than this draft's best corners, none of the young players project to have his lockdown capabilities.

**Detroit Lions WR Jameson Williams:** Three years into his NFL career, he's developed into quite a deep-strike weapon on the field. Off of it, he continues to have too many missteps – especially for a player who's the fourth or fifth offensive option overall. And with other extension-eligible players such as DE Aidan Hutchinson slotted for financial priority in Detroit, this could be the ideal time to move a guy who has two years left on his rookie deal, including his fifth-year option.



# The Shedeur Sanders controversy dissected

Josh Peter  
USA TODAY

Like NFL scouts who have evaluated Shedeur Sanders, academics have studied the controversy around him.

Where it starts: The son of Deion Sanders and quarterback from Colorado is the most polarizing player in the draft that starts April 24, triggering vastly different opinions.

He’s a bust!  
He’s NFL-ready!  
He’s arrogant!  
He’s a gentleman!

Back and forth they go, the critics and supporters, creating a cacophony and opportunity for academics to address race, fame, wealth and other issues stoking emotion among fans and analysts voicing opinions about Sanders.

Whether his arm is strong enough, his feet are quick enough, his grasp of defensive formations firm enough, those issues have been debated and will be dissected more. What’s left is to better understand why people react strongly to Sanders and what it says about us.

## Breaking the quarterback mold

Cheryl Cooky is a professor at Purdue University who studies the intersections of gender, sports, culture, and the media. When talking about Shedeur Sanders, she brought up NFL history.

She pointed out that 2023 was the first time the Super Bowl featured two Black starting quarterbacks in Patrick Mahomes of the Kansas City Chiefs and Jalen Hurts of the Philadelphia Eagles.

“I mean, we’re 100-plus years in the history of this league,” she said. “I think that’s important context for understanding what’s happening in dynamics playing out.”

Breaking from the mostly conservative mold of quarterback, Sanders has flashed his luxury watch during games. He’s also sported diamond necklaces. It’s similar to his father, Deion, one of the most flamboyant and outspoken players in NFL history.

Of Shedeur Sanders’ style, Cooky said, “For a Black quarterback to be acting in ways that sort of violate norms and expectations gets policed even more so than I think if this was a Black player in another position or a white quarterback, for example.”



University of Colorado coach Deion Sanders and his son Shedeur, who is expected to be a first-round pick in the NFL draft. MARK J. REBILAS/IMAGN IMAGES

She also brought up ESPN’s Ryan Clark, who faced backlash after he said race was behind NFL evaluators anonymously criticizing Sanders for such things as being “arrogant” and “brash.”

Said Cooky: “Ryan Clark making these comments five years ago, it’d be interesting to see what the response would’ve been at that particular moment when the political landscape was slightly different than what it is today.”

## Comparisons to Arch Manning

Todd Boyd, the “Notorious Ph.D.” at Southern California, is an expert in sports media and American pop culture. In considering the treatment of Sanders, he contemplated a future situation.

“It’ll be interesting to watch how Arch Manning is covered,” he said.

Manning, unlike Sanders, does not have a famous father. But he has two famous uncles (Peyton and Eli) and a legendary grandfather (Archie). They comprise the “First Family of Football” and may help better understand the dynamic around Shedeur.

Arch Manning, who is expected to start the 2025 season, spent the past two years primarily on the bench. Yet, Boyd noted, Arch Manning has gotten ample favorable attention.

“The reason he’s getting that kind of attention is because of his last name, and I’ve not found anybody who’s had a problem with that,” he said.

Being the son of Deion Sanders has not always translated into favorable attention.

“Deion moves through the world too easily for some people’s liking,” Boyd said.

Also, Boyd noted that for many years the narrative for Black athletes was they were underprivileged and success in athletics was their singular way out.

“We have a generation of Black athletes now who don’t fit that stereotype, and Shedeur certainly doesn’t fit that,” Boyd said. “I think some people might be slow to recognize this change, and there may be others who are potentially put off by it.”

## Shades of Angel Reese

Angela Hattery, co-director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Gender Based Violence at the University of Delaware, has written extensively about sports.

Hattery, in thinking about Sanders, said she’s reminded of Angel Reese entering the 2024 WNBA Draft along with her rival, Caitlin Clark.

“There were a lot of haters of Angel Reese and everybody loved Caitlin Clark and they’re both really great players,” Hattery said. “But Angel didn’t want to play the good girl. She cultivated a very different image.”

Similarly, Sanders has not conformed to the image of a traditional quarterback.

“Black men have to fit in a much smaller box,” Hattery said. “There’s just a lot of evidence for that, that we still require Black men to behave certain ways. And we prefer as a society that they behave in ways that are more normative white. We’re more comfortable with (President Barack) Obama, for example, than we are with Black men who are more audacious or more flashy ...”

## ‘Some racist tendencies’

Jay Coakley, the author of “Sports In Society: Issues and Controversies,” cited President Donald Trump as a factor in some of the controversial views of Sanders. In particular, Trump setting a policy captured by this quote: “We will terminate every diversity, equity, and inclusion program across the entire federal government.”

“Trump has raised this issue where if you’re not a white man and you’re getting publicity, it’s somehow unjustified,” Coakley said.

As a result, Coakley suggested, it’s understandable how Sanders has become controversial to some people.

“If there’s a fan who’s got some racist tendencies, they’re going to make that connection and they’re going to say, ‘This is a typical flashy Black athlete, and I just don’t go for them,’” Coakley said. “And so race comes in that way. But I seriously doubt that somebody’s going to talk about race in a very explicit way for fear that they’re going to be attacked.

“Now, as a sociologist, I know there is that kind of a connection.”

# QB’s harshest critic laments losing his own NFL dream

Josh Peter  
USA TODAY

Shedeur Sanders has attracted a special brand of critics.

They can be underhanded, brutal and merciless.

Among those regularly ripping Sanders, the Colorado quarterback and son of Deion Sanders, one man stands apart.

It’s Daniel Kelly, 51, a former pro scout for the New York Jets. Last week he said he was laying low with his criticism of Sanders. But that day he extended his streak of posting negative tweets about the quarterback to 14 days in a row.

In some ways, the overall criticism of Sanders has been fair. But in other ways, it’s traversed into the extreme.

Kelly represents the latter. He exemplifies the challenges polarizing players like Sanders encounter on social media from individuals who consider themselves draft experts – but may not have the extensive experience and accountability of high-profile experts like the NFL Network’s Daniel Jeremiah or ESPN’s Louis Riddick.

“It’s never hating,” Kelly told USA TODAY Sports. “It’s evaluating.”

With Sanders expected to be picked in the first round of the 2025 NFL Draft, Kelly has bestowed on him a “100% bust rate.” He also has labeled Sanders as “an immature, passive aggressive hothead” and “NFL practice squad talent with a Hall of Fame name.” Of Sanders’ character, the former scout wrote “he has a suitcase full of red flags.”

In more analytical fashion, Kelly writes Sanders has “decent arm strength,” “good behind-the-line-of-scrimmage mobility” and resets in the pocket. But that he takes too long to throw the ball, presents a medical risk because of a fractured back in 2023 and is prone to fumbling.

The result: Kelly has raised his profile, relished articles being written about his opinions of Sanders and ticked off some notable people.

On March 3, Deion Sanders Jr. wrote on X, “Bro just calm yo (expletive) down....” On April 3, Mel Kiper Jr. tersely dissected one of Kelly’s tweets during ESPN’s “First Draft.” And every day, Kelly said, he gets bombarded with un-

pleasant messages, including death threats, on his X account, @firstround-mock.

“My wife can’t believe some of the stuff I’ve showed her,” Kelly said.

## The improbable path

Kelly’s path to the NFL is about as improbable as a sixth-round draft pick becoming the greatest quarterback of all time.

At 17, according to Kelly, he started writing and sending scouting reports to Charley Casserly, then general manager of the NFL’s team in Washington. “I remember the name,” Casserly told USA TODAY Sports.

At 21, according to Kelly, he did an unpaid internship with Tony Dungy, then defensive coordinator with the Minnesota Vikings. Dungy did not respond to voicemails and text messages from USA TODAY Sports.

At 24, Kelly said, he published an NFL Draft guide and sent copies to every team in the league. The Jets apparently were impressed enough to hire Kelly, who said he was working as a loan officer at the time.

“I was sitting in the best chair in the National Football League at 24 years old,” he said.

A 1998 media guide for the Jets lists Kelly as a member of the support staff and working pro personnel. He said he worked with the team until 2002. As evidence, Kelly has shared online photos of a Jets ID badge and a Jets business card identifying him as a Pro Scout.

Lionel Vital, who was a scout with the Jets in 1998 and 1999 and went on to become director of college scouting for the Dallas Cowboys, confirmed Kelly’s time with the Jets.

“He’d walk in there and he had his opinion, and he’d just stick to it,” said Vital, who co-hosted a podcast with Kelly last season. “He just wouldn’t give up on what he thought, and I know he’s going to tell everybody.”

It was a turbulent four years.

The first month on the job, according to Kelly, he was diagnosed with testicular cancer. In early 2001, his daughter Bailey Hope, then 15 months old, was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma cancer, Kelly said.



Daniel Kelly isn’t the only analyst to criticize former Colorado quarterback Shedeur Sanders. MARK J. REBILAS/IMAGN IMAGES

“It made my cancer look like a walk in the park,” he said.

He shared a memorial card of his daughter. She died Dec. 25, 2001.

Kelly said he got fired by the Jets about two months later.

“I believe I had the talent to do this,” Kelly said, “but I was too immature.”

## Predictions gone wrong

Jason Brown, a football coach who starred in Netflix’s “Last Chance U,” said of Shedeur Sanders, “Let’s be honest, if he’s not Prime’s son, he’s not even a (expletive) third-rounder.”

Dan Sileo, a retired defensive tackle who played one year in the NFL, wrote on X, “QB Shedeur Sanders will be an @nfl bust!”

Johnny Manziel, a genuine NFL bust, ripped Sanders for insinuating Colorado’s offensive line was to blame after he got sacked six times in the team’s 28-10 loss to Nebraska last season.

In other words, Kelly isn’t the only one openly blasting Sanders. But it’s come at a price.

Critics have skewered Kelly for some of his past predictions, such as:

“Tim Tebow...is a future Hall of Fame caliber quarterback.”

“Bryce Young has the best potential I’ve ever seen to quickly turnaround a struggling team.”

“Spencer Rattler is the next Patrick Mahomes.”

What Kelly would prefer to highlight: “Any GM who is considering (Trey Lance) or takes him in the first round should be fired on the spot.”

“It would be foolish to take (Zach Wilson) in the first round. He will get everybody fired.”

“(C.J.) Stroud is a franchise quarterback.”

## Dreaming again

Bill Polian, the retired general manager of the Indianapolis Colts, said he doesn’t know of Kelly or begrudge draft analysts like him. But he says they’re ill-equipped.

“If someone’s a retired scout, then he has about 45% of the information,” Polian said, noting that psychological testing and medical evaluations are among information available only to NFL personnel. “I just know that they don’t have all the information that I, as a general manager, needed in order to make a judgment.”

Added Polian: “Some guy in his grandmother’s basement doesn’t know how to look at film.”

For the record, Kelly said he lives in a townhouse in Key West, Florida, with his wife, Samantha.

“First two years I was out of football, I didn’t even watch the game,” he said. “I couldn’t, it was too painful ...

“I’m 28 years old. I’m on the backside of my dream.”

But he’s dreaming again, about reclaiming his NFL dream. Says he is working 17 to 20 hours a day, six to seven days a week while building his business, First Round Mock, and its website he launched in 2022.

“He grinds,” said Vital, the former NFL scout.

There’s little time to waste at 51, hoping to get back to the NFL while pumping out scouting reports, more analysis and tweets, many of them pointed and directed at Sanders.

“Please get help,” one X user wrote to Kelly, “you are clearly hurting about something.”







# Alex Ovechkin's first playoff OT goal lifts Caps

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA | REUTERS

Alex Ovechkin scored two goals, including the winner in overtime, to lift the Washington Capitals to a 3-2 victory over the visiting Montreal Canadiens in Game 1 of their Eastern Conference quarterfinal NHL playoff series.

It was Ovechkin's first career playoff overtime goal. He also notched an assist for Washington, which squandered a two-goal lead in the third period. Anthony Beauvillier finished with a goal and an assist, and Dylan Strome logged three assists.

Cole Caufield and Nick Suzuki scored for Montreal, each on an assist from Lane Hutson.

Ovechkin, 39, added another highlight to a magical season in which he surpassed Wayne Gretzky as the NHL's all-time goal scoring leader. He sealed the series opener April 21 after the Capitals won a faceoff in the offensive zone and Beauvillier found him open in front of the net. The tally was the 74th career playoff goal for Ovechkin, who finished the regular season with 897 career goals, three more than Gretzky.

In other first-round series games April 21:

- **Kings 6, Oilers 5:** Phillip Danault scored his second goal of the game with 41.1 seconds remaining in regulation to give host Los Angeles a wild victory over Edmonton in their series opener.

Andrei Kuzmenko and Adrian Kempe both collected one goal and two assists while Quinton Byfield and Kevin Fiala both registered one goal and one assist for the Kings. Goaltender Darcy Kuemper made 20 saves for the Kings, who held a 4-0 lead late in the second period and 5-2 edge in the third before the Oilers charged back.

Connor McDavid scored once in a four-point game for Edmonton.

- **Stars 4, Avalanche 3 (OT):** Colin Blackwell scored 17:46 into overtime to give Dallas a win over visiting Colorado, evening their first-round Western Conference playoff series at one victory each.

Evgenii Dadonov, Thomas Harley and Tyler Seguin scored for the Stars in regulation, and Sam Steel had two assists, including the setup for the OT tally. Jake Oettinger stopped 34 of 37 shots.

Colorado's Logan O'Connor had a goal and assist.

- **Jets 2, Blues 1:** Kyle Connor scored the tiebreaking goal in the third period for a second straight game to help Winnipeg to a win against visiting St. Louis in Game 2 of their series.

Mark Scheifele had a goal and an assist for the Jets, who lead the series 2-0. Connor Hellebuyck made 21 saves.

Jimmy Snuggerud scored and Jordan Binnington stopped 20 shots for the Blues.

## FOR THE RECORD

All times ET

### COLLEGE BASEBALL

#### USA TODAY Sports Coaches Poll

Rank, school (1sts)	W-L	Pts	LW
1 Texas (29)	33-5	748	1
2 Clemson	35-7	710	4
3 Oregon State	30-7	639	6
4 Arkansas (1)	34-7	637	2
5 LSU	34-7	616	7
6 Tennessee	33-7	612	3
7 Florida State	29-7	590	8
8 North Carolina	31-9	530	10
9 Georgia	33-9	484	5
10 Vanderbilt	30-10	461	17
11 Auburn	27-13	405	9
12 UC Irvine	28-9	403	14
13 Oklahoma	29-10	355	16
14 West Virginia	34-4	328	20
15 UCLA	29-10	317	12
16 Oregon	27-11	312	18
17 Alabama	31-10	240	15
18 Ole Miss	28-12	227	11
19 Arizona	22-11	227	22
20 Coastal Carolina	30-10	197	21
21 Louisville	28-11	157	19
22 Georgia Tech	29-11	116	13
23 Troy	28-12	115	23
24 Southern Miss	27-13	84	26
25 NC State	27-12	47	28

Dropped out: No. 23 TCU 29-12, No. 25 Western Kentucky 33-7.

Others receiving votes: Western Kentucky 33-7 46; TCU 29-12 36; Iowa Baptist 28-11 34; Kansas 31-10 27; Iowa 27-11 24; Northeastern 30-9 7; Cal Poly 27-11 6; Southeastern Louisiana 31-9 4; Duke 28-14 4; Kentucky 22-15 3; UTSA 30-10 2.

The USA TODAY Sports board of coaches is made up of 30 coaches at Division I institutions. All are members of the American Baseball Coaches Association.

### UFL

#### XFL Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arlington	3	1	0	.750	83	43
DC	3	1	0	.750	80	62
St. Louis	2	2	0	.500	87	72
San Antonio	1	3	0	.250	65	103

#### USFL Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Birmingham	3	1	0	.750	65	55
Michigan	3	1	0	.750	91	65
Houston	1	3	0	.250	49	82
Memphis	0	4	0	.000	50	88

#### Friday's Game

Memphis at Birmingham, 8 p.m.

### SOCCER

#### English Premier League

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Liverpool	33	24	7	2	75	31	79
Arsenal	33	18	12	3	61	27	66
Nott'm Forest	33	18	6	9	53	39	60
Newcastle	33	18	5	10	62	44	59
Man City	33	17	7	9	64	42	58
Chelsea	33	16	9	8	58	40	57
Aston Villa	33	16	9	8	53	47	57
Bournemouth	33	13	10	10	52	40	49
Fulham	33	13	9	11	48	45	48
Brighton	33	12	9	12	53	53	48
Brentford	33	13	7	13	56	50	46
Crystal Palace	33	11	11	11	41	45	44
Everton	33	8	14	11	34	40	38
Man United	33	10	8	15	38	46	38
Wolverhampton	33	11	5	17	48	61	38
Tottenham	33	11	4	18	61	51	37
West Ham	33	9	9	15	37	55	36
Ipswich Town	33	4	9	20	33	71	21
Leicester City	33	4	6	23	27	73	18
Southampton	33	2	5	26	24	78	11

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

#### Monday's Game

Tottenham 1, Nottingham Forest 2

#### Tuesday's Game

Manchester City 2, Aston Villa 1

#### Wednesday's Game

Crystal Palace at Arsenal, 3 p.m.

### MLS

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Charlotte FC	6	2	1	19	16	7
Cincinnati	6	2	1	19	13	11
Inter Miami CF	5	0	3	18	13	6

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Columbus	5	1	3	18	12	7
Philadelphia	5	3	1	16	16	9
Nashville	4	4	1	13	12	11
Orlando City	3	2	4	13	15	12
Chicago	3	3	3	12	16	15
NY Red Bulls	3	3	3	12	10	9
NY City FC	3	4	2	11	11	13
New England	3	4	1	10	6	7
Atlanta	2	4	3	9	11	16
D.C. United	2	4	3	9	11	19
Toronto FC	1	4	4	7	8	13
CF Montreal	0	6	3	3	4	13

### WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Vancouver	6	1	2	20	17	6
Austin FC	5	3	1	16	7	8
Minnesota	4	1	4	16	11	7
Portland	4	2	3	15	16	13
Colorado	4	2	3	15	13	13
San Diego FC	4	3	2	14	15	12
Los Angeles FC	4	4	1	13	13	14
Seattle	3	3	3	12	12	11
FC Dallas	3	3	3	12	10	11
Chicago	2	2	1	7	9	8
Real Salt Lake	3	6	0	9	8	14
Saint Louis	2	4	3	9	5	6
Sporting KC	2	6	1	7	15	19
Houston	1	4	4	7	8	14
LA Galaxy	0	6	3	3	6	16

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

### NWSL

	W	L	D	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	5	0	0	15	12	1
Orlando	4	1	0	12	11	2
Washington	4	1	0	12	7	3
Gotham	2	1	2	8	8	4
Angel City	2	1	2	8	7	8
San Diego	2	1	1	7	9	8
Seattle	2	2	1	7	5	5
Bay	2	2	1	7	5	5
Portland	1	2	2	5	3	5
Houston	1	3	1	4	4	8
Utah	1	3	1	4	4	8
Louisville	1	3	1	4	3	9
Chicago	1	4	0	3	3	11
North Carolina	0	3	2	2	3	7

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

#### Tuesday's Game

Gotham at Portland

#### Friday's Games

Utah at Houston, 8 p.m.

Angel City at Orlando, 8 p.m.

### NBA

#### Playoffs first round

Best-of-7 series

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

##### Cleveland Cavaliers 1, Miami Heat 0

Game 1: Cavaliers 121, Heat 100

April 23: Heat at Cavaliers, 7:30 p.m., NBA TV

April 26: Cavaliers at Heat, TBD, TNT

April 28: Cavaliers at Heat, TBD

##### Boston Celtics 1, Orlando Magic 0

Game 1: Celtics 103, Magic 86

April 23: Magic at Celtics, 7 p.m., TNT

April 25: Celtics at Magic, 7 p.m., ESPN

April 27: Celtics at Magic, 7 p.m., TNT

##### New York Knicks 1, Detroit Pistons 1

Game 1: Knicks 123, Pistons 112

Game 2: Pistons 100, Knicks 94

April 24: Knicks at Pistons, 7 p.m., TNT

April 27: Knicks at Pistons, 1 p.m., ABC

##### Indiana Pacers 1, Milwaukee Bucks 0

Game 1: Pacers 117, Bucks 98

Game 2: Bucks at Pacers

April 25: Pacers at Bucks, 8 p.m., ESPN

April 27: Pacers at Bucks, 9:30 p.m., ESPN

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

##### Oklahoma City Thunder 1, Memphis Grizzlies 0

Game 1: Thunder 131, Grizzlies 80

Game 2: Grizzlies at Thunder

April 24: Thunder at Grizzlies, 9:30 p.m., TNT

April 26: Thunder at Grizzlies, 1 p.m., TNT

##### Golden State Warriors 1, Houston Rockets 0

Game 1: Warriors 95, Rockets 85

April 23: Warriors at Rockets, 9:30 p.m., TNT

April 26: Rockets at Warriors, 9:30 p.m., ABC

April 28: Rockets at Warriors, 9:30 p.m., TNT

##### L.A. Lakers vs. Minnesota Timberwolves

Game 1: Timberwolves 117, Lakers 95

Game 2: Timberwolves at Lakers

April 25: Lakers at Timberwolves, 9:30, ESPN

April 27: Lakers at Timberwolves, 3:30, ABC

##### Denver Nuggets 1, Los Angeles Clippers 1

Game 1: Nuggets 112, Clippers 110 (OT)

Game 2: Clippers 105, Nuggets 102

April 24: Nuggets at Clippers, 10 p.m.,

## Sports Weekly

On newsstands: We continue our preview of this week's NFL draft with a breakdown and grades for positions (which groups get an A+?) and a look at teams that have the most at stake. What do they need to do? Plus, we examine Penn State edge rusher Abdul Carter and what makes him so valuable. Bob Nightengale's baseball notebook takes you around the major leagues and our NHL experts offer predictions for the Stanley Cup playoffs. We also have MLB stats and MLB, NBA and NHL box scores. You can order the edition at [onlinestore.usatoday.com](https://onlinestore.usatoday.com) and subscribe to the magazine by going to [mysportsweekly.com](https://mysportsweekly.com) or by calling 800-872-1415.

### NBA TV

April 26: Nuggets at Clippers, 6 p.m., TNT

### NHL

#### Playoffs

##### First Round

Best-of-7 series

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

##### Washington Capitals 1, Montreal Canadiens 0

Game 1: Capitals 3, Canadiens 2, OT

April 23: Canadiens at Capitals, 7 p.m., ESPN

April 25: Capitals at Canadiens, 7 p.m., TNT

April 27: Capitals at Canadiens, 6:30 p.m., TBS

##### Carolina Hurricanes 1, New Jersey Devils 0

Game 1: Hurricanes 4, Devils 1

Game 2: Devils at Hurricanes

April 25: Hurricanes at Devils, 8 p.m., TBS

April 27: Hurricanes at Devils, 3:30 p.m., TBS

##### Toronto Maple Leafs 1, Ottawa Senators 0

Game 1: Maple Leafs 6, Senators 2

Game 2: Senators at Maple Leafs

April 24: Maple Leafs at Senators, 7 p.m., ESPN2

April 26: Maple Leafs at Senators, 7 p.m., TBS

##### Tampa Bay Lightning vs. Florida Panthers

Game 1: Panthers at Lightning

April 24: Panthers at Lightning, 6:30 p.m., TBS

April 26: Lightning at Panthers, 1 p.m., TBS

April 28: Lightning at Panthers, TBD

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

##### Winnipeg Jets 2, St. Louis Blues 0

Game 1: Jets 5, Blues 3

Game 2: Jets 2, Blues 1

April 24: Jets at Blues, 9:30 p.m., ESPN2

April 27: Jets at Blues, 1 p.m., TBS

##### Colorado Avalanche 1, Dallas Stars 1

Game 1: Avalanche 5, Stars 1

Game 2: Stars 4, Avalanche 3, OT

April 23: Stars at Avalanche, 9:30 p.m., ESPN

April 26: Stars at Avalanche, 9:30 p.m., TBS

##### Vegas Golden Knights 1, Minnesota Wild 0

Game 1: Golden Knights 4, Wild 2

Game 2: Wild at Golden Knights

April 24: Golden Knights at Wild, 9 p.m., TBS

April 26: Golden Knights at Wild, 4 p.m., TBS

##### Los Angeles Kings 1, Edmonton Oilers 0

Game 1: Kings 6, Oilers 5

April 23: Oilers at Kings, 10 p.m., TBS

April 25: Kings at Oilers, 10 p.m., TNT

April 27: Kings at Oilers, 9:30 p.m., TBS

### MLB

#### American League East Division



# Greene embraces ‘beauty’ of long road

Gabe Lacques  
USA TODAY

BALTIMORE – Hunter Greene has occupied a unique position in baseball’s zeitgeist, an inherently buzzy character who nonetheless never fully grasped the mantle as its Next Big Thing. Oh, he had plenty of advance billing, as a two-way prep superstar drafted second overall in 2017, one year before Shohei Ohtani ever graced a major league field. Yet even as he always possessed the sport’s most eye-opening currency – a 100-mph fastball – fate seemed to intercede. Just one pro season into ditching shortstop and embracing pitching full time, he required Tommy John surgery, deleting him from competitive pitching for the 2019 and 2020 seasons. And even as he got his professional sea legs, the command that comes with a polished product eluded him, resulting in too many home run balls as Ohtani and the indomitable Paul Skenes dominated the discourse.

The nonlinear path to fulfilling potential isn’t just for long-shot prospects or slumping hitters. Sometimes the can’t-miss flamethrower, the bluest chip in the stack, needs a minute to get there. “But you know, there’s beauty in that,” Greene tells USA TODAY Sports, “in being able to figure out ways to become a better player and a better person and be able to grow. To add to your development and process. I was able to do that. I was able to come back better in a lot of different ways. And it’s made me better as a person, too.” And it’s clear the Greene who the Reds and baseball fans dreamed on has arrived.

In an era of unprecedented velocity, Greene checks pitching boxes that so many throwers cannot: He throws harder and longer than anyone and, since the beginning of last season, has dominated opposing hitters as much as any starting pitcher. He’s held opposing batters to a league-low .179 batting average since 2024, with only Skenes (.541) and reigning American League Cy Young winner Tarik Skubal (.566) producing a lower OPS against than Greene’s .578. Greene leads the National League in WHIP this season, at 0.78, and joins an eye-popping quintet of All-Stars atop the leaderboard over the past two seasons: Logan Gilbert, Skenes, Skubal, Zack Wheeler and Greene. Yes, he belongs in that conversation. But it’s also the manner in which he dominates that gives pause.

## Keeping it 100

In Greene’s second start of the season at Texas, he began an 18 ⅓-inning



Hunter Greene was the second overall pick in the 2017 MLB draft.  
GREG FIUME/GETTY IMAGES

scoreless streak that included several career-high water marks. An April 7 start in San Francisco marked the first time he pitched into the ninth inning, falling one out shy of completing a four-hit shutout. It wasn’t for lack of stuff: In the ninth inning, on his 88th pitch, Greene’s fastball was clocked at 100.7 mph. In his previous start, 56 of his 59 four-seam fastballs were at least 99 mph. “A lot of guys can touch 100. Hunter throws 100,” says Reds closer Emilio Pagan. “There’s a lot of guys that can throw 98, 99 and hit 100 a couple times in a game. If you look up at Hunter, that game in San Fran, he was 101 in the ninth. That’s ridiculous. He’s kind of on another level with that.” “Obviously Skenes is a name that pops up. I feel like Hunter’s fastball is even more consistent than his. No disrespect to Skenes. But it’s fun to watch, man.” Like any flamethrower, Greene’s ascendance truly began when he combined power with pitchability. He gave up a combined 53 homers over 237 innings in his first two seasons yet cut that number to 12 over 150 ⅔ last year. He’s taken another big step forward in 2025. His walk rate ranged from 9% to 9.6% his first three seasons but he’s cut that nearly in half, to 5.1%, and has a 35-6 strikeout-walk ratio through five starts. Those numbers start with conviction. “Being able to trust in yourself, believe in yourself, be aggressive in the zone,” says Greene. “And just play the odds. Play the odds of being able to come out on top in an at-bat and just believe in yourself.

“Being able to fill up the zone, you’ll find yourself in a deeper part of the game by getting ahead, getting quick outs.” Indeed, Greene has completed at least seven innings in three of his five starts, coming off a 2024 in which he did so in seven of his 26 outings. Possessing a fastball ranked in the 99th percentile by Statcast is both a gift and an asset to be nurtured. The lengthier starts add significant value for the Reds. For Greene, it remains a work in progress, a tool both to elicit chase from opposing hitters and use to either set up his burgeoning split-finger pitch or vice versa. “It comes with time,” he says of harnessing heat. “It was a process for me. I’m still working on it. Some guys just throw it. But being able to know how to use it in certain counts, to certain hitters, and moving the ball around – I feel like that’s a process. Being able to figure that out and find that and use it for you. Taking mental notes. The biggest thing is being able to make adjustments.” The process never ends. Greene’s scoreless streak did not last another pitch on April 19, when he gave up consecutive homers to Baltimore’s Cedric Mullins and Gunnar Henderson to start the first inning. He needed 77 pitches to complete three innings, and manager Terry Francona surmised that was enough for this day. Greene’s takeaway? “That this game is full of failure,” he says. “I wouldn’t be in this position I’m in if I weren’t able to do that.”

**‘A real joy to watch him’**

That mentality distills the sense of

security Greene possesses. He has financial security in the form of a six-year, \$53 million deal signed when he was coming off a 5-13, 4.44 ERA campaign in his first full season. With each dominant start, the pact looks a little more team-friendly, yet Greene will hit the free agent market no later than 30, plenty of time to approach the \$40 million per annum pitchers of that age and pedigree have attained. It’s just as likely he hasn’t neared his performance apex, either. “Shoot, I hope we haven’t seen it yet,” says Francona. “With good young players, they get to a certain point where they start to get better. They learn there’s another gear. They’re not just trying to survive. They’re trying to thrive.” “I think he saw that he had another gear and came into shape ready to go. He’s got a split-finger now that I think is becoming a weapon. He holds his velocity because he’s in good shape.” Longevity is important to Greene. He understands the significance that comes with being the preeminent Black pitcher in the game, and the symbolic heft of joining the Black Aces, the informal fraternity of pitchers who have won 20 games in a season. In this era of bullpen specialization, wins are harder to come by, but Greene keeps that goal close at hand. “Being able to be in position to where it’s a goal of mine, and also obtainable, is special,” he says. “Hopefully I’m able to obtain that one day.” That kind of sums up Greene’s station in life: He has an All-Star appearance and a long-term contract under his belt yet doesn’t turn 26 until August, young enough still to dream on the future. It’s a sweet spot, to be sure – the gifted athlete now able to harness their gift, not at all worried about being the next big thing but embracing the now, with the promise of more very much in front of them. “You could tell he was not only confident, but super-comfortable with who he is on the mound,” says Pagan, in his second season with the Reds. “That’s a really dangerous combination for an athlete, because he knows he’s good, but he’s also very aware of who he needs to be in order to be the best version of him on any given day. “It’s been a real joy to watch him, man. “Obviously, I knew about his natural ability when I signed here, but to see him grow as fast as he has since I’ve been here, into being a guy who was supposed to be really good and who showed flashes of it to where, when he takes the mound, I feel like he’s going to go nine every time. It just looks like that. “I know he hasn’t done that yet. But they’re coming, for sure.”

# Pistons’ culture shifts with playoff road win

Lorenzo Reyes  
USA TODAY

NEW YORK – The last time the Detroit Pistons won a playoff game, the Seattle SuperSonics were a month from selecting Russell Westbrook with the No. 4 pick of the NBA draft. Apple was months from releasing the iPhone 3G, the successor to the original model. In fact, since May 26, 2008, the date of Detroit’s last postseason victory, the Boston Celtics have won an NBA-most 126 playoff games. The evening of April 21, facing the possibility of a second consecutive blown fourth-quarter lead, the Pistons snapped a 15-game postseason losing streak to even their first-round series against the New York Knicks. They won 100-94. In the process, Detroit surpassed another bench mark, another indicator its culture is being reset. “We did what we were supposed to do,” Pistons coach J.B. Bickerstaff told reporters. “To win a game, on the road, to get home court is what we came here for. We approached it with a business-like mentality and learned from the fourth quarter the other night, but we just did what we were supposed to do.” This season Detroit posted a 30-win improvement over last year, the sixth-best turnaround in NBA history. The team has a burgeoning supernova in Cade Cunningham, a 23-year-old, first-time All-Star who dropped 33 points and 12 rebounds 11 of them defensive in the second game of the series at Madison Square Garden. The Pistons play team defense and hounded the Knicks along the perimeter, forcing them to miss their first eight 3-point tries. Through the first two games of this series – even with the April 19 blown



Cade Cunningham celebrates his sole 3-pointer in a Game 2 win over the Knicks.  
BRAD PENNER, IMAGN IMAGES

lead – the young Pistons showed they’re already ahead of their rebuild. “We wanted to send a message,” Tobias Harris said. “We were disappointed after Game 1 with what happened there, so we wanted to come out tonight and figure out ways that we could be better. ... Our message was for us, internally, to show that we could close. Tonight was a great night for that. That type of feeling and that type of energy – we have a team that’s new and new to this feeling. We needed to understand how to close out a game in the playoffs.” Just like they did two days earlier, the Pistons entered the fourth quarter with an eight-point lead. And also like the first game, New York responded with a fury, tying the score at 94 with 1:15 left.

But point guard Dennis Schröder scored 20 points off the bench, none bigger than his go-ahead 3-pointer that was the eventual game-winner. The question is whether it will be merely a culture-shifting victory, or one the Pistons can ride to a series upset. Some of the coaching adjustments they made before Game 2 suggest that Detroit could continue to find ways to attack New York’s defense. After the Knicks dictated the physicality with which they defended Cunningham in Game 1, the Pistons asked Cunningham to push the pace and get easier opportunities in transition. When asked about the shift, Bickerstaff did not divulge much, saying only that the Pistons “saw something” from game film they

thought they could exploit. Cunningham responded. After missing his first two shots of the game, he relentlessly attacked the rim and attempted 12 free throws. He played under control and never seemed flustered. “He’s elite,” Bickerstaff said. “He is a superstar, and he played the game tonight as a superstar. He did what he needed to do to help his team win. He understood how aggressive he needed to be on the offensive end of the floor. So he was going to go out and be aggressive. He also understood how important finishing possessions was. He had 11 defensive rebounds; that’s knowing and understanding how to manipulate the game and make winning plays, whatever your team needs in the moment.” The Pistons also moved center Jalen Duren to guard the shorter Josh Hart, reducing his impact on the offensive glass, an area where Hart can spark New York with high-energy plays. That left Harris to guard Knicks center Karl-Anthony Towns, a player with range who can stretch the floor; Towns took just three shots in the second half, did not score after intermission and finished with 10 points. The Knicks, however, are also well-coached. They are loaded with offensive firepower and will surely make their own adjustments ahead of Game 3 on April 24 in Detroit. The next test for the Pistons will be to anticipate any tweaks and devise their own – to avoid stagnation and retain home-court advantage. “It’s a great feeling, man,” Cunningham said. “It feels good to represent the city like we did tonight. It’s something that the city has been waiting on a long time, so we feel good about it and we’re ready to go back to the crib and perform in front of them.”



# College football burns as leaders eat cake



**Matt Hayes**  
USA TODAY Sports Network

The absurdity would be hilarious if it weren't so dangerously reckless. College football is dying, everyone. And the sport's leaders don't really care. Somewhere in Las Colinas, Texas, in a posh \$600 a night five-star hotel, the muckety-mucks of the College Football Playoff are dining on five-star meals and bickering about playoff formats and automatic qualifiers and generating revenue – and getting nothing done. That's four of these highfalutin' meetings in the past four months, thank you.

With nary a thing to show. Meanwhile, the college football world is crumbling around them. A quarterback just held a football team hostage because none of those muckety-mucks had the foresight to make sure NIL deals had buyout clauses. Or had – and I know this is a foreign idea – a plan. One plan. Any plan.

One that doesn't include the Tennessee quarterback failing to get a restructured NIL deal days before the spring transfer portal opened, and leaving to sign with UCLA. That doesn't include the UCLA quarterback, who three months earlier transferred to Westwood from Appalachian State, leaving UCLA before playing a snap and signing with – wait for it – Tennessee. All in a matter of a week. Back in Las Colinas, the 10 conference commissioners and the Notre Dame athletic director – at the behest of their university presidents (don't ever forget that part) – will continue to play the charade of we're for all of college football. For a better and equitable game.

When they all know damn well the SEC and Big Ten own the show. It's their script, their three-card monte. They strut around the meetings with their big sticks and passive/aggressive attitudes, knowing they can whack anyone out of line with a simple execution of we'll take our ball and go home. Translation: The television networks



**Tennessee football coach Josh Heupel talks to now-former Vols quarterback Nico Iamaleava.** SAUL YOUNG/KNOXVILLE (TENN.) NEWS SENTINEL

want us, not you – and we'll start our own playoff if we don't get our way. I'd be a lot happier if they were just honest about it. Here's what we're doing, take it or leave it. Would save a boatload of revenue in swanky resort fees – and then they can begin the heavy lift of fixing the game. Like slowing the bleeding by adding buyouts to NIL deals. Or adding a \$200,000 transfer portal talent fee for Group of Five schools losing players to Power Four conference schools. Group of Five schools spent time and money developing the players, they should get something in return. I mean, other than the Big Ten and SEC telling them to take it – or you'll get even less College Football Playoff money. If a team is going to pay \$1 million for the best tight end in the MAC, surely they'll pay \$1.2 million to cover the talent fee. And yes, the talent fee is part of the salary pool. See how easy that is? See how that could, at the very least, give pause to a team contemplating a raid of Group of Five schools?

It's so much easier when the villain and hero roles are clearly defined, and frankly, I don't think the SEC and Big Ten give a flip about being the villains. But, buddy, can they put on a show like they do. We all know what the SEC and Big Ten want, and we all know they're going to get it. The idea that the rest of college football has any power over them by holding out possible format changes for the final year (2025) of the old CFP contract is comical. The Big Ten and SEC: We want a 14-team structure for the new CFP contract beginning in 2026, with four automatic qualifiers each. And we're going to hold play-in games during championship weekend. The rest of college football: If you do that, we'll be really mad – and, and, and, well, *we won't vote for the straight seeding you want for the 2025 CFP!* Heavens, not that. But they'll argue day after day over these inane topics, while the core of the sport is rotting. Because university presidents care about how it looks –

not how it works. How it looks like the NCAA (see: the 300-plus university presidents, not some singular boogeyman) has done everything it can to promote player empowerment, but did so at the cost of critical structure. How it looks like the NCAA has given players the ability to move freely from school to school, just like coaches. But unlike coaches, there's no contract buyout – or any tether whatsoever to keep players with a team. Certainly not loyalty. How it looks like the NCAA is creating opportunity for players by allowing upward mobility within the sport. You say upward mobility, I say the best players are playing for the schools that throw the most money at them – leaving a distinct class warfare between the haves who cherry-pick players and have-nots who develop players and watch them walk without compensation. How it looks like the NCAA will share billions with the players, who haven't earned a penny in media rights revenue for decades upon decades. But they're only really sharing about 20% of athletic-related university revenue – which has many buckets of cash, not just media rights revenue. How it looks like the NCAA is begging Congress for help with federal NIL reform, and throwing its arms up in despair when there's nothing to show for it. When those same university presidents know the only group on the planet more dysfunctional than the NCAA is Congress.

But sure, let's argue for months – at posh resorts, no less – about circular arguments that will end when and where the SEC and Big Ten want them to end, anyway. Let's put on a dog and pony show so it looks like we know what in the world we're doing, while the perfectly imperfect sport of our past is dying on the vine for all to see. Let's avoid all hard truths, and incessantly blather on and on about formats and automatic qualifiers. Meanwhile, Tennessee and UCLA just completed the first-ever effective college football player trade right under the collective noses of those who preach about a better and more equitable game. But buddy, they sure can put on a show.

● USA TODAY

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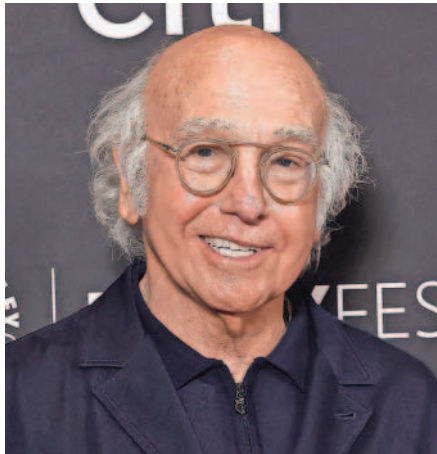
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LIFELINE



KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES

MAKING WAVES  
LARRY DAVID

Larry David doesn’t sound happy about Bill Maher’s recent dinner with President Donald Trump. The “Curb Your Enthusiasm” star published a satirical essay this week in The New York Times written from the perspective of a critic of Adolf Hitler who had dinner with the Nazi leader and was impressed he seemed more personable than he is in public. David did not mention Maher in the fictional piece, but closely mirrored the way Maher spoke about his experience. On his show “Real Time,” Maher said the “guy I met is not the” same Trump the public sees and described him as “gracious and measured.”



IT’S YOUR BIRTHDAY  
WHO’S CELEBRATING TODAY

Gigi Hadid is 30. Dev Patel is 35. Kal Penn is 48.

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**Aries** (March 21-April 19). Have the confidence to go after a life-changing dream? Resistance can feel all-consuming.

**Taurus** (April 20-May 20). Shining your light can be problematic if it shadows another. Watch for ego clashes.

**Gemini** (May 21-June 21). Flying under the radar? Control dynamics in academic or legal matters may prompt you to sit this one out.

**Cancer** (June 22-July 22). Your social circle may be changing. Are you questioning who you can trust? Prepare for hidden fears to arise.

**Leo** (July 23-Aug. 22). Professional partnerships can feel wrought with tension. Is your authority being challenged? Power imbalances quicken.

**Virgo** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Stabilizing growth can break apart your embedded routines. A change of habit is forced.

**Libra** (Sept.23-Oct. 23). Reinventing how you identify with creativity? The sun activating Pluto can present a self-expression crisis. Be open to change.

**Scorpio** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A partnership may be unraveling your sense of security. Feel like you’re losing control? Take a deep breath.

**Sagittarius** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Differing opinions? Prepare to butt heads over ideas when working with others today. Rigid thinking creates a stalemate.

**Capricorn** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your values are undergoing a transformational shift. Prioritize what you find satisfying and fulfilling. Ready to put your happiness first?

**Aquarius** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Is a version of you coming to an end? The sun activating Pluto is akin to shedding old skin.

**Pisces** (Feb. 19-March 20). Fear of many unknowns may invade your mind. Relinquish illusions of control.

STREAMING



Andor (Diego Luna) steals a TIE Fighter in the “Star Wars” series “Andor.” PROVIDED BY DES WILLIE/LUCASFILM

‘Andor’ action turns political, psychological in Season 2

Brian Truitt USA TODAY

May the Force – and a Xanax – be with you. ● The first season of the Emmy-nominated Disney+ series “Andor” featured Diego Luna reprising his role as Rebel spy Cassian Andor from the 2016 “Star Wars” movie “Rogue One” and showing how he hooked up with the galactic good guys. A prequel to a prequel (since that film was a backstory to the original 1977 “Star Wars”), “Andor” Season 2 (first three episodes now streaming; three more each Tuesday night at 9 ET/PT) sets up the events of “Rogue One” while also upping the action and the anxiety – for its characters and the audience.

As the Empire rules the galaxy with an iron hand (and builds a secret weapon of mass destruction), pockets of resistance are growing, and everybody’s stressed out. That psychological aspect is “the beauty of the season,” Luna says, and explores “how difficult a revolution is. There’s all these factions, and yes, there’s a moment where everyone can aim to the same target, but then you are there, left together, and all those differences become an issue.” In Season 1, Cassian was part of a

massive prison break and an insurrection against Imperial forces in his home of Ferrix. Twelve new episodes ratchet up the stakes, as he steals a TIE Fighter, goes undercover on the planet Ghorman – where the Empire’s up to no good and there’s a scrappy group of resistance fighters – and is recruited for a high-profile rescue mission.

But all the various personalities around him are tested as well. His

See ANDOR, Page 2D



Imperial officer Dedra Meero (Denise Gough, center, with Kurt Egyiawan) feels the stress of being in charge in Season 2. PROVIDED BY LUCASFILM

BOOKS

For Henry, love can grow out of conflict

Anna Kaufman  
USA TODAY

Emily Henry writes a love worth fighting for.

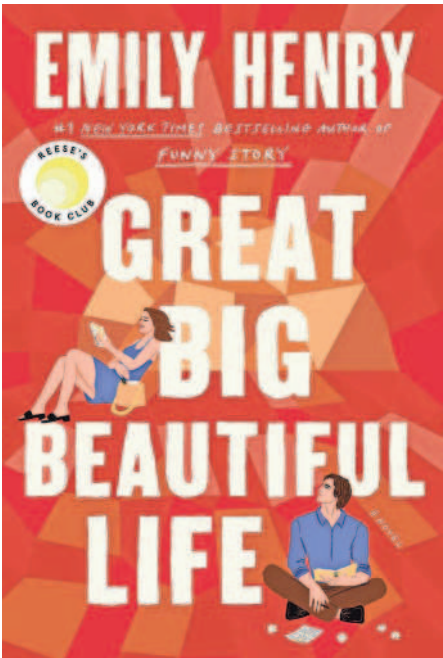
The renowned contemporary romance author, credited by some for dusting the cobwebs (and stigma) off the so-called chick-lit genre, says conflict is the key to a well-written love story.

“I think the people you find that incredible intimacy with, closeness with, are the people who you can be vulnerable enough with to have those hard conversations,” Henry tells USA TODAY ahead of the release of her newest book, “Great Big Beautiful Life” (\$29, out now from Berkley).

“Conflict is such a huge part of building intimacy with someone. If you’re not willing to have that, then you’re shutting the relationship down before it can go to the next level.”

Perhaps that’s why characters in a Henry novel fight, sometimes bitterly, before coming back together. Her latest novel is no different. It features two warring journalists – Alice and Hayden – vying for the chance to write the biggest celebrity memoir of the century. It’s a take on the popular enemies-to-lovers trope, a favorite of Henry’s.

The sixth stand-alone novel in Henry’s brightly colored collection of romance books, “Great Big Beautiful Life” hammers home Henry’s point that discord can be a path toward – rather than an obstacle to – love.



“These survival tactics that we develop and that come out in our relationships are not actually serving us,” she says of the various tics and coping mechanisms she bakes into her main characters. “I think every time I write a new heroine, I’m kind of trying on a new survival tactic in a way and seeing the flaws in that.”

Writing flaws in a way that is distinct enough to bubble up into conflict, but not so glaring that it makes a protagonist unlikable, is a fine literary line to walk, Henry says.

“Readers like a flawed, complicated male lead. I think that’s something that makes them feel real and familiar, like someone we could know and could fall in love with,” she says. “But for whatever reason ... we’re so, so, so much harder on female characters.”

Fans will find pieces of Henry written into her male and female characters. “I bleed into them equally,” she says.

In “Great Big Beautiful Life,” Alice represents “me at my best” – a true optimist who gives the benefit of the doubt sometimes unduly.

Hayden is “more cynical and a lot more guarded,” she says, adding: “I’m a relatively private person. I like to have distinct boundaries and expectations.” Those characteristics, which readers might not as easily accept in a heroine, find a hospitable home in her heroes.

New novel is Henry’s most tangled yet

“Great Big Beautiful Life” represents a slight departure from the

See HENRY, Page 2D



STREAMING

# After ‘Conclave,’ check out ‘The Two Popes’

Brian Truitt  
USA TODAY

After the death of Pope Francis on Easter Monday, “Conclave” is the first movie that comes to a lot of people’s minds. But don’t forget about a film focused on the late pontiff.

Directed by Fernando Meirelles, the 2019 Netflix dramedy “The Two Popes” centers on religious rivals-turned-friends Pope Benedict (Anthony Hopkins), aka Joseph Ratzinger, and Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio (Pryce), the future Pope Francis. The engaging historical fiction balances a serious side and a strong sense of humor with its two different main characters: While Benedict has conservative leanings, Bergoglio is a liberal seeking church reform, and their debate tells a tale of human understanding and fallibility.

“The Two Popes” is a fascinating look at the ins and outs of papal elections – five years before “Conclave” made that cool again – and a gem that revels in being funny.

What is ‘The Two Popes’ about?

After the death of Pope John Paul II, a papal conclave in Rome convenes to choose a new leader of a church caught between tradition and progressivism. The German Cardinal Ratzinger is thought of as a natural successor and ultimately is picked, though Bergoglio receives a surprising amount of support. The introverted Ratzinger isn’t a fan of the popular Argentinian: When they run into each other in the bath-



Pope Benedict (Anthony Hopkins, left) meets Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio (Jonathan Pryce) in Netflix’s “The Two Popes.” PROVIDED BY PETER MOUNTAIN/NETFLIX

room, Bergoglio whistles ABBA’s “Dancing Queen” and Ratzinger dismissively asks, “What hymn is that?”

Seven years later, as the church’s conservatism has alienated Catholics and leaked documents regarding corruption have surfaced, Bergoglio is called to Benedict’s summer residence to discuss the church’s future. The South American bishop tells the pope he wants to retire, feeling like “a salesman” for a product he can’t endorse anymore, but heated conversations lead to heart-to-hearts between the two where they get to know each other, bonding over Fanta, pizza and World Cup soccer.

How to watch ‘The Two Popes’

The movie is streaming on Netflix.

Who plays Pope Francis in ‘The Two Popes’?

Pryce stars as the future Pope Francis while Anthony Hopkins is Pope Benedict, and they have sensational chemistry together. Hopkins plays Benedict as testy and headstrong before Bergoglio brings out appealing aspects of a man wrestling with his connection to God, while Pryce nails being a rock-star priest able to talk to anybody yet still hiding what he deems his own failures.

Both actors received Oscar nominations for their roles, with Pryce garnering a best actor nod and Hopkins landing in the supporting actor category. (Anthony McCarten also scored a screenplay nomination for adapting his own play “The Pope.”)



Andor (Diego Luna) and Bix Caleen (Adria Arjona) engage in some rebellious subterfuge in the second season of “Andor.” PROVIDED BY LUCASFILM

## Andor

Continued from Page 1D

girlfriend, Bix (Adria Arjona), has PTSD after being tortured by the Empire. Senator Mon Mothma (Genevieve O’Reilly) risks her personal and political life for the nascent Rebel Alliance, while the more hardcore guys in the resistance, including Luthen Rael (Stellan Skarsgard) and extremist Saw Gerrera (Forest Whitaker), are a bit more morally dubious in their actions. Even Imperial folks are feeling palpable unease, including ambitious couple Dedra Meero (Denise Gough) and Syril Karn (Kyle Soller).

Showing this sort of universal galactic anxiety was important to “Andor” creator Tony Gilroy. “That’s how I fed my family for 30-plus years. I’m in the behavior empathy business,” says the Oscar-nominated director of “Michael Clayton” and writer on “Dolores Claiborne,” “The Devil’s Advocate” and four “Bourne” movies. “The better my ability to inhabit every character, the better the storytelling will be. That’s the game.

“In this show, everybody’s confronted with epic decisions of great importance all the time, organically. It’s just my job to make them as real as I possibly can.”

Gilroy doesn’t tell stories about “good and bad” people, Luna adds. “There’s just people surviving a galaxy that’s turning darker and darker on them. It’s why this show is so relevant today, and it’ll be relevant in years, because it’s about the complexity of community work.”

Gough compares “Andor” to “Angels in America,” in which she starred on Broadway in 2018. “You have essentially six leading characters across eight hours of the most intense journeys for each of them,” the Irish actress says. “They never cross each other enough to help each other out of whatever. They are all on their own mission. And when I

was watching (‘Andor’), I was like, ‘God, you’re sort of alone together.’ ”

The appearance of Ben Mendelsohn’s villainous Orson Krennic, the primary antagonist of “Rogue One,” was one example of a “Star Wars” personality where showing vulnerability and “realness” might demystify him in a way.

“All roads lead to the Death Star, and I had to get him in there to start the fuse on that,” Gilroy says. “Some characters really benefit from learning their DNA and their provenance, and it might diminish his. I’m not sure I want to watch him make coffee in the morning.”

Luna calls “Andor” a “beautiful excuse” to explore the political and social climate of a revolutionary period. Besides a commitment to actual emotions, there also is an emphasis on bringing more relatability and less fantasy to the “Star Wars” landscape, from mass media to wedding receptions. “If it doesn’t remind you of something you have experienced before, probably it’s not right.”

Gilroy also dipped into our own history, especially when depicting the Imperial massacre at Ghorman – mentioned in various “Star Wars” projects and explored in depth in “Andor” – that ignited the rebellion. A scene from the Season 2 premiere featuring Krennic and the Imperial brain trust was modeled after the Wannsee Conference, a 1942 meeting of Nazi officials pivotal to carrying out the Holocaust.

“One of the things they really needed was propaganda and media,” Gilroy says. “Power has always used narrative as a way of shaping the battlefield, whether it’s the burning of the Reichstag or the Gulf of Tonkin (incident) that gets America into Vietnam or the sinking of the Lusitania. The use of truth and story has been in the playbook of oppression since people were sitting around a campfire. Instead of carrier pigeons, now it’s something else, but that’s a very potent tool.”



Author Emily Henry’s latest novel follows two writers competing for the story of a lifetime. PROVIDED BY EMILY HENRY

## Henry

Continued from Page 1D

classic rom-com structure loyal Henry readers have grown to love.

A sprawling, 432-page affair, the novel leans on all the elements of a good beach read: quaint townspeople; a misunderstood and charming male lead; a complex heroine with a creative job that somehow still affords her croissant and coffee money.

But the backdrop to their story is complicated, too. It weaves together countless secondary characters with their own often tragic love stories. The subject of the celebrity memoir, which grounds the novel, is the heiress of a media empire who’s left to deal with a world defined by the tabloid culture her own family bred.

Henry was inspired to write a complex novel with the idea that love is not just about the two people at the heart of a rom-com. It’s about the invisible string that connects them to past loves – sometimes troubled ones – from which they came.

“I do think we’re all, to an extent, the products of the generations that came before us,” she says. “We’re reacting to how we were treated as kids by our family.”

She sees the book as a story about “doing the best you can with what you were given” and a testament to the fact that “every generation of our families ... is trying to do just a little bit better than what they started out with, emotionally speaking ... trying to be a little bit healthier.”

**Even in Henry’s sprawling new story, love is still in the details**

In “Great Big Beautiful Life,” Henry-heads will read the same detail-oriented romantic sensibility that separates the author from others.

Her knack for creating a sense of place is uncanny, a well-named diner

or perfectly described summer breeze lifting the reader out of their daily doldrums to a Reddi-Wip light beach town like Little Crescent Island, the backdrop for “Great Big Beautiful Life.”

Often writing love in subtleties, Henry has proven herself a master translator of our most puzzling and passionate feelings.

“I have been taught, and have seen to be true as a reader, that the more specific something is, the more universal it’s going to feel,” she says. So while you may not have “loved someone with a dent in their nose,” she jokes, those details connect a reader to a story.

“That’s also my experience of love,” says Henry, who is married. She describes the feeling as “the longer that I look at you, the longer I’ve known you, the more I know you, the more and more beautiful that you become to me or that I understand you’ve always been.”

That poetic tidbit, spoken casually mid-interview, is as good a piece of evidence as any of Henry’s full-fledged grip on the romance’s loyal readers.

“Writing romance, it’s just kind of bottling that sensation,” she says. “I feel like it’s actually a pretty good parlor trick to write a love story.”

Romance is not ‘wish fulfillment’

As for those who malign romance as “wish fulfillment” for women in search of lasting love in a sometimes inhospitable dating environment, Henry has a counter-argument: Her books are about the exception, not the rule.

Though she acknowledges modern dating seems to be mostly “a wreck,” the words that pour from her to the page are proof of grand love, she says.

“All of those things that someone is writing came to them somehow. So if I can feel that way, then other people can feel that way. Men and women out there can feel that way. And why would you ever settle for any less? If that’s the kind of love that you want, be with someone who has the capacity to love you like that.”



**Answers:** Call 1-900-988-8300, 99 cents a minute; or, with a credit card, call 1-800-988-8300, 99 cents a minute.

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## TXTPERT

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

Across

3. 7568

5. 7325

6. 25427

7. 332283

9. 38653

Down

1. 66725

2. 728473

3. 737782

4. 8253

8. 363

4/23

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**Solution to Tuesday's puzzle**

2	3	15	14
9	5	6	4
16	8	7	1
11	10	13	12

Enter the missing numbers from 1 to 16 without repetitions so that the sum of the four numbers in each row and column is the same as the corresponding circled number.

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4/23/25

1	2	3	4					5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12						13	14					15				
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56							57	58						59		
60							61							62		
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CLUES	SOLUTIONS
1 requirement (10)	_____
2 grocery carriers (4)	_____
3 like most dives (8)	_____
4 akin to a cow (6)	_____
5 powering an older watch (7)	_____
6 stories (9)	_____
7 place with little privacy (8)	_____

WI	HEA	TI	OBL	BA
IGA	BOV	FI	DLO	NDI
GS	NG	INE	ON	CDO
ANE	OWL	TES	SHB	NG

Tuesday's Answers: 1. FLOOR 2. CONNECTED 3. INSULAR 4. COWBOY 5. POWERED 6. STORIES 7. PLACE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CIHNF

IPNTNE

DWOSIM

EFLWOL

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**Ans. here:**

Jumbles: VOCAL      TEETH      FEWEST      WINNING

Yesterday's Answer: Figuring out how his big ego is easy when people start talking... — THE "I'S" HAVE IT.

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app! Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Is it all right if I just take care of the penalty now?

Yes, sir. Just tap your card here.

4  
23

WHEN THE DRIVER OFFERED TO PAY HIS SPEEDING TICKET ON THE SPOT, THE OFFICER SAID ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)



MOVIES



Michael B. Jordan, right, and director Ryan Coogler discuss the details and ending of their new film “Sinners.” STAN GODLEWSKI FOR USA TODAY

# Coogler, Jordan break down ‘Sinners’ ending

Brian Truitt  
USA TODAY

*Spoiler alert! The following post discusses important plot points, including the ending of “Sinners” (in theaters now).*

Ryan Coogler’s horror movie “Sinners” goes hard when it comes to the blues, so it makes sense that a bona fide music legend would show up before the credits roll.

The filmmaker enlisted Buddy Guy to play the older version of a key character in his 1930s-set period epic. And it also led to an emotional day on set: One of Coogler’s biggest inspirations for “Sinners” – and Guy’s casting – was a blues-loving uncle who saw the guitar legend perform more than 50 times. As they filmed a post-credits scene set in 1992 on the first day of production, star Michael B. Jordan hugged Guy, and “it hit me like a ton of bricks,” Coogler says. “I realized I had dressed Buddy Guy up like my uncle without knowing it. And seeing Mike hug him, it broke me down. I was like, ‘Oh, that’s what this movie is about this whole time.’”

In “Sinners,” gangster twins Smoke and Stack (Jordan) find a juke joint in their Mississippi hometown and recruit their gifted guitar-playing cousin Sammie (Miles Caton in the ’30s, Guy in the ’90s) to play opening night. However, their shindig is turned upside down with the appearance of Irish vampire Remmick (Jack O’Connell) who attacks the partygoers, turning them into new bloodsuckers and adding to his army.

Coogler and Jordan break down the movie’s emotional ending and a time-jumping post-credits scene:

### What happens in the ending?

Remmick first “turns” Stack’s former lover Mary (Hailee Steinfeld), and she makes Stack a vamp, which knocks his brother Smoke for a loop. From there, he and the survivors try to stay alive until dawn. Smoke’s ex Annie (Wunmi Mosaku) is bitten, and she makes Smoke stake her in the heart before she can turn. Smoke and Stack ultimately come to blows, Sammie makes it out of the sawmill alive and Smoke and Sammie defeat Remmick when the sun rises and he (along with most of his vampires) go up in flames.

But that’s not the end of the fight. The shady white guy who sold the twins the sawmill was a local Ku Klux Klan leader, and the place is a trap: He and his men aim to kill anyone who comes out in the

morning. So while a tired and scarred Sammie returns to his preacher dad, ex-soldier Smoke rounds up machine guns and heavy weaponry to take on Klan members. He kills them all, but is mortally wounded, and as he dies, Smoke is reunited with both Annie and the child they lost as a baby.

“This movie for me was about identity, as my movies always are, and how people see themselves, but also what people do,” Coogler explains. “Smoke sees himself as a father and as a man who’s unredeemable because of his past sins, but he also sees himself as a soldier. For him, soldier means he’s a killer. He’s as good at killing people as Sammie is at singing (and) as Stack is at coming up with schemes and talking people into doing things that they might not want to do.

“That would always be how he would respond to what happens. It was also the only ending that made sense.”

### Does ‘Sinners’ have a post-credits scene?

There are two. The final moment after the credits roll finds young Sammie at his dad’s church, doing a sweet rendition of “This Little Light of Mine.” But the meatiest one is a mid-credits scene that catches up with Sammie in 1992. Decades later, he’s playing in his own club and dressed to the nines, just like his cousins.

Old Sammie sits at the bar when he’s shocked to find Stack and Mary, very much still kicking and rocking a ’90s vibe, walk through the door. Stack reveals to Sammie that he made a deal with Smoke to let the kid live out his life. Before leaving, Stack goes in and looks like he might bite Sammie and finally turn him, but instead embraces him.

Jordan feels that Stack would keep his word because he “owed” his brother that one wish. “He still checked in one time, just right before he’s getting ready to go,” he says.

The actor thinks Stack wanted to hear Sammie play live again: “He’s probably the last person alive that knew who he was before he was a vampire. There was an honesty that was there and a vulnerability that he wasn’t going to get any more for the rest of the eternity.”

Jordan also appreciated revisiting the ’90s with his wardrobe: a Coogi sweater, Cartier glasses and a brass knuckle ring that reads “Stack.” “Hopefully the kids this Halloween, they pull up.”



Smoke (Michael B. Jordan, center), flanked by brother Stack (also Jordan) and pal Cornbread (Omar Miller), are wary of some uninvited guests in the period horror film “Sinners.” PROVIDED BY WARNER BROS. PICTURES

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

# Doctors Brace For Rush To Get New \$1 Pill That Does What Costly Adult Diapers Cannot

Participants in clinical trial began to feel noticeable results in just 14 days without side effects; public now facing 48-hour cut off.

Doctors around the country are bracing for the rush of people expecting to get one of the newest breakthroughs in medical science called BladderMax.

“This is a real game changer!” says Dr. Jennifer Sage. Some say, the newly released pill called BladderMax is going to threaten the adult diaper industry.

But just think about the millions of lives that will be saved from the embarrassment that comes from bladder control problems!

News of this remarkable pill called BladderMax is creating a virtual flood of letters to the research company that developed it. One doctor says: This is the “holy grail for people with bladder problems!”

### So Exactly Why Is Bladdermax Wowing The Scientific Community?

Even though this pill is extremely effective, it contains no drugs whatsoever.

BladderMax’s active ingredient comes from a natural edible plant source. It’s safe, as well as easy to use.

BladderMax prevents bladder leakages so impressively, that it has caught the action of scientists and bladder health experts all over the globe. It works like nothing else seen before. Simply take as directed. You can almost feel your bladder getting stronger. It’s just that effective!

“Experts predict, the data is so compelling... “Adult diapers may be unnecessary. Padded underwear could be obsolete within 5-years.”

“There just won’t be a need for them anymore,” he added.

### Kegels In A Bottle

The real power of BladderMax lies deep inside it’s active ingredient. It contains a compound called phytosterols that prevents bladder leakages similar to the way pelvic floor exercises (commonly known as “kegels”) do.

Jennifer Sage, a leading doctor says: “With BladderMax it doesn’t take much to relieve your frequency. You just don’t have to go as much anymore.” The compound absolutely kills uncontrollable urges in just weeks after taking it. You’ll swear your bladder has grown in size and strength.

The secret is its ability to inhibit 5-alpha-reductase (the enzyme that causes bladder overactivity). BladderMax’s active ingredient helps calm and increase urine flow so your bladder doesn’t have the constant need to empty. Then, it strengthens bladder tissue to help the bladder contract and expand for better confidence



As new pill gains popularity, scenes like this will become rare and unusual.

and control.

Think about it. A pill that calms that “gotta go feeling”, as it rebuilds and tones bladder muscle. Incredibly, the leakages just disappear.

### No More “Stress-Leaks”

If you leak when you laugh, cough, jump or do other physical activity, you’ll never worry about stress-leakages again. BladderMax stops urine from leaking during times of stress.

It’s pure magic. You’ll feel great, you’ll sleep great, and look great. And even be able to wear your favorite clothes without worrying about wetting through again!

### Clinical Studies Don’t Lie!

The clinical trial results on BladderMax’s active ingredient have sent shockwaves throughout the medical community. The findings show it works to produce results scientists never thought were possible.

For example, doctors tested the active ingredient on patients who suffered with overactive bladder symptoms for years. The results showed users saw a huge reduction in sudden urges to go and embarrassing leakages in just 4 weeks. Plus, they had less nighttime trips to the bathroom.

In this same study, scientists had bladder sufferers take note of daily use of adult diapers, padded underwear or panty liners. The scientists then gave half the patients the active ingredient in BladderMax, with another group taking a placebo.

The result? The group taking BladderMax’s active ingredient enjoyed a significant reduction in daily protection use, while the placebo group saw an increase.

That means, the active ingredient in BladderMax not only reduces trips to the bathroom, but also reduces the need for bulky adult diapers, which is amazing.

### 100% Safe

What’s more, BladderMax contains no fillers, no binders, and it’s produced in state-of-the-art FDA registered lab facilities. It’s 100% safe, natural and won’t interfere with your regular medications. So you can control your bladder with confidence.

### Ecstatic Users

“My bladder problems are 80% better than they were just weeks ago. It seems to be improving daily. I now use minimum protection. It really does work,” says Denise G., of Maineville, Ohio.

### Impressed Doctors

“I have patients who wake up 4 or more times in the night to pee. After just days of taking BladderMax they report only having to get up once or twice at most. That’s why I’m now recommending my patients take BladderMax,” said Dr. Jennifer Sage.

“BladderMax’s active ingredient reduces the need for adult diapers and padded underwear. It’s shown in clinical trials to improve sleep satisfaction and quality of life. Many top doctors, myself included, consider BladderMax the greatest bladder control breakthrough in the last decade,” she added.

### Local Readers Get Special Discount

Special arrangements have been made with the manufacturer to supply local readers with a special discount supply of BladderMax.

Starting at 7:00 AM today, the order hotline will be open for 48 hours. All you have to do is call **TOLL-FREE 1-800-853-3851**. The company will do the rest.

**Important:** Due to BladderMax’s recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back. Those who miss the 48 hours deadline may be forced to pay full price for BladderMax.

This statement has not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. All clinical studies on BladderMax’s active ingredient were independently conducted and were not sponsored by the makers of BladderMax.



NATION&WORLD

EXTRA

INSIDE  
U.S. defense  
contractors mostly  
maintain forecasts  
despite tariffs, 4NN

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

FIRST 100 DAYS



How the president moved swiftly to punish perceived foes, fill administration with loyalists

Joseph Ax REUTERS

Hours after swearing an oath to defend the U.S. Constitution on Jan. 20, President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing his attorney general to scour the Justice Department and other agencies for evidence of political “weaponization.” • The same day, Pentagon staff took down a portrait of Mark Milley, a Trump critic who as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been the highest-ranking military officer during Trump’s first term. That evening, Trump stripped his former national security adviser, John Bolton — who wrote a memoir critical of Trump — of the protective Secret Service detail he had been given after the Justice Department said Iran had threatened Bolton’s life.

See TRUMP, Page 6NN

ABOVE:  
President  
Donald Trump  
has made  
particular use  
of executive  
orders —  
typically used  
by presidents  
to direct policy  
priorities — to  
target  
perceived foes.  
EVELYN  
HOCKSTEIN/  
REUTERS FILE

College presidents unite against higher ed policies

Trump targets universities over protests, initiatives

Helen Coster REUTERS

NEW YORK — More than 200 university and college presidents in a joint statement accused President Donald Trump’s administration of political interference in higher education, banding together after Harvard University said the government was threatening its independence. The statement, signed by presidents from institutions such as Princeton, Brown, Harvard, Columbia, the University of Hawaii and Connecticut State Community College, criticized what it described as “the unprecedented government overreach and political interference now endangering American higher education.” “We are open to constructive reform and do not oppose legitimate govern-



Over 200 universities say they oppose “unprecedented government overreach and political interference.” FAITH NINIVAGGI/REUTERS FILE

ment oversight,” the statement said. “However, we must oppose undue government intrusion in the lives of those who learn, live, and work on our campuses.”

See COLLEGE, Page 6NN

Proposal would be major shake-up of State Department

Rubio: Work must follow ‘America First’ agenda

Simon Lewis and Humeyra Pamuk REUTERS

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is proposing a major overhaul of the U.S. State Department that would eliminate more than 100 offices including some working on war crimes and rights advocacy to ensure the agency is in line with President Donald Trump’s “America First” priorities. The plan, which Congress has been notified about, would eliminate 132 of the department’s 734 bureaus and offices, an internal State Department memo seen by Reuters said. Undersecretaries will submit plans to reduce staff by 15%, the document added. It was not immediately clear how many people would be laid off as a result




Rubio

of the revamp, but a report in online publication the Free Press, which Secretary of State Marco Rubio posted on X, said an additional 700 positions would be eliminated in the shuttered offices. An internal working group will lead implementation of the reorganization and develop detailed plans for each part of the department by July 1, Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau wrote to staff in an internal email seen by Reuters. The shake-up comes as part of an unprecedented push by Trump and his billionaire adviser Elon Musk to shrink the federal government, saying U.S. taxpayer money is misspent. The effort has led to the firing of thousands of government employees.

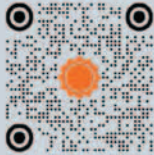

See DEPARTMENT, Page 6NN





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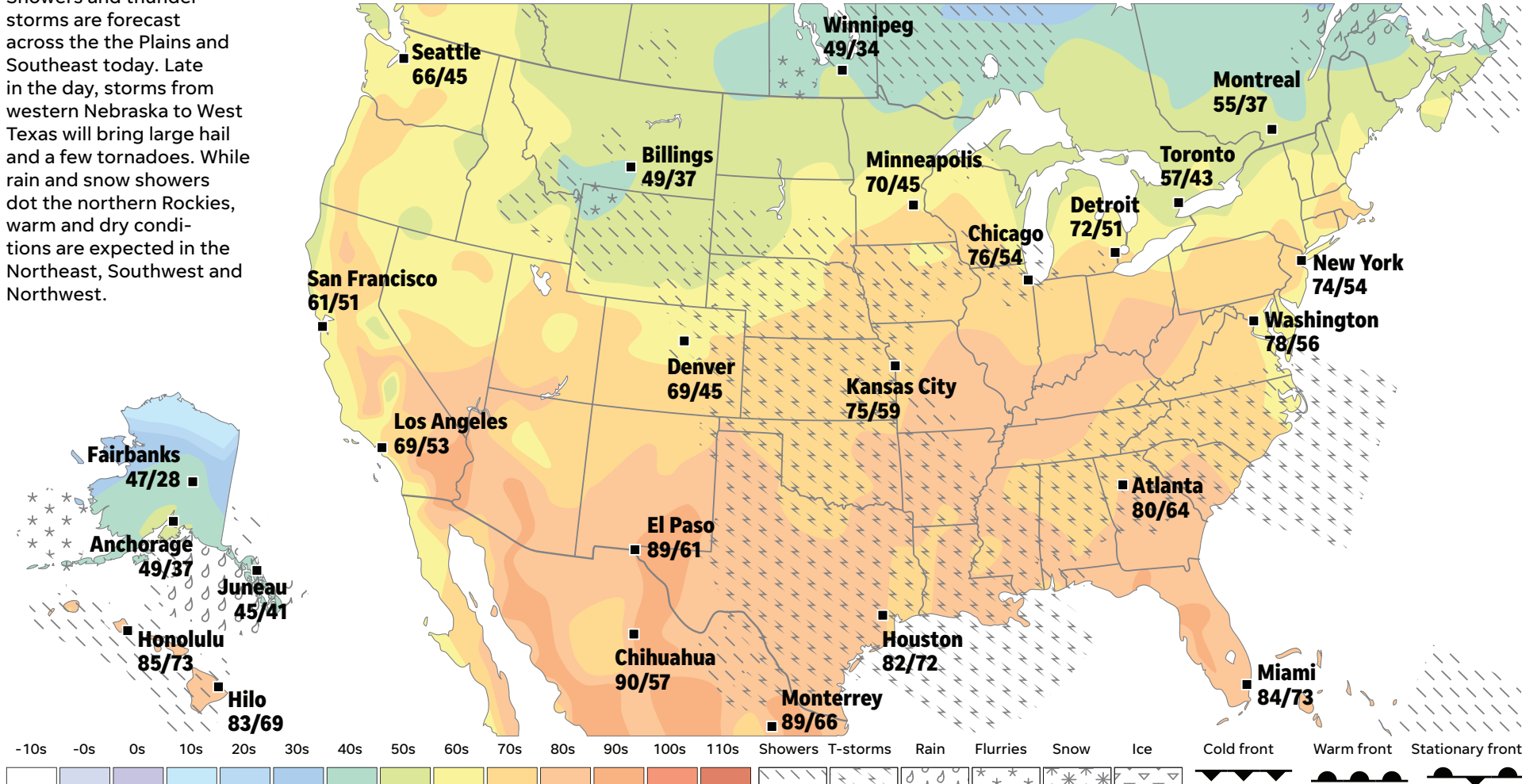


NATIONAL SUMMARY

Showers and thunderstorms are forecast across the the Plains and Southeast today. Late in the day, storms from western Nebraska to West Texas will bring large hail and a few tornadoes. While rain and snow showers dot the northern Rockies, warm and dry conditions are expected in the Northeast, Southwest and Northwest.

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 Wednesday. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



TUESDAY EXTREMES

**NATIONAL** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
**High:** 95 at Needles, CA  
**Low:** 15 at Stanley, ID  
**Precip:** 2.68" at Jasper, AL

**INTERNATIONAL** (excludes Antarctica)  
**High:** 115 at Jharsuguda, Indai  
**Low:** -16 at Constable Pynt, Greenland  
**Precip:** 4.41" at Beru, Kiribati

TODAY IN HISTORY

A record chill gripped northern Florida on April 23, 1993. Tallahassee plunged to 31 degrees. The previous record of 41 was set in 1940. This was also the latest freeze recorded there last century.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

**Q:** What weather term is the same word when spelled backward?

NATIONAL CITIES WEDNESDAY

	High/low/W	Air Quality		High/low/W	Air Quality		High/low/W	Air Quality		High/low/W	Air Quality
Aberdeen, SD	63/40/pc	28	Evansville, IN	80/57/pc	61	Levittown, PA	76/48/s	55	Rochester, NY	61/47/pc	48
● Abilene, TX	79/64/t	30	Fall River, MA	69/45/s	52	Lincoln, IL	79/50/pc	50	Rockford, IL	75/51/t	65
Accomac, VA	67/50/pc	46	Farmington, NM	79/41/s	53	Louisville, KY	81/59/pc	69	● Ruidoso, NM	75/48/s	53
Adrian, MI	73/50/sh	53	● Fayetteville, NC	78/62/t	44	● Lubbock, TX	79/63/t	41	Salem, OR	73/41/s	35
Akron, OH	74/52/pc	77	● Fond du Lac, WI	67/50/pc	44	Manitowoc, WI	56/48/pc	57	● Salina, KS	74/59/t	41
Alamogordo, NM	88/51/s	46	Fort Myers, FL	91/66/s	58	Mansfield, OH	74/53/s	79	Salinas, CA	61/50/pc	40
Alexandria, VA	78/52/pc	65	Fort Smith, AR	84/63/pc	42	Marshall, NC	72/58/t	32	Salisbury, MD	72/43/pc	55
Alliance, OH	75/50/pc	74	Framingham, MA	72/45/s	51	Marshfield, WI	70/45/pc	49	● San Angelo, TX	83/65/t	24
● Amarillo, TX	77/59/t	42	Freeport, IL	73/51/t	43	Massillon, OH	76/50/pc	87	Sarasota, FL	85/66/s	47
Ames, IA	73/56/t	47	Fremont, OH	75/53/pc	71	McLean, VA	78/51/pc	62	● Savannah, GA	84/65/t	43
Anderson, SC	79/62/t	37	Fort Collins, CO	66/46/pc	55	Melbourne, FL	83/70/s	46	● Sheboygan, WI	54/46/sh	56
Appleton, WI	67/49/pc	50	Gadsden, AL	78/59/t	34	● Memphis, TN	80/64/c	49	● Shelby, NC	76/61/t	41
● Asheville, NC	71/57/t	32	Gainesville, FL	89/63/s	52	Middletown, NY	72/42/s	51	● Sherman, TX	81/65/t	31
Ashland, OH	76/50/s	88	Galesburg, IL	77/52/pc	45	Milford, MA	70/44/s	52	● Shreveport, LA	82/67/t	30
● Athens, GA	80/61/t	41	● Gastonia, NC	76/61/t	41	Milwaukee, WI	62/49/sh	50	Silver City, NM	80/43/s	41
● Augusta, GA	83/61/t	42	● Glen Rose, TX	81/66/t	27	Monroe, MI	69/51/sh	67	● Sioux Falls, SD	71/46/sh	42
Austin, TX	81/70/t	33	Gonzales, LA	82/68/t	34	● Monroe, LA	81/66/t	35	Somerset, NJ	73/49/s	64
Bartlesville, OK	77/58/t	48	Great Falls, MT	56/28/s	56	Montgomery, AL	82/62/t	31	Somerville, NJ	76/48/s	54
Battle Creek, MI	74/53/sh	48	Green Bay, WI	68/48/pc	54	Muncie, IN	78/51/s	60	South Bend, IN	76/51/pc	73
Bedford, IN	77/52/pc	57	● Greenville, SC	77/61/t	38	Murfreesboro, TN	79/59/pc	40	● Spartanburg, SC	77/61/t	41
Binghamton, NY	66/44/s	48	Hackensack, NJ	75/54/s	56	Naples, FL	87/66/s	51	Springfield, IL	79/52/pc	51
Bluffton, SC	79/65/pc	42	Hagerstown, MD	76/53/s	61	Nashville, TN	81/62/pc	47	Springfield, MO	79/59/pc	49
Bremerton, WA	67/40/s	31	Hattiesburg, MS	82/64/t	39	Neptune, NJ	64/49/s	57	St. Augustine, FL	81/68/s	43
Brockton, MA	72/43/s	52	Henderson, KY	78/54/pc	56	New Bedford, MA	68/43/s	50	St. Cloud, MN	65/39/pc	50
● Brownwood, TX	81/66/t	29	● Hendersonville, NC	70/58/t	35	New Bern, NC	76/59/t	33	St. George, UT	83/56/s	55
Burlington, IA	77/55/pc	39	Herkimer, NY	64/37/pc	49	New Philadelphia, OH	78/47/s	88	Staunton, VA	75/44/s	60
● Burlington, NC	73/56/t	43	Hillsdale, MI	72/51/c	51	Newark, OH	79/49/s	68	Stevens Point, WI	71/46/pc	48
Burlington, VT	62/37/c	42	Holland, MI	68/51/pc	54	Newton, NJ	74/44/s	52	● Stockton, CA	78/45/s	47
Cambridge, OH	80/52/s	66	Hornell, NY	69/47/pc	51	New York, NY	74/54/s	59	Stroudsburg, PA	76/45/s	52
Camdenton, MO	81/57/pc	42	Houma, LA	82/69/c	32	Norwich, CT	73/42/s	50	Stuart, FL	83/70/s	44
Canandaigua, NY	64/46/pc	46	Howell, MI	71/51/sh	50	Ocala, FL	90/64/s	55	Sturgis, MI	73/50/sh	52
Canton, OH	75/52/pc	76	● Hutchinson, KS	73/59/t	40	● Oklahoma City, OK	77/63/t	51	Tallahassee, FL	89/61/pc	48
Carlsbad, NM	89/59/s	69	Hyannis, MA	61/43/s	51	Opelousas, LA	82/68/t	32	Thibodaux, LA	82/68/t	34
Chambersburg, PA	76/51/s	61	Indianapolis, IN	78/53/pc	62	Oshkosh, WI	66/49/pc	47	Topeka, KS	74/58/t	51
Cherry Hill, NJ	76/50/s	57	Iowa City, IA	76/55/t	44	Palm Beach, FL	82/74/s	42	Tuscaloosa, AL	77/61/t	38
Cincinnati, OH	78/55/pc	70	Ithaca, NY	65/44/s	50	● Palm Springs, CA	91/61/s	82	Utica, NY	62/38/pc	47
Clarksville, TN	81/59/pc	48	Jackson, MS	81/64/t	33	Panama City, FL	81/64/pc	38	Ventura, CA	61/51/pc	47
Coldwater, MI	72/51/sh	51	Jackson, TN	81/61/c	44	Pekin, IL	80/53/pc	50	● Victorville, CA	78/47/s	63
Columbus, OH	79/54/s	71	Jacksonville, FL	86/65/pc	44	Pensacola, FL	80/65/pc	49	Vineland, NJ	76/44/s	53
Corning, NY	71/43/s	53	Jacksonville, NC	77/60/t	40	Peoria, IL	79/54/pc	70	Visalia, CA	83/48/pc	66
● Corpus Christi, TX	84/74/t	33	Kent, OH	74/50/pc	70	Petersburg, VA	77/48/s	46	Washington, DC	78/56/pc	69
Daytona Beach, FL	83/66/s	46	Kewanee, IL	77/52/pc	43	Phoenix, AZ	91/65/pc	72	Watertown, SD	61/41/pc	31
● Deming, NM	86/46/s	39	Keyser, WV	78/49/s	64	Port Huron, MI	70/49/pc	51	Wausau, WI	70/44/pc	46
● DeRidder, LA	81/67/t	29	● Kinston, NC	76/58/t	35	Portsmouth, NH	67/40/s	50	Waynesboro, PA	76/53/s	60
Des Moines, IA	75/58/t	40	Knoxville, TN	76/58/t	28	Poughkeepsie, NY	74/43/s	50	White Plains, NY	73/48/s	55
Detroit, MI	72/51/sh	58	Lafayette, IN	78/49/pc	53	Providence, RI	70/47/s	51	● Wichita Falls, TX	79/65/t	42
Devils Lake, ND	49/31/pc	28	● Lafayette, LA	83/70/t	32	Pueblo, CO	80/49/t	64	Wilmington, DE	76/49/s	61
Dover, NH	66/38/s	52	Lakeland, FL	91/66/s	51	Quincy, MA	71/46/s	53	● Wilmington, NC	79/63/t	46
El Paso, TX	89/61/s	49	Lansing, MI	71/53/pc	53	Redding, CA	81/51/s	52	Wisconsin Rapids, WI	72/46/pc	48
Elmira, NY	71/42/s	50	Las Cruces, NM	86/51/s	41	Reno, NV	70/41/s	58	Wooster, OH	75/49/s	81
Erie, PA	63/53/pc	53	Lebanon, PA	76/49/s	59	Ravenna, OH	74/49/pc	71	Worcester, MA	67/44/s	50
Eugene, OR	72/39/s	35	Leesburg, FL	90/67/s	51	Richmond, IN	78/50/s	62	York, PA	76/50/s	62

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

	Wednesday High/low/W	Thursday High/low/W		Wednesday High/low/W	Thursday High/low/W		Wednesday High/low/W	Thursday High/low/W		Wednesday High/low/W	Thursday High/low/W
Acapulco	90/76/s	89/75/s	Cape Town	75/52/s	76/52/pc	La Paz	58/32/pc	59/33/s	San Jose	81/66/r	86/65/pc
● Addis Ababa	78/53/s	78/53/s	● Caracas	85/74/t	87/75/r	Lagos	90/78/t	91/79/t	San Salvador	87/66/sh	86/66/r
Algiers	72/45/s	77/49/s	Casablanca	77/54/s	85/59/pc	Lima	73/64/s	73/64/pc	Santiago	70/52/c	74/50/pc
Amman	94/67/c	85/58/c	Colombo	90/79/t	90/79/r	Lisbon	74/55/s	79/57/s	● Sao Paulo	76/64/c	77/64/r
● Amsterdam	59/50/sh	57/46/r	Copenhagen	55/43/c	54/42/c	London	56/44/r	62/44/pc	Sarajevo	67/49/t	65/51/sh
Ankara	71/46/t	68/51/t	● Damascus	93/61/c	88/58/c	Madrid	73/47/s	79/49/s	Shanghai	79/63/pc	81/57/pc
● Asuncion	77/68/sh	72/66/r	Dublin	55/44/pc	60/50/pc	Manila	100/82/pc	98/82/pc	● Singapore	87/77/t	89/79/t
Athens	75/59/pc	71/56/c	● Geneva	61/45/t	59/43/r	Mexico City	84/60/pc	83/59/s	Stockholm	49/29/c	49/33/pc
Auckland	70/53/pc	66/53/pc	Guatemala City	83/61/pc	83/61/pc	Milan	75/53/sh	76/51/s	● Sydney	74/64/sh	75/63/sh
Baghdad	103/75/s	105/78/c	● Hanoi	96/78/s	93/73/t	● Mombasa	84/74/r	88/75/r	● Taipei	84/70/sh	83/70/sh
Bangkok	100/84/pc	100/83/t	Harare	79/56/s	80/56/c	Montevideo	73/57/c	69/55/c	Tegucigalpa	86/65/sh	87/64/sh
● Beijing	82/48/s	73/44/s	Havana	87/64/s	86/68/t	Montreal	55/37/c	58/44/pc	Tehran	84/66/s	85/67/s
● Beirut	84/66/c	73/64/c	Helsinki	46/35/c	45/36/pc	Moscow	80/49/s	66/49/pc	Tokyo	68/62/r	73/62/pc
Belgrade	75/55/t	71/54/sh	Hong Kong	86/77/t	87/76/r	New Delhi	71/61/t	74/61/c	Toronto	57/43/pc	70/50/t
Berlin	66/48/c	66/45/c	Jakarta	92/75/t	91/75/t	Nairobi	106/75/s	107/77/s	Tunis	73/55/s	74/57/pc
Bogota	66/51/r	66/52/r	Jerusalem	94/61/c	78/56/c	Panama City	90/71/r	92/72/sh	Vancouver	59/43/s	63/46/pc
Brussels	56/48/sh	56/46/r	Johannesburg	68/51/t	65/44/pc	Paris	59/48/sh	64/45/sh	Vienna	72/52/pc	65/53/sh
Bucharest	77/49/c	77/50/s	Kabul	73/52/s	75/53/s	Port-au-Prince	92/68/sh	89/71/sh	Warsaw	72/50/pc	72/52/pc
Budapest	78/53/c	72/53/sh	Khartoum	111/86/pc	112/86/s	Rio de Janeiro	79/70/pc	81/71/sh	● Yerevan	62/47/c	71/56/pc
Buenos Aires	74/61/c	70/61/pc	Kyiv	82/57/s	81/55/s	Riyadh	103/73/pc	105/76/pc	● Zagreb	70/50/c	65/53/sh
Cairo	93/67/pc	81/64/c	Kingston	89/76/s	88/76/s	Rome	67/54/pc	68/50/sh	● Zurich	65/46/t	57/46/r

● Denotes possible travel delays Wednesday

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.





SPAIN

# Wanted: A home

In early April, tens of thousands of people took to the streets in demonstrations across Spain, angry over the high price of housing.

From Madrid to Malaga to the Balearic Islands, Spaniards said they were angry because they can't afford to buy or rent homes anymore. Many young and well-paid professionals now, they added, are forced to live with their parents or share apartments – and are still broke.

“I’m living with four people and I still allocate 30 or 40% of my salary to rent,” Mari Sánchez, 26, a lawyer in the capital of Madrid, told the Associated Press. “That doesn’t allow me to save. That doesn’t allow me to do anything. That’s my current situation, one many young people are living through.”

In Spain, the average rent has almost doubled in the past 10 years, due to the country’s history of real estate speculation, and the lack of new affordable housing, Euronews reported. From September 2023 to September 2024 alone, rent increased 16% in Madrid, and 29% in the central Spanish city of Cáceres, a World Heritage Site.

It’s a similar increase for property. Homeownership, meanwhile, among Spaniards under 35 has fallen dramatically over the past 14 years. In 2011, 70% of that demographic group owned their own home. Today, around one-third do.

The problem is particularly acute in areas that attract large numbers of tourists, such as Barcelona or the Canary Islands.

In some of these areas, as in Barcelona or Ibiza in the Balearic Islands, rental prices can often exceed 100% of the median salary, the news outlet added.

Some say the country is becoming a victim of its own success.

“A dozen years ago, Spain was a byword for economic failure,” wrote the Economist.



“The country’s government and banks appeared to be locked in a death spiral and depended on bail-outs, young people were leaving the country or protesting their lack of opportunities. Homes lay half-built and airports abandoned, relics of a burst construction bubble. How that has changed.”

Last year, Spain was the best-performing economy of the developed world, based on five indicators – GDP, stock-market performance, core inflation, unemployment, and government deficits – compared with 37 countries, the magazine noted. Spain is now the eurozone’s fourth-biggest economy, its fastest-growing, and responsible for 40% of its growth last year. It is the “envy” of Europe, the BBC noted.

“Madrid has attracted strong international attention over the last two years due to its incredible post-COVID economic streak,” IARI, an Italian think tank, wrote. “Whereas most of Europe’s economies struggled with soft growth and lingering uncertainties, Spain’s turnaround consistently outperformed the rest of (the European Union) countries’ performance.”

However, it is the booming tourism sector – 93.8 million visitors last year and the second most-visited country after France – and the at-

tractiveness of Spain to immigrants as well as investors that are also putting pressure on the availability of homes and pricing.

Immigrants to Spain have increased the population by 1.5 million over the past three years to 48.9 million. About 70% of immigrants hail from Latin America and are competing for the same affordable housing that Spain’s own citizens are hunting for. At the same time, Spain’s unemployment rate – 12% – as well as real wage stagnation and the higher growth of lower-paid service sector employment mean that many can’t afford to rent or buy anymore.

Protesters, who have been demonstrating for two years against the housing issue but also overtourism, also blame international hedge funds for buying up properties to sell or rent to tourists. As a result, Spain has instituted a 100% tax on all non-EU residents who buy homes in the country and implemented a rental price cap.

“Whoever converts the premises doesn’t think about the needs of the community or the neighbors, but rather their own economic interest. It’s a problem,” Alejandro Tamayo, professor of urban planning at the Polytechnic University of Madrid, told Spanish newspaper El Mundo.

DISCOVERIES

# Jurassic pit stop for all kinds

Paleontologists recently discovered that long-necked herbivores and sharp-clawed carnivores shared the same watering hole some 167 million years ago in what is now the Isle of Skye in northwestern Scotland – mingling peacefully at a prehistoric lagoon that served as a kind of Jurassic pit stop.

“It was kind of the service station for the Middle Jurassic,” lead author Tone Blakesley of a new study on dinosaur footprints told the Washington Post. “The dinosaurs would have come down from the surrounding land masses, drop down for a drink, and move on.”

First spotted in 2019, Blakesley and his colleagues have since uncovered between 150 and 200 footprints, analyzing 131 for the study. They used drones and 3D imaging to document the site and reconstruct dinosaur movements across the area.

Some of the prints were nearly 18 inches in length and belonged to *Megalosauruses*, which were meat-eating dinos and ancestors of *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Other footprints were larger and rounder and likely belonged to plant-eating sauropods, such as *Cetiosaurus*.

Based on stride length and footprint size, the researchers estimate that the carnivores moved at a brisk pace – around five miles per hour – while the sauropods lumbered along at about 1.5 miles per hour.

The tracks were made in soft sand that once lined a shallow freshwater lagoon and were preserved as the sediments hardened over millions of years.

“It looks like someone has pressed the pause button,” Blakesley told the Guardian. “It’s a surreal feeling... to be able to put my hand in the sole of these footprints.”

Paleontologist Mike Benton, who was not involved in the study, noted that the discoveries offer a rare insight.

# Can Trump fire Powell from the Fed?

## Trump’s authority to make move unclear

REUTERS

President Donald Trump on April 21 kept up his verbal assault on Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell over the Fed’s refusal for now to further cut interest rates, rattling financial markets growing ever more fearful that Trump may ultimately try to fire the U.S. central bank chief over the matter.

### Can Trump fire Powell?

Whether Trump has the authority to do so is unclear.

The Federal Reserve Act of 1913 establishing the Fed stipulates that members of its Board of Governors, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate to staggered 14-year terms, can only be removed for “cause” – long thought to mean misconduct, not policy disagreement.

That said, the law omits reference to limits on removal from its description of the four-year term of the Fed chair, who is one of the seven governors.

### Is this uncharted territory?

There is no direct legal precedent, since no president has ever tried to fire a Fed chief. There are, however, lawsuits now working their way through the courts over unrelated firings by Trump being watched as possible proxies for whether he has that power. One is currently pending before the Supreme Court, where any attempt to fire Powell would almost certainly end up.

### What would the firing mean in practical terms?

A lot would hinge on just how Trump might choose to “fire” the Fed chief.

As each of his predecessors has done, Powell holds three roles – chair of the Federal Reserve System, member of the Board of Governors and chair of the Fed’s interest-rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee.



President Donald Trump has taken issue with Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell for leaving interest rates unchanged amid Trump’s tariff negotiations. CARLOS BARRIA/REUTERS FILE

### Can Trump remove him as Fed chair?

Were Trump to try to remove Powell only as chair of the Fed system, Powell could remain a governor until that term expires at the end of January 2028. The next scheduled board vacancy does not occur until January 2026, which in the meantime would leave Trump only the option of nominating one of the other incumbent governors to be chair. Two of those other six were appointed by Trump in his first term – governors Christopher Waller and Michelle Bowman, whom Trump recently nominated as vice chair for bank oversight. Both, like Powell, have spoken about the importance of Fed independence, so it’s

**The Federal Reserve Act of 1913 establishing the Fed stipulates that members of its Board of Governors, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate to staggered 14-year terms, can only be removed for “cause” – long thought to mean misconduct, not policy disagreement.**

not clear that either immediately would deliver the rate cuts Trump wants.

### What about roles as FOMC leader, governor?

Trump has no direct control over who heads the FOMC. The FOMC chair is chosen annually by the panel’s 12 members – the seven governors, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and four of the other regional bank presidents, who serve on the panel on a rotating basis.

Removing Powell as a governor would have the largest impact. Were it to withstand legal challenge, it would give Trump both a board vacancy and chair vacancy to fill with a nominee of his own choosing. Also it would open the door to Trump firing as many of the other governors as he pleased to install a wider Fed leadership he saw as compliant with his wishes.

### Could Powell challenge it?

Powell would have the standing to challenge his firing in federal court, but he would have to fund that effort with personal resources. A lawyer and former private equity leader, he has the personal wealth to finance such an effort.

Powell has said repeatedly that he believes his removal is not allowed under the law, and said more recently that he does not believe the cases working their way through the courts now over Trump’s firing of other independent federal board and agency members will apply to the Fed.

### Is it an empty threat from Trump?

The Wall Street Journal reported last week that Trump has discussed firing Powell and replacing him with Kevin Warsh, who served as a Fed governor between 2006 and 2011. Warsh, the paper said, has advised against that, advocating that Trump should allow Powell to remain until his term as Fed chair expires in May 2026. Also last week, White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett, another potential replacement to Powell, said the matter was the subject of ongoing study.



# ConocoPhillips plans layoffs

Company gets consultant to advise on restructuring

Sheila Dang and Ernest Scheyder  
REUTERS

HOUSTON – ConocoPhillips, a top U.S. oil and gas producer, plans to cut staff, the company said on April 22, amid a broad push to rein in costs and streamline operations after its \$23 billion buyout of rival Marathon Oil.

The job cuts are the latest sign of pain in the oil and gas industry, which is facing higher costs and lower revenues as prices hover around \$63 a barrel. Many companies say they cannot drill profitably if oil prices fall under \$65 a barrel.

Oil giants Chevron and SLB announced their own layoffs earlier this year.

Houston-based ConocoPhillips hired management consulting firm Boston Consulting Group to advise on the restructuring and layoff program, which is being referred to internally as

“Competitive Edge,” two sources told Reuters.

The sources declined to be named as the discussions were confidential.

ConocoPhillips has started by restructuring its operations and announced it would centralize some functions, two sources added.

The company previously had six operating segments: Alaska; Lower 48; Canada; Europe, Middle East and North Africa; Asia Pacific; and Other International, according to its annual report.

The operations restructuring will be followed by reorganizations in corporate and support functions, one source added.

“We are always looking at how we can be more efficient with the resources we have. As part of this process, we have informed employees that workforce reductions are anticipated,” a ConocoPhillips spokesperson said in a statement.

Details of the layoffs have not been announced but are expected in the fourth quarter of this year, four sources said. The company has not determined

how large the cuts will be, three sources added.

The company had about 11,800 employees in 14 countries at the end of 2024, according to its annual report.

ConocoPhillips has bulked up in recent years through hefty acquisitions. Besides its acquisition of Marathon Oil last year, it bolstered its position in the Permian Basin of Texas and New Mexico with a \$10 billion deal to buy Shell’s assets and its acquisition of Concho Resources in 2021.

The company laid off up to 500 Houston employees in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic slashed global energy demand and pushed energy prices down. Marathon Oil had also laid off more than 500 workers in Texas, ahead of its merger with ConocoPhillips.

ConocoPhillips is also focused on divesting some of its assets, one of the sources said. The company was exploring the sale of oil and gas assets in Oklahoma that it inherited from its \$22.5 billion takeover of Marathon Oil last year, Reuters reported earlier this month.

## FINANCIAL MARKETS

# Stocks rise on earnings and hopes of easing tariff tensions

Stephen Culp  
REUTERS

U.S. stocks rebounded on April 22 as a spate of quarterly earnings reports and hints at the deescalation of U.S.-China trade tensions brought buyers in from the sidelines.

A broad rally boosted all three major U.S. indexes by more than 2.5%, as investors looked past President Donald Trump’s ramped-up rhetoric against Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, who is widely considered a stabilizing force for the markets.

Minneapolis Fed President Neel Kashkari, when asked about Trump’s attacks on Powell, said the Fed’s independence is “foundational” to better economic outcomes.

But having been battered for weeks by the White House’s erratic and multi-front tariff disputes, the S&P 500 remains nearly 14% below its record closing high reached on Feb. 19.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said that while trade negotiations with Beijing will likely be “a slog,” he believes that there will be a deescalation of U.S.-China trade tensions.

“The roller coaster continues,” said Ryan Detrick, chief market strategist at Carson Group in Omaha. “Some thawing of the aggression (between) U.S. and China, thanks to Bessent’s comments, helped push things higher.”

“Washington understands that the uncertainty around tariffs is hurting markets, and maybe we can get some type of positive news going forward on the trade front,” Detrick added.

Those uncertainties helped prompt the International Monetary Fund to slash its forecasts for U.S. economic growth to 1.8% in 2025, citing the impact of U.S. tariffs, now at 100-year highs.

First-quarter earnings season gathered steam.

So far, 82 of the companies in the S&P 500 have reported. Of those, 73% have beaten expectations, according to LSEG.

Analysts now see aggregate S&P 500 earnings growth of 8.1% for the January-March period, down from the 12.2% growth forecast at the beginning of the quarter, per LSEG.

“Current earnings are showing a continuation of good fundamentals, which is not a surprise,” said Bill Merz, head of Capital Market Research at U.S. Bank Wealth Management, Minneapolis, who added that investors are parsing corporate guidance for “clarity on what companies are planning to do in response to tariff policy.”

Shares of industrial conglomerate 3M Co. jumped 8.1% after the company posted better-than-expected first-quarter profit expectations, though it flagged a likely hit to 2025 profit from tariffs.

Northrop Grumman slumped 12.7% after the company reported a sharp drop in profit.

Aerospace and defense company RTX tumbled 9.8% after flagging a potential \$850 million hit to its annual profit due to tariffs.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 1,016.57 points, or 2.66%, to 39,186.98; the S&P 500 gained 129.56 points, or 2.51%, to 5,287.76; and the Nasdaq Composite gained 429.52 points, or 2.71%, to 16,300.42.

All 11 major sectors in the S&P 500 advanced, with financials and consumer discretionary enjoying the largest percentage gains.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 6.4-to-1 ratio on the NYSE. There were 50 new highs and 44 new lows on the NYSE.

On the Nasdaq, 3,580 stocks rose and 796 fell as advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 4.5-to-1 ratio.

The S&P 500 posted four new 52-week highs and one new low while the Nasdaq Composite recorded 31 new highs and 76 new lows.

Volume on U.S. exchanges was 15.21 billion shares, compared with the 18.94 billion average for the full session over the last 20 trading days.

# Musk, facing Tesla slump, to cut back on DOGE work

Akash Sriram and Abhirup Roy  
REUTERS

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said on April 22 he would cut back significantly the time he devotes to the Trump administration from next month and spend more time running his many companies.

The move comes as Musk’s involvement in the so-called Department of Government Efficiency – where he has led efforts to cut federal jobs – has become a political lightning rod, fueling unrelenting protests and vandalism at Tesla showrooms. Investors have raised concerns about Musk spending too little time managing Tesla, where sales have nosedived.

“The large slog of work necessary to get the DOGE team in place and working with the government to get the financial house in order is mostly done,” Musk told analysts on a conference call. But he said he still intended to spend some 40% of his time on DOGE.

Tesla shares, which had risen 4% in after-hours trading right before an earnings conference call began, spiked to trade up 5.5% on Musk’s comments. The stock has nearly halved from its December peak.

After market close on April 22, Tesla reported profitability for its core auto business that topped rock-bottom expectations and said it was on track to produce an affordable car.

But the EV maker said it would have to reassess its growth forecast in three



Musk

months because it was “difficult to measure the impacts of shifting global trade policy on the automotive and energy supply chains” and that “changing political sentiment, could have a meaningful impact on demand for our products in the near-term,” it said.

Tariff tensions add further uncertainty. Tesla has paused some China-sourced component imports after U.S. tariffs on the Asian country rose to 145%, Reuters earlier reported. China has responded with tariffs of its own, leading Tesla to suspend new Model S and Model X orders in the country.

Musk, who said on April 22 he continued to support lower tariffs, added that Tesla was not immune to “macro demand for cars,” adding that economic uncertainty causes people to want to “pause on doing a major capital purchase like a car.”

“Absent the macro issues, we don’t see any reduction in demand,” he said. But tariffs will have an outsized impact on Tesla’s energy business, he said.

While the stronger-than-expected margin in the first quarter – driven by lower costs – offered some relief, Tesla’s auto revenue still slumped by a fifth in the period, and net profit plunged 71%. These metrics both missed Wall Street estimates.

Musk acknowledged the blowback on the company, but brushed off con-

cerns about brand damage hurting Tesla’s first-quarter sales.

Musk’s recent posts on his social media site X have suggested he is slowly reengaging with his businesses, after spending months talking only about how he was cutting government waste. But his time away from DOGE will be split between money-maker Tesla and his other companies which include SpaceX, xAI and Neuralink.

“I think more attention by Musk on Tesla is a net positive for the stock, but to see a meaningful move in the stock we would need to see a headline more like ‘Musk to leave DOGE to refocus on Tesla,’” said Shawn Campbell, adviser and investor at Camelthorn Investments, who personally holds Tesla shares.

Tesla has said it plans to release a cheaper car – seen as a key catalyst for future growth – in the first half of 2025, using existing platforms and assembly lines, after scrapping plans for a brand-new, low-cost model. Tesla in its release said the launch of affordable cars was on track for the first half of the year.

“The ramp might be slower than we had hoped initially,” Lars Moravy, the vice president for engineering, said on the call, but that there was nothing blocking Tesla from starting production within the publicized timeline.

“The models that come out in the next months will be built on our lines and will resemble in form and shape the cars we currently make,” Moravy added.

# Defense contractors mostly maintain forecasts

Mike Stone and Utkarsh Shetti  
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Major U.S. defense contractors are mostly maintaining their financial forecasts for 2025, saying it is too soon to understand the impact of President Donald Trump’s tariffs.

Lockheed Martin, the largest defense firm, reaffirmed its forecasts for the year on April 22, buoyed by resilient demand for its missile systems and fighter jets. Similarly, Northrop Grumman said its profit margins may narrow, but stuck with its sales prediction, indicating some confidence in the face of trade tensions.

“We do not see, at this point in time, significant risk to our company related to the trade policies as we understand them today,” Northrop CEO Kathy Warden told analysts. “We’re going to monitor that closely and we’re already taking action to account for and mitigate the risks that we do see, particularly in availability of certain components that we need for delivering on our programs.”

RTX Corp, formerly known as Raytheon Technologies, broke ranks by expressing concern about potentially \$850 million in reduced profits from new levies on metals and China. This divergence highlights the varying impacts of trade policies across the de-

fense and commercial aerospace sectors.

RTX has large commercial aerospace businesses that make jet interiors and engines.

The defense industry, like other sectors with complex manufacturing operations, is grappling with the potential effects of a global trade war. The situation has pressured an already strained supply chain, forcing companies to reassess their strategies and cost structures.

Despite these challenges, the sector continues to benefit from a surge in global weaponry demand, fueled by the Russian war in Ukraine and conflict in the Middle East. This increased demand has helped offset some of the uncertainties stemming from trade disputes.

However, RTX’s concern signals the industry is not immune to trade pressures, highlighting the complex interplay between defense spending, international relations and economic policies.

A higher U.S. defense budget, suggested by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth in an April 7 social media post, would benefit contractors’ revenues while providing some stability and growth, even amid an uncertain economic outlook.

Trump’s review of military equipment export rules, aimed at easing re-

strictions, could potentially boost revenues for U.S. contractors.

However, this comes as some allies, including Canada and the European Union, are reconsidering their reliance on U.S. defense equipment due to trade tensions and shifting geopolitical alliances.

The European Union has outlined plans to shore up its own defense capabilities to reduce reliance on the U.S. by 2030, meaning any role for companies outside the bloc could diminish.

Northrop Grumman posted a 49% drop in first-quarter profit and missed sales expectations, as the U.S. contractor booked losses on its B-21 stealth bomber program due to higher manufacturing costs, sending its shares down 12%.

Lockheed reported higher first-quarter profit, boosting shares more than 0.8%. Lockheed quarterly earnings per share of \$7.28 beat Wall Street analyst expectations of \$6.34.

Collins Aerospace, RTX’s aerospace and avionics arm, posted an 8% rise in revenue that touched \$7.22 billion in the quarter, while the Pratt and Whitney unit, which makes engines for Airbus’ A320neo jets, saw sales rise 14%.

Raytheon, RTX’s defense unit, reported a 5% fall in sales year-over-year, primarily driven by the divestiture of its cybersecurity, intelligence and services business completed last year.

## Oil prices

Brent crude futures rose \$1.18, or 1.8%, to settle at \$67.44 per barrel April 22. The West Texas Intermediate crude contract for May, which expired on April 22’s settlement, gained \$1.23, or 2%, to close at \$64.32. The more actively traded WTI June contract also gained 2% to settle at \$63.47.



# Jury finds NY Times not liable in Palin case

## Decision follows retrial after 2022 verdict overturned

Luc Cohen  
REUTERS

NEW YORK – A federal jury in Manhattan on April 22 found the New York Times not liable for allegedly defaming Sarah Palin in a 2017 editorial about gun control, dealing the former Republican vice presidential candidate a second loss at trial.

The verdict came in a retrial of Palin’s case, after a federal appeals court threw out a 2022 verdict in the Times’ favor. The jury deliberated for around two hours after a weeklong trial.

In a statement after the verdict, New York Times spokesperson Danielle Rhoades Ha said: “The decision reaffirms an important tenet of American law: publishers are not liable for honest mistakes.”

Palin’s lawyers did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Palin, 61, who also served as Alaska’s governor, sued the newspaper and former editorial page editor James Bennet over a June 14, 2017, article that wrongly suggested she may have incited a January 2011 mass shooting in an Arizona parking lot.

Six people were killed and Democratic U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords was seriously wounded in the attack.

Bennet said he was under deadline pressure when he added language to “America’s Lethal Politics” that linked the attack to a map from Palin’s political action committee that put Giffords and other Democrats under crosshairs.

The Times quickly acknowledged its mistake and apologized, publishing a correction 14 hours after the editorial

appeared online.

Lawyers for Palin said that wasn’t enough because the backtracking didn’t mention her by name.

In her closing argument, Times’ lawyer Felicia Ellsworth alluded to the high burden that Palin, a public figure, had in order to hold the newspaper liable.

“To win this case, Governor Palin needs to prove that the New York Times and James Bennet did not care about the truth,” she said. “There has not been one shred of evidence showing anything other than an honest mistake.”

Palin lawyer Ken Turkel said it was more than that.

“This is not an honest mistake about a passing reference” to Palin, he said in his closing argument. “For her, it was a life-changer.”

Palin lost her first trial in February 2022, but the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan last August said the verdict was tainted by several rulings from the presiding judge. The case had long been viewed by Palin and other conservatives as a possible vehicle to overturn the 1964 U.S. Supreme Court landmark New York Times v. Sullivan.

In that case, the court said that to win a defamation case, a public figure must demonstrate that an offending statement was made with “actual malice,” meaning with knowledge it was false or with reckless disregard as to whether it was false. The 2nd Circuit, however, said Palin waived the argument by waiting too long to challenge the “actual malice” standard. President Donald Trump has also questioned the standard.

Palin was Alaska’s governor from 2006 to 2009, and ran with late Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona in his unsuccessful 2008 White House run. Democrat Barack Obama and his vice presidential pick, Joe Biden, won that race.

# ‘60 Minutes’ executive producer to step down

Dawn Chmielewski  
and David Shepardson  
REUTERS

Bill Owens, the longtime executive producer of CBS News’ “60 Minutes,” is stepping down over concerns about editorial independence, according to an internal memo seen by Reuters on April 22.

Owens’ departure follows a month-long legal battle with President Donald Trump, who sued CBS in October over a “60 Minutes” interview with his Democratic rival for the White House, former Vice President Kamala Harris. Earlier this month, the case entered mediation.

“Over the past months, it has also become clear that I would not be allowed to run the show as I have always run it. To make independent decisions based on what was right for 60 Minutes, right for the audience,” Owens wrote in a note to the “60 Minutes” staff. After defending the show “from every angle, over time with everything I could,” he has elected to step aside.

Last week, Trump again attacked “60 Minutes,” saying it aired two inaccurate stories about him and he has pressed the Federal Communications Commission to take action.

The FCC is already reviewing whether the Harris interview violated “news distortion” rules. Though the agency is prohibited from censorship or infringing the First Amendment rights of media, broadcasters cannot intentionally distort the news.

FCC Chair Brendan Carr said in February the commission was in the early stages of its review of the bid by CBS’s parent company, Paramount Global, which is seeking agency approval for an \$8.4 billion merger with Skydance Media.

The federal agency has authority over the transaction because it needs to approve the transfer of the broadcast television licenses held by CBS. The deal was extended for 90 days, as the companies await regulatory approval.

Carr said in November the “60 Minutes” complaint was likely to arise during the FCC review of the transaction.

CBS News President and CEO Wendy McMahon lauded Owens’ “unwavering integrity, curiosity, and a deep



Owens

commitment to the truth” in an email to the staff. She said the news executive, who spent 37 years at CBS News, including 24 years at its premiere news program, would remain with “60 Minutes” in the weeks ahead.

“Working with Bill has been one of the great privileges of my career,” McMahon wrote. “Standing behind what he stood for was an easy decision for me, and I never took for granted that he did the same for me.”

Katherine Jacobsen, U.S. program coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists, said it was alarming to see a media executive resign because he did not feel he had editorial independence.

“It really speaks to something that we should all be alarmed about, and that is the erosion of media freedom and journalists’ ability to work without fear of retaliation,” Jacobsen said.

CBS’s long-running prime-time news show became a lightning rod for Trump, who repeatedly assailed the network on the campaign trail over the episode, threatening to revoke CBS’s broadcasting license if elected.

The lawsuit, filed in the Northern District of Texas, alleges that the network misled viewers by airing two different responses from Harris to a question about the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

CBS said last month that “the transcript and unedited interview footage demonstrate that CBS engaged in commonplace editorial practices – specifically, by deciding what material from a lengthy sit-down interview would air in a time-limited television format.”

The FCC’s Carr rejected the idea, telling Reuters an investigation is ongoing. “We’re not close in my view to the position of dismissing that complaint at this point,” he said.

The Center for Individual Freedom, Americans for Tax Reform, Taxpayers Protection Alliance and other groups last week called on Carr to reject the complaint, saying an “adverse ruling against CBS would constitute regulatory overreach and advance precedent that can be weaponized by future FCCs.”

# Judges extend deportation blocks

Luc Cohen and Tom Hals  
REUTERS

NEW YORK – Two U.S. judges on April 22 extended temporary blocks on some deportations of Venezuelan migrants and signaled that President Donald Trump’s invocation of a 1798 law historically used in wartime to speed up their removal from the United States may not survive judicial review.

Denver-based U.S. District Judge Charlotte Sweeney wrote in a ruling that Trump’s administration must give Venezuelan migrants detained in Colorado notice 21 days in advance before any deportations under the Alien Enemies Act and must inform them of their right to challenge their removal.

And at a court hearing in Manhattan, U.S. District Judge Alvin Hellerstein appeared inclined to require the administration to notify Venezuelans at least 10 days in advance before deporting them under that 18th century law. Hellerstein said he understands Trump’s desire to move quickly on deportations but that the administration must afford migrants due process.

“This is not a secret court, an inquisition in medieval times. This is the United States of America,” Hellerstein said.

Hellerstein also said Trump’s March 15 proclamation invoking the law to deport hundreds of men accused of being members of the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua to a prison in El Salvador may run afoul of the U.S. Constitution’s Eighth Amendment protections against cruel and unusual punishment.

“This proclamation is contrary to law,” said Hellerstein, an appointee of Democratic President Bill Clinton.

Relatives of many of the deported Venezuelans and their lawyers have denied that they are Tren de Aragua members and have said they were never given the chance to contest the administration’s allegations of gang affiliation. Trump’s administration has designated Tren de Aragua as a foreign terrorist organization.

The judges provided the first judicial guidance on how the Trump administration can ensure due process rights under the Alien Enemies Act since the U.S. Supreme Court’s April 7 order requiring migrants be given the opportunity to challenge their removals in court. The Supreme Court in its order did not specify how much notice migrants should be given, nor did it resolve the validity of the administration’s reliance on that law to carry out the deportations.

At the hearing in Manhattan, Justice Department lawyer Tiberius Davis said migrants would be given at least 24 hours to contest their deportations.

The deportees sent by Trump’s administration to El Salvador are being detained in the country’s massive anti-terrorism prison under a deal in which the United States is paying President Nayib Bukele’s government \$6 million.

The deportations are part of the Republican president’s hard-line approach toward immigration since he returned to office in January.

“The president was elected on this exact program and it remains his most popular policy,” Davis said at the hearing.

The American Civil Liberties Union, representing the migrants in both states, had urged the judges to provide notice 30 days in advance. That timetable was in line with the procedure that the U.S. government used the last time the Alien Enemies Act was invoked, during World War II, to intern and deport people of Japanese, German and Italian descent.

The law authorizes the president to deport, detain or place restrictions on individuals whose primary allegiance is to a foreign power and who might pose a national security risk in wartime.

In her decision, Sweeney wrote that the ACLU was likely correct that the Alien Enemies Act was inapplicable because Tren de Aragua’s presence in the U.S. did not amount to an act of war.

“The court properly recognized that this wartime authority cannot be used during peacetime and that the government is not complying with due process,” Lee Gelernt, the lead ACLU lawyer in the case, said in a statement.

On April 19, the Supreme Court weighed in again, blocking what advocates said was the imminent removal of dozens of Venezuelans held in Texas without due process.

In a separate case, the Trump administration was accused of violating a judge’s order to provide information about its efforts to facilitate the return to the United States of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran man who lived in Maryland, according to a court filing made public on April 22.

The administration has acknowledged that Abrego Garcia was deported in error to El Salvador in March.

Maryland-based U.S. District Judge Paula Xinis last week ordered the administration to provide documents and answer questions by the end of April 21 about its efforts to comply with a court order to facilitate Abrego Garcia’s return.

The Trump administration said in the same joint filing that it made a good-faith effort to comply with the demands for documents and to answer questions from Abrego Garcia’s legal team.

# FAA takes action to prevent incidents near Vegas airport

David Shepardson  
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – The Federal Aviation Administration said on April 22 it is taking action to prevent collisions between helicopters and passenger planes around the busy Las Vegas airport, citing significant safety issues.

A Jan. 29 collision between a helicopter and an American Airlines regional jet near Reagan Washington National Airport killed 67 people and prompted the FAA to launch a review of helicopter operations near major U.S. airports.

The FAA said it was addressing several serious issues involving helicopters at Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas, partly stemming from a routine lack of compliance with separation rules as tower controllers had not issued traffic advisories between returning air tour helicopters and airplanes.

In March, Congress blasted the FAA for failing to act for years to address helicopters in “dangerous proximity” to commercial airplanes near Reagan Washington, citing 15,000 reports of dangerous proximity between planes and helicopters since 2021. “Clearly something was missed,” said acting FAA Administrator Chris Rocheleau.

The FAA said in Las Vegas agreements with local helicopter operators requiring them to avoid arrival and departure routes lack defined vertical or lateral measurements.

“We took quick action including exercising positive control over the helicopters and issuing more traffic advisories to pilots. As a result, the number of traffic alert and collision avoidance system reports decreased by 30% in just three weeks,” the FAA said.

It added it is planning further actions around Las Vegas, the eighth busiest U.S. airport by passengers.

The FAA in March imposed permanent restrictions on helicopter traffic around Reagan Washington that has the single busiest runway in the United States. The FAA has mandated a halt to air traffic when essential helicopters are operating near Reagan.

The FAA is also scrutinizing airplane traffic flows around Hollywood Burbank Airport and Van Nuys Airport in the Los Angeles area, which are less than 10 miles apart and serve a wide mix of aircraft with closely spaced arrival and departure paths.

The FAA held a helicopter safety roundtable on April 22 that also looked at operations and maintenance. An air tour helicopter crash in the Hudson River near New York City earlier this month killed six, raising new questions about the safety of operations.

The FAA said the top causes of helicopter accidents “are loss of control, striking an object during low-altitude operations, and both unintentional and intentional flight” in poor weather.



# Rubio will not attend Ukraine peace talks in London

## Europe worried about Trump administration’s approach to Moscow

Humeyra Pamuk REUTERS

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio will not attend talks in London aimed at ending the war in Ukraine, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said on April 22, after earlier saying he planned to travel to London.

After speaking with his British counterpart, Rubio said he was rescheduling his trip to the United Kingdom to coming months.

“I look forward to following up after the ongoing discussions in London and rescheduling my trip to the UK in the coming months,” he said in a post on X.

The talks will go ahead and President Donald Trump’s Ukraine envoy, former Gen. Keith Kellogg, would attend the discussions, he said.

It was unclear whether the absence of Washington’s top diplomat meant that Trump had downgraded Washington’s expectations from the meeting, after saying on April 20 that he hopes Moscow and Kyiv will make a deal this week to end the conflict in Ukraine.

“In this particular instance, while the meetings in London are still occurring, he will not be attending. But that is not a

statement regarding the meetings. It’s a statement about logistical issues in his schedule,” Bruce told reporters at a regular news briefing.

“Gen. Kellogg is there, and so he will be having those conversations.”

Earlier on April 22, Bruce said in an interview on Fox Business Network’s “Mornings with Maria” program that she was leaving along with Rubio for London to continue talks, adding: “London has potential, and this is a good open door.”

The decision comes after warnings that the U.S. would walk away from efforts to broker a Russia-Ukraine peace deal unless there are clear signs of progress soon.

Since taking office in January, Trump has upended U.S. foreign policy, pressing Ukraine to agree to a ceasefire while easing many of the measures the Biden administration had taken to punish Russia for its 2022 full-scale invasion of its neighbor.

Trump has repeatedly said that he wants to broker a ceasefire in Ukraine by May, arguing the United States must end a conflict that has killed tens of thousands and risks a direct confrontation with nuclear-armed Russia.

Europe has been increasingly concerned over the Trump administration’s overtures toward Moscow, after the failure so far of Trump’s efforts to secure a ceasefire in the war.

## College

Continued from Page 1NN

The White House did not respond to a request for comment. Asked on April 22 about a lawsuit filed a day earlier by Harvard accusing the Trump administration of violating the Constitution by exerting financial pressure to force changes at the university, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that the government will respond in court.

“It’s quite simple: if you want federal dollars, obey federal law,” she said. Harvard and other universities say they are compliant with the law, but that the government is violating federal laws governing due process over funding terminations. The joint statement is the latest show of opposition from U.S. higher-education leaders as the Trump administration seeks to leverage federal funding of medical and other scientific research to overhaul U.S. academia, which Trump says is gripped by antisemitic, anti-American, Marxist and “radical left” ideologies.

Fifty-seven percent, including one-third of Republicans, disagreed with the statement that “it’s OK for a U.S. president to withhold funding from universities if the president doesn’t agree with how the university is run,” a Reuters/Ipsos poll that closed on Monday found.

On April 14, Harvard rejected numerous demands from the administration, which is seeking oversight of Harvard’s student body, faculty and curriculum in an apparent effort to curb what it perceives as the university’s liberal bias.

Soon after, the administration announced it was freezing \$2.3 billion in federal funding to the school, most of it research grants from the Department of Health and Human Services.

The White House has said Trump wanted to ensure taxpayer dollars do not support racial discrimination or racially-motivated violence. Trump has called a pro-Palestinian student protest movement across the country after a deadly attack in October 2023 by the Palestinian group Hamas, which prompted Israel’s offensive in Gaza, as anti-American and antisemitic.

The administration also threatened to strip Harvard of its tax-exempt status and take away its ability to enroll foreign students.

On April 21, Harvard sued the Trump administration in federal court in Boston, saying the government’s pausing or canceling awarded grants in an attempt to “coerce and control” the country’s oldest university was unlawful and an unconstitutional attack on free speech rights.

The Trump administration has said the handling of pro-Palestinian protests by leaders of Harvard, Columbia and other universities is a violation of the Civil Rights Act’s Title VI, which requires that recipients of federal funding not discriminate based on race or national origin.

Harvard in its lawsuit has in turn has accused the Trump administration of violating Title VI, which requires the government to first seek voluntary compliance, and it can only end federal funding after a lengthy investigation and hearings process and a 30-day notice to Congress, which has not happened at Harvard.

Columbia University agreed to negotiations over demands similar to those made of Harvard after the Trump administration said it had terminated grants and contracts worth \$400 million, mostly for medical and other scientific research. The outcome of those negotiations has not yet been announced.

The Trump administration has also threatened to withhold funding for universities and has sought to deport pro-Palestinian foreign students.



President Donald Trump’s administration has served the president’s retribution agenda that he promised in his campaign. EVELYN HOCKSTEIN/REUTERS

## Trump

Continued from Page 1NN

In his first 100 days, Trump has wielded the levers of presidential power against a panoply of perceived enemies. Trump’s actions served notice that his campaign promise of political retribution was anything but rhetorical, after he repeatedly telegraphed his intentions as a candidate.

The Republican president has used the machinery of the state and the power of the presidency to go after people and institutions that have aggrieved him in more expansive ways than any of his predecessors, historians said.

“It’s not unusual for presidents to have enemies,” said Jeremi Suri, a presidential historian at the University of Texas at Austin. “What is unusual is for the president to use the entirety of the federal government, not simply to exclude someone, but to directly punish them.”

Trump has made particular use of executive orders – typically used by presidents to direct policy priorities – to target perceived foes by stripping them of security clearances, blocking them from government buildings or directing agencies to probe them for wrongdoing.

He has reached deep into the traditionally independent Justice Department to fire those he views as disloyal, pulled protective security details from his critics and ordered investigations into former officials who challenged his false claims that his 2020 election loss was rigged.

On his first day in office, he removed clearances for 50 former national security officials who had signed a letter suggesting Russia was behind a story about salacious material found on a laptop belonging to President Joe Biden’s son Hunter. No evidence of Russian involvement has emerged.

He has also taken away clearances for all three Democrats who ran against him in presidential contests: Biden, Hillary Clinton and Kamala Harris.

Trump has focused much of his attention on the criminal justice system after claiming during his 2024 presidential campaign that his four indictments were motivated by politics. Then-President Joe Biden’s administration denied the accusations.

In Trump’s first 100 days, his Justice Department has fired or demoted dozens of officials, prosecutors and FBI agents, including rank-and-file employees who worked on investigations into Trump and the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by a mob of Trump supporters.

In a speech at the Justice Department’s headquarters in February, Trump denounced the “lies and abuses” that he said had led Special Counsel Jack Smith to charge him with illegally retaining classified documents after leaving office and plotting to

overturn the 2020 election.

“Traditional presidencies have failed to bring meaningful change to the ways of Washington, and the President is committed to upending the entrenched bureaucracy,” said White House spokesman Harrison Fields. “Utilizing every tool afforded by the Constitution, the Trump Administration is prioritizing efficiency; eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse; and fulfilling every campaign promise.”

During his first term, Trump’s instincts for revenge were sometimes thwarted by his own appointees, many of whom were experienced government hands or establishment Republicans.

Trump has taken steps as well to eliminate internal watchdogs who might seek to constrain him.

“All administrations, particularly when you see a switch from one party to another, seek to control the executive branch,” said historian Timothy Naftali, the former director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. “It’s the ferocity and the scope of what he’s done that makes it unprecedented.”

Other presidents have used their power to penalize rivals in more muted ways, Suri said. Democrat Lyndon Johnson sought to discredit his political rival, Robert Kennedy, in the news media, and Republican George W. Bush banned Brent Scowcroft, a former national security adviser, from the White House after Scowcroft wrote a column opposing the Iraq War.

“That’s often how presidents use their power to go after enemies: they keep them out of their administration and spread rumors about them,” Suri said.

Trump has frequently intertwined his personal animus against political opponents with his administration’s ideological and policy objectives.

In February, Trump digressed from remarks during a White House meeting with governors to address Maine Governor Janet Mills, warning her to comply with an order banning transgender athletes.

“See you in court,” Mills, a Democrat, replied.

Within a day, three separate federal departments had initiated inquiries into whether the state was violating civil rights law, imperiling millions of dollars in federal funding. The Justice Department sent Mills a letter telling her Maine was “on notice” while Trump demanded a “full-throated apology” before the “case can be settled.”

In early April, Trump’s agriculture secretary, Brooke Rollins, wrote Mills to confirm that some school funding had been frozen.

“This is only the beginning,” Rollins warned her. Nine days later, the Education Department said it was taking steps to cut off all federal school funding to the state, and last week Attorney General Pam Bondi announced the Justice Department had sued Maine in federal court.

## Department

Continued from Page 1NN

“In its current form, the Department is bloated, bureaucratic, and unable to perform its essential diplomatic mission in this new era of great power competition,” Rubio said in a statement.

Both Rubio and officials said the bloated structure of the State Department made it impossible to quickly and efficiently make decisions, and that the new plan would attempt to empower regional bureaus to increase functionality and remove offices and programs not aligned with America’s core national interests.

Trump issued a separate executive order in February directing Rubio to revamp the U.S. Foreign Service and how the State Department functions to ensure that the U.S. diplomatic corps faithfully implements his agenda.

The proposed reorganization appears to be less dramatic than many in the department had feared, and a memo that had circulated among State Department employees over the weekend that was proposing to eliminate nearly all of the department’s African affairs bureau among other drastic changes.

Rep. Greg Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the reorganization, coming after the dismantling of the U.S. Agency for International Development, would cede space to U.S. adversaries.

“These potentially sweeping changes have less to do with streamlining the State Department and more to do with eviscerating American soft power, including our values-driven defense of human rights and democracy globally,” Meeks said in a statement.

The plan is separate from potential budget cuts, which could see the department lose about half of its funding but are yet to be decided by Trump’s White House.

The biggest changes proposed were the elimination of the Undersecretary of Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights, a part of the department that Rubio accused of diverting from U.S. priorities as he took aim at what he called “ideological capture” at the agency.

That branch, he wrote in an article on Substack, “provided a fertile environment for activists to redefine ‘human rights’ and ‘democracy’ and to pursue their projects at the taxpayer expense, even when they were in direct conflict with the goals of the Secretary, the President, and the American people.”

He accused officials working on democracy, human rights and labor of waging vendettas against what he called “anti-woke” leaders in Poland, Hungary and Brazil and said the migration bureau had helped spur mass migration.

Numerous USAID programs for years had supported work bolstering independent media and civil society in increasingly autocratic countries. It was not immediately known if that was still a priority.

While some bureaus under the abolished branch were being folded into other parts of the State Department, a key office monitoring war crimes and atrocities globally – the Office of Global Criminal Justice – had disappeared from the new organizational chart provided.

State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce told reporters the proposal was a road map and things could still change. The closure of a bureau focused on a specific issue does not mean work on that issue would be completely stopped, she said, without detailing how those issues would remain department priorities.

Rubio last week also closed a State Department office set up to counter foreign disinformation, accusing it of censoring conservative views.



# SPORTS **EXTRA**

NBA PLAYOFFS



Indiana Pacers guard Tyrese Haliburton, right, shoots while Milwaukee Bucks forward Bobby Portis (9) defends during Game 2 of a first-round playoff series at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. TREVOR RUSZKOWSKI/IMAGN IMAGES

## PACERS, THUNDER TAKE 2-0 LEADS

Pascal Siakam and Tyrese Haliburton each had a double-double as the Indiana Pacers beat the Milwaukee Bucks 123-115 on Tuesday in Indianapolis for a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference first-round series.

● Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 27 points to lead the Oklahoma City Thunder to a comfortable home win over the visiting Memphis Grizzlies, 118-99 on Tuesday in Game 2 of their series. **COVERAGE, 2NS**

NFL DRAFT

## Which players could be surprises?

Michael Middlehurst-Schwartz  
USA TODAY

What exactly constitutes an NFL draft sleeper in 2025?

Satisfying the label is exceedingly difficult. Prospects who once received minimal media attention now are thoroughly examined in the pre-draft process, leaving few to truly fly under the radar. And the depth of the individual classes has also shifted radically in recent years amid a new era of Name, Image and Likeness rules, with this year's 70 early declarations representing just more than half of the total from 2021.

But without fail, the draft has continued to produce players who quickly defy their draft stock by making massive early contributions, with fourth-round Tampa Bay Buccaneers running back Bucky Irving and Los Angeles Chargers cornerback Tarheeb Still emerging as the latest Day 3 picks to make an instant mark.

With the draft about a week away, here's our look at 14 potential sleepers in this year's class:

**RB Jacory Croskey-Merritt, Arizona:** Having played in just one game last season due to eligibility issues and then being snubbed for the NFL Scouting Combine, Croskey-Merritt has

See **DRAFT**, Page 8NS



Tennessee wide receiver Dont'e Thornton Jr. runs for a touchdown after a catch against Kent State on Sept. 14. BRANDON SUMRALL/GETTY IMAGES

STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS MAPLE LEAFS 3, SENATORS 2 (OT)

## Domi's OT goal gives Leafs 2-0 series lead

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Max Domi scored at 3:09 of overtime, lifting the Toronto Maple Leafs over the Ottawa Senators 3-2 on Tuesday night and giving the hosts a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference first-round playoff series.

Game 3 is Thursday in Ottawa. Domi scored on a 28-foot wrist shot from the edge of the left circle after taking a backhand pass from Simon Benoit and weaving to his left.

"They're a great team and gave us all we could handle," Domi said. "(Benoit) made a great play and I just shot it."

John Tavares had a goal and an assist for the Maple Leafs. Morgan Rielly also scored and Anthony Stolarz made 26 saves.

"Confidence is high but they're going to be ready to go (in Game 3)," Stolarz

said. "They will have their home crowd behind them."

Brady Tkachuk and Adam Gaudette scored for the Senators, who overcame a two-goal deficit to force overtime. Linus Ullmark stopped 18 shots.

"I think that (comeback) gives us confidence," Tkachuk said. "There's not one ounce of panic, doubt in this locker room."

"It comes down to one shot, things happen. I think we controlled a lot of play. We've been resilient all year. We're not going to let it deflate us. I'm looking forward to Game 3 with our home fans behind us."

Toronto opened the first period aggressively and Ullmark was forced to make a save when Pontus Holmberg broke in alone at 1:20.

See **MAPLE LEAFS**, Page 6NS



Maple Leafs forward Max Domi, right, celebrates with teammates after scoring the winning goal in overtime on April 22 in Toronto. DAN HAMILTON/IMAGN IMAGES



## NBA PLAYOFFS

PACERS 123, BUCKS 115 INDIANA LEADS SERIES 2-0

# Pacers fend off Bucks’ late comeback try

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Pascal Siakam and Tyrese Haliburton each had a double-double as the Indiana Pacers withstood a late rally to beat the Milwaukee Bucks 123-115 on Tuesday in Indianapolis for a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference first-round playoff series.

Siakam had 24 points and 11 rebounds while Haliburton had 21 points and 12 assists for fourth-seeded Indiana, which never trailed. The best-of-seven series shifts to Milwaukee for Game 3 on Friday.

The Pacers led by 15 before Bucks star Damian Lillard hit a 3-pointer to cap a 13-0 run and cut the deficit to 115-113 with 2:33 remaining.

After Siakam’s trey ended the run on the Pacers’ next possession, Siakam and the Bucks’ Bobby Portis were issued technical fouls. Andrew Nembhard helped to secure the victory with a 3-pointer that put Indiana ahead 121-113 with 1:11 left.

Nembhard finished with 17 points, Aaron Nesmith added 16, Myles Turner had 15 and Benedict Mathurin scored 14 off the bench. The Pacers shot 48.9 percent from the field and 44.4 percent (16 of 36) from 3-point range.

Giannis Antetokounmpo led fifth-seeded Milwaukee with 34 points, 18 rebounds and seven assists. Portis posted 28 points and 12 rebounds off the bench, Lillard added 14 points and Kyle Kuzma had 12 points. The Bucks shot 50.6 percent from the field and 40 percent (14 for

35) from beyond the arc, but committed 16 turnovers.

Lillard was 4-of-13 shooting from the field and played 37 minutes in his first game since March 18 after being out with deep vein thrombosis in his right calf.

Indiana opened the game with 11-of-14 shooting from the field and led 31-16 with 4:43 left in the first quarter.

The Pacers held a 40-30 advantage at the end of the fast-paced first period and led by 14 with 5:34 left in the second quarter. Milwaukee rallied to cut the lead to four and trailed 68-60 at the half.

Haliburton led the Pacers with 16 points in the first half, while Antetokounmpo and Portis Jr. had 14 apiece for Milwaukee.

Indiana began the second half on a 10-2 run and led 83-69 after Nembhard made two foul shots with seven minutes left in the third quarter.

Indiana 123, Milwaukee 115

MILWAUKEE (115)

Antetokounmpo 14-20 6-10 34, Kuzma 5-10 2-2 12, Lopez 3-6 0-0 8, Lillard 4-13 4-5 14, Prince 2-4 0-0 6, Portis 11-19 0-1 28, Trent Jr. 1-4 1-1 4, Porter Jr. 4-9 0-0 9, Green 0-2 0-0 0, Sims 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 44-87 13-19 115.

INDIANA (123)

Nesmith 5-9 2-2 16, Siakam 8-16 6-6 24, Turner 6-10 2-2 15, Haliburton 8-19 2-2 21, Nembhard 6-10 2-2 17, Toppin 3-4 0-0 7, Mathurin 4-10 5-5 14, McConnell 3-8 0-0 6, Walker 1-4 0-0 3, Bryant 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 44-90 19-19 123.

MIL	30	30	27	28	-	115
IND	40	28	31	24	-	123

3-Point Goals: Milwaukee 14-35 (Portis 6-11, Prince 2-3, Lopez 2-4, Lillard 2-8, Porter Jr. 1-2, Trent Jr. 1-3, Green 0-1, Kuzma 0-3), Indiana 16-36 (Nesmith 4-5, Nembhard 3-5, Haliburton 3-10, Siakam 2-5, Toppin 1-2, Walker 1-2, Turner 1-3, Mathurin 1-4). Fouled Out: None. Rebounds: Milwaukee 43 (Antetokounmpo 18), Indiana 38 (Siakam 11). Assists: Milwaukee 26 (Antetokounmpo, Lillard 7), Indiana 30 (Haliburton 12). Total Fouls: Milwaukee 19, Indiana 19. A: 17,274 (18,165)



Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) tries to shoot around the Pacers’ Pascal Siakam on April 22 in Indianapolis. TREVOR RUSZKOWSKI/IMAGN IMAGES

THUNDER 118, GRIZZLIES 99 OKLA. CITY LEADS SERIES 2-0



Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander controls the ball against the Memphis Grizzlies’ Ja Morant on April 22 in Oklahoma City. ALONZO ADAMS/IMAGN IMAGES

# SGA leads Thunder to easy win over Grizzlies

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 27 points to lead the Oklahoma City Thunder to a another comfortable home win over the visiting Memphis Grizzlies, 118-99 on Tuesday in Game 2 of their Western Conference first-round series.

The Thunder, who won the opener by 51 points, lead the best-of-seven series 2-0. Game 3 is scheduled for Thursday in Memphis.

The Grizzlies cut what was a 23-point deficit to eight late in the third quarter. With Gilgeous-Alexander, an MVP front-runner, on the bench to start the fourth quarter, the Thunder scored the first nine points of the period – five by Alex Caruso – to take control for good.

Oklahoma City held the Grizzlies to just 7-of-19 shooting (36.8 percent) from the field in the fourth quarter. Memphis finished shooting 42.9 percent from the floor.

Gilgeous-Alexander, who scored a season-low 15 in the Game 1 victory, struggled from the floor again in Game 2, going just 10-for-29 overall and 3-for-10 on 3-point attempts.

Jalen Williams added 24 points for Oklahoma City, which never trailed. Chet Holmgren contributed 20 points, 11 rebounds and five blocks, and Caruso scored 13.

Jaren Jackson Jr. led Memphis with 26 points while Ja Morant added 23. Jackson scored 13 of his points in the third quarter, when the Grizzlies outscored the Thunder 27-20.

After going just 2-for-13 in the field in Game 1, Jackson was 10-for-17 overall

and 2-for-3 from beyond the arc on Tuesday.

But still, Oklahoma City was too much – especially on defense.

The Thunder scored 25 points off the Grizzlies’ 15 turnovers while committing just seven turnovers themselves.

Through two games, Oklahoma City has outscored Memphis 48-8 on the fast break.

Early on, the game seemed to be heading toward another massive blow-out.

Four minutes into the game, the Thunder led by double figures as the Grizzlies missed their first 10 shots. However, Memphis settled in and stayed within striking distance.

After falling behind by 19 early in the second, the Grizzlies quickly reeled off an 11-2 run to get back within 10, keyed by seven quick points by Morant.

That momentum didn’t last long, though, as Oklahoma City stretched its lead to 23 late in the half and was up by 18 at the break.

Oklahoma City 118, Memphis 99										
MEMPHIS (99)										
Bane 7-17 3-3 19, Jackson Jr. 10-17 4-6 26, Edey 2-3 0-0 4, Morant 10-25 1-2 23, Pippen Jr. 4-12 3-3 13, Aldama 4-11 0-0 10, Kennard 2-4 0-0 4, Bagley III 0-1 0-0 0, Konchar 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 39-91 11-14 99.										
OKLAHOMA CITY (118)										
Holmgren 6-14 5-6 20, Williams 10-19 2-3 24, Hartenstein 3-7 0-0 6, Dort 3-9 0-0 8, Gilgeous-Alexander 10-29 4-4 27, Wallace 2-4 0-0 5, Caruso 5-10 0-0 13, Joe 2-6 2-2 7, Wiggins 4-6 0-1 8, Williams 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 45-104 13-16 118.										
MEM	17	35	27	20	-	99				
OKC	32	38	20	28	-	118				
3-Point Goals: Memphis 10-31 (Jackson Jr. 2-3, Morant 2-6, Aldama 2-6, Bane 2-7, Pippen Jr. 2-7, Konchar 0-1, Kennard 0-1), Oklahoma City 15-45 (Caruso 3-6, Holmgren 3-8, Gilgeous-Alexander 3-10, Williams 2-6, Dort 2-7, Wallace 1-2, Joe 1-5, Wiggins 0-1). Fouled Out: None. Rebounds: Memphis 42 (Bane 12), Oklahoma City 55 (Holmgren 11). Assists: Memphis 17 (Morant 6), Oklahoma City 21 (Gilgeous-Alexander, Williams 5). Total Fouls: Memphis 13, Oklahoma City 16. A: 18,203 (18,203)										

LAKERS 94, TIMBERWOLVES 85 SERIES TIED 1-1

# Doncic, Lakers start fast to draw even in series

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Luka Doncic scored 16 of his 31 points in a dominating first quarter and added 12 rebounds and nine assists as the Los Angeles Lakers evened their Western Conference first-round playoff series with a 94-85 victory over the visiting Minnesota Timberwolves on Tuesday.

LeBron James added 21 points and 11 rebounds, Austin Reaves scored 16 points and Rui Hachimura had 11 as the No. 3 seed Lakers rebounded from a 22-point loss in the series opener Saturday.

Julius Randle scored 27 points and Anthony Edwards added 25 for the Timberwolves, who shot 38 percent after shooting 51.2 percent in Game 1, when they were also 21 of 42 from 3-point range. Minnesota was 5 of 25 from long range in Game 2.

Jaden McDaniels scored eight points for the Timberwolves after he scored a team-high 25 in Game 1. Minnesota heads home, where it went 2-0 against Los Angeles in the regular season.

Los Angeles roared out to a double-digit lead less than seven minutes into the game. The Lakers were up 34-15 at the end of the first quarter, shooting 55 percent while holding Minnesota to 27.8 percent.

Hachimura went to the locker room in the first quarter after he was inadvertently hit in the face by the Timberwolves’ Naz Reid. He returned midway through the second quarter, wearing a protective mask.

The Lakers led by 22 points in the first half and were up 58-43 at halftime.

Minnesota got within 11 points, at 62-51, with 7:48 remaining in the third quarter before Los Angeles went on a 9-0 run for a 71-51 advantage.

The Timberwolves pulled within single digits at 86-77 with 6:27 remaining, on a fadeaway from McDaniels. It was the closest they had been since 15-8 in the first quarter.

The Wolves were again within nine points, at 90-81, when James had a steal and a coast-to-coast layup for a 92-81 lead with 2:40 left.

L.A. Lakers 94, Minnesota 85										
MINNESOTA (85)										
McDaniels 3-11 2-2 8, Randle 9-17 7-9 27, Gobert 2-5 2-4 6, Conley 0-5 0-0 0, Edwards 10-22 3-4 25, Alexander-Walker 1-6 2-4 0-0 6, Reid 3-8 2-2 9, DiVincenzo 1-4 2-2 4, Shannon Jr. 1-10 0-2. Totals 30-79 20-25 85.										
L.A. LAKERS (94)										
Hachimura 4-9 3-3 11, James 8-19 4-4 21, Hayes 1-2 0-0 2, Doncic 9-20 11-11 31, Reaves 7-14 2-2 16, Finney-Smith 3-6 0-0 7, Vincent 2-4 0-0 6, Vanderbilt 0-1 0-0 0, Goodwin 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 34-75 20-20 94.										
MIN	15	28	22	20	-	85				
LAL	34	24	23	13	-	94				
3-Point Goals: Minnesota 5-25 (Randle 2-4, Edwards 2-8, Reid 1-3, DiVincenzo 0-2, Alexander-Walker 0-2, Conley 0-3, McDaniels 0-3), L.A. Lakers 6-29 (Vincent 2-4, Doncic 2-8, Finney-Smith 1-3, James 1-5, Vanderbilt 0-1, Hachimura 0-2, Reaves 0-6). Fouled Out: None. Rebounds: Minnesota 34 (Conley, Edwards, Gobert 6), L.A. Lakers 41 (Doncic 12). Assists: Minnesota 14 (Randle 6), L.A. Lakers 23 (Doncic 9). Total Fouls: Minnesota 22, L.A. Lakers 24. A: 18,997 (18,997)										



The Lakers’ Luka Doncic (77) dribbles against the Minnesota Timberwolves’ Jaden McDaniels on April 22 in Los Angeles. SEAN M. HAFHEY/GETTY IMAGES



## NBA PLAYOFFS

MAGIC AT CELTICS, 7 P.M. ET, TNT BOSTON LEADS SERIES 1-0

# Magic hope their bench provides lift in Game 2

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

The Orlando Magic will be looking for more secondary scoring Wednesday when they visit the Boston Celtics for Game 2 of their Eastern Conference first-round playoff series.

Despite 36 points from Paolo Banchero and 23 from Franz Wagner, Orlando dropped the series opener 103-86 in Boston on Sunday. No other Magic player scored more than seven points.

Orlando's three other starters combined for 10 points: point guard Cory Joseph was scoreless, center Wendell Carter Jr. had four points and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope finished with six.

"Our ability to make sure that when we get the rebound or we do turn them over, we have to make sure we convert," Orlando coach Jamahl Mosley said. "You have to get easy baskets when you have a high-level defense as they are."

The Magic held Jayson Tatum to 17 points and Jaylen Brown to 16, but Boston's supporting cast provided plenty of offense. Derrick White was 7-of-12 from 3-point territory and tossed in 30 points, and Payton Pritchard came off the bench to score 19 – two more than Orlando's non-starters.

Boston will surely need those players to step up again on Wednesday after the Celtics listed Tatum as doubtful for Game 2 after he which they might surely need to do again on Wednesday with Tatum listed as doubtful for Game 2 after he landed awkwardly on his right wrist.

"That's something as a team we harped on coming in, is that they do have two main guys, but it's really the other guys that kill you," Banchero said. "I think we just have to do a better job of getting those guys off the line because they really kill you from three. ... You do

a good job on the main guys, but some of the role guys on the wings, they kill you. So, we have to do a better job taking them away."

Boston trailed 49-48 at halftime, but outscored Orlando 30-18 in the third and 25-19 in the fourth.

"Looking back at it, that momentum shift in the third quarter was big," Mosley said. "Us being deliberate and intentional in some of our defensive communication pieces ... (we) had a couple mishaps. That's what got to their spark."

"We've got to push that ball up the floor a lot faster so we're not sitting down playing against a set switching defense."

Brown scored 10 of his 16 points in the third quarter. Jrue Holiday added nine points in the third quarter after failing to score in the first half.

"I think that in the first half, (the Magic) kind of controlled the intensity level of the game," Brown said. "They were more physical than us, and in the second half, we kind of shifted that."

The Celtics had a momentary scare early in the fourth quarter when Tatum drove to the basket and was fouled hard by Caldwell-Pope. Tatum landed awkwardly on his right wrist and remained on the floor in obvious discomfort, but remained in the game.

Tatum said his X-ray came back negative, and he was feeling better after the game.

Following Game 2, the best-of-seven series will shift to Orlando for Game 3 (Friday) and Game 4 (Sunday).

"The goal is to try and get one (on the road)," Banchero said. "Game 2 we have to come out with a higher level of focus and just do what we can do to get a win on the road because we are not winning this series unless we do. So, that's the goal."



Orlando Magic forward Paolo Banchero shoots over Celtics center Luke Kornet (40) on April 20 at TD Garden in Boston. BOB DECHIARA/IMAGN IMAGES

HEAT AT CAVALIERS, 7:30 P.M. ET, NBA TV

CLEVELAND LEADS SERIES 1-0



Cavaliers guard Donovan Mitchell brings the ball up court against the Miami Heat on April 20 at Rocket Arena in Cleveland. DAVID RICHARD/IMAGN IMAGES

# Cavs' guards controlled Game 1, seek an encore

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Donovan Mitchell, Darius Garland and Ty Jerome kept the Miami Heat on guard throughout Game 1 of their Eastern Conference first-round series.

The Cleveland Cavaliers' three-man backcourt rotation combined to score 85 points in a 121-100 home victory Sunday – 27 of them in the fourth quarter to turn an eight-point lead into a decisive triumph.

The Heat knew how dangerous All-Stars Mitchell and Garland were, along with backup Jerome, but were unable to hold them down. Miami's players recognize that things must be different in Game 2 on Wednesday night.

"You've been seeing them all season. You understand what it is, what they do," Heat power forward Bam Adebayo said, visibly frustrated. "They make smart plays. They try to make the right play every possession."

The top-seeded Cavaliers went inside and outside to force mistakes. Mitchell attacked aggressively and made 9 of 10 shots within the arc, while Garland and Jerome buried 10 of 17 3-point attempts.

Center Jarrett Allen effectively rolled to the hoop in a 12-point, 11-rebound outing, but Sixth Man of the Year finalist Jerome was the difference maker with 16 points in the final period of his postseason debut.

"I've got great teammates, a great coaching staff, great fans behind me," said Jerome, whose 28 total points tied for the second most off the bench in franchise playoff history. "We did what we had to. We came out here in Game 1 and defended home court in front of these phenomenal fans."

Perhaps the most worrisome aspect of the Heat's loss was how many offensive off-nights Cleveland overcame from other players.

All-Star forward Evan Mobley was a non-factor with nine points and seven rebounds, while top bench scorer De'Andre Hunter didn't have a point in 16 minutes. Reserves not named Jerome missed 12 of their 14 field-goal attempts.

The Cavaliers, who averaged a league-best 121.9 points in the regular season, also didn't move the ball especially well with 21 assists on 45 baskets. They relied on other aspects of the game to earn their 65th victory in 83 contests under first-year coach Kenny Atkinson.

"We set the tone with our physicality," Garland said. "We were really physical attacking people when they were cutting through, rebounding really well, getting to the foul line a little bit. It was great."

As is typically the case, the face of the franchise set the tone.

Mitchell matched his career high with four steals, highlighted by a strip of Adebayo that prompted him to flex his muscles to the crowd, and later shoved Miami's Duncan Robinson when he lingered above Sam Merrill after fouling him.

"It's the playoffs and that's ultimately what it is, the little things," Mitchell said. "The 30 (points) is cool, that's what I'm known for. But to me, it's the steals, boxing out, diving on loose balls that's going to take us to the next level."

Adebayo led Miami in Game 1 with 24 points and nine rebounds. Tyler Herro had 21 points and Davion Mitchell scored 18 points off the bench.

WARRIORS AT ROCKETS, 9:30 P.M. ET, TNT GOLDEN STATE LEADS SERIES 1-0

# Rockets look to rebound after Game 1 loss at home

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Heading into a high-stakes Game 2, the host Houston Rockets are looking for more offensive production on Wednesday to avoid falling into a two-game hole against their Western Conference playoff counterpart, the Golden State Warriors.

"We dominated the glass, we dominated some areas, but had a poor offensive showing in general," said Houston coach Ime Udoka following his team's 95-85 loss in the series opener on Sunday. "We had some wide-open, naked that we missed on those kick-outs, and opportunities on layups on the second chance [from offensive rebounding]."

The No. 2-seeded Rockets grabbed 22 offensive rebounds to just six for the Warriors in Game 1, but Houston's advantage in second-chance points was just 22-12. The Rockets' inability to leverage their rebounding edge into a more substantial scoring gap on follow-up chances reflected the team's 34-of-87 (39.1 percent) shooting performance from the floor.

Seventh-seeded Golden State, meanwhile, shot 36-of-76 (47.4 percent) from the field overall and 12-for-32 from 3-point range, compared to just 6-of-29 for Houston.

Stephen Curry, who scored a game-high 31 points, was responsible for five of the Warriors' 12 made 3-pointers, in-



Rockets forward Jabari Smith Jr. (10) drives against Golden State Warriors forward Gui Santos on April 20 in Houston. TROY TAORMINA/IMAGN IMAGES

cluding a 34-foot desperation heave with 5:11 remaining in regulation, when the Rockets trailed by only four points.

Houston battled back from a deficit that was as large as 23 points to give itself a chance down the stretch. Jabari Smith Jr., who came off the bench to score 11 points on 3-of-3 shooting and grab six rebounds, said the late-game push is "encouraging" for the Rockets as

they regroup ahead of Game 2.

After conceding home-court advantage with its Game 1 loss, Houston finds itself needing a win on Wednesday to avoid heading to San Francisco in a two-game hole.

This is familiar territory for the Rockets franchise, which was eliminated from the postseason in four of its previous six appearances by Golden State.

The Warriors ousted the Rockets in the Western Conference Finals in both 2015 and 2018 as well as in the first round in 2016 and the Western Conference semifinals in 2019.

Houston now features an entirely new core since its last playoff series against Golden State: 21-point-per-game scorer Jalen Green and 19.1-point, 10.3-rebound-per-game big man Alperen Sengün, who both debuted in the 2021-22 season. Both now play critical roles in the Rockets' push to overcome the Warriors.

Curry was central to each of Golden State's previous playoff defeats of the Rockets but now has a new running mate factoring into the Warriors' chase for a fifth NBA championship since 2015: Jimmy Butler.

Butler, acquired in a trade from Miami in February, has been sensational of late. He closed the regular season with games of 28, 24 and 30 points. He then posted 38 points, seven rebounds, six assists and three steals in Golden State's 121-116 win over Memphis in the play-in round on April 15.

Butler's performance against the Grizzlies secured the Warriors the West's No. 7 seed and a matchup with a Houston team that Golden State beat in three of four regular-season meetings. His 25 points, seven rebounds, six assists and five steals were crucial in the Game 1 win.



MLB

TUESDAY’S ROUNDUP

Cubs rally late, edge Dodgers in 10th inning

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Miguel Amaya belted a game-tying solo homer with two outs in the ninth inning and Ian Happ hit a walk-off RBI single in the 10th, fueling the host Chicago Cubs to an 11-10 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers on Tuesday.

Chicago’s Kyle Tucker blasted a two-run homer in the eighth and Amaya deposited a 0-1 fastball from Tanner Scott over the wall in center field to forge a 10-10 tie.

Vidal Brujan, who started the 10th inning at second base, came around to score after Happ – who went 4-for-5 – sent a first-pitch screwball from Noah Davis (0-1) into right field.

Happ’s RBI single made a winner out of Porter Hodge (2-0).

Chicago’s Pete Crow-Armstrong highlighted a three-hit performance with an RBI double in a five-run first inning and a two-run homer in the fifth.

In the first, Seiya Suzuki ripped a two-run double, Dansby Swanson slapped an RBI triple and Amaya had an RBI single to help send the Cubs to their sixth win in the last nine games.

Nationals 7, Orioles 0

Mitchell Parker allowed just one hit over eight innings, Dylan Crews and Nathaniel Lowe homered and Washington beat visiting Baltimore in the opener of a three-game series.

Parker (3-1) allowed only a third-inning single to Cedric Mullins and retired the final 14 Orioles he faced in the longest start of his young career. The 25-year-old left-hander struck out four and walked two while throwing 99 pitches and lowering his ERA to 1.39.

Crews extended his hitting streak to seven with his third home run in four games. James Wood had two doubles and a single, Jose Tena finished a homer short of the cycle and Keibert Ruiz had three hits for Washington, which had 10 extra-base hits and has won three of four.

Mullins had a single and two walks for Baltimore, which has lost three of four.

One game after Baltimore pitchers gave up 24 runs, starter Dean Kremer (2-3) gave up six runs (five earned) on 11 hits over 5½ innings.

Royals 4, Rockies 3 (11 innings)

Freddy Fermin drilled a game-winning single with the bases loaded and none out in the 11th inning to give Kansas City a victory over visiting Colorado.

Drew Waters went 3-for-4 with a homer and a triple and Kris Bubic pitched seven scoreless innings for the Royals in the opener of a two-game set. The Royals have won two straight games following a six-game losing streak.

Jacob Stallings laced a three-run double to give Colorado the lead in the top of the ninth inning but the Rockies’ road losing streak eventually extended to 11 games.

Colorado is 1-12 away from home this season and just 4-18 overall.

Mark Canha was the automatic runner in the Kansas City 11th and Bobby Witt Jr. was intentionally walked. Trevor Kinley (0-1) threw a wild pitch on his first delivery home to move the runners up and Colorado then intentionally walked Vinny Pasquantino.

Fermin then hit the single to center to score Canha with the decisive run.

Guardians 3, Yankees 2

Tanner Bibee allowed two runs while gutting out six innings and Steven Kwan’s second hit of the night ignited a three-run rally in the sixth, as Cleveland defeated visiting New York for its fifth straight win.

Bibee (2-2), who entered his fifth start of the season with a 5.85 ERA, allowed a homer to Ben Rice on the game’s first pitch, then didn’t allow another run until the sixth inning despite yielding four other hits, walking three and throwing 106 pitches. That effort kept Cleveland in position to win its second straight over the Yankees and improve to 14-9 on the season after starting 3-6.

Aaron Judge went 4-for-4 to raise his American League-leading average to .411 for New York, which managed just six hits while dropping its third in four games after winning five in a row. Yankees starter Will Warren allowed just one hit and a walk while striking out five, and retired 10 straight batters until the sixth, when he gave up back-to-back singles to Kwan and Nolan Jones to open the frame.



Cubs first baseman Michael Busch, left, throws water on Ian Happ after Happ drove in the game-winning run on April 22 in Chicago. MATT MARTON/IMAGN IMAGES

Padres 2, Tigers 0

Nick Pivetta pitched seven dominant innings, Elias Diaz hit a two-run homer and visiting San Diego downed Detroit.

Pivetta (4-1) allowed just two hits and walked two while striking out six. Jason Adam pitched the eighth and Robert Suarez got the last three outs for his 10th save.

Tigers starter Jack Flaherty (1-2) gave up two runs and five hits in six innings. He struck out nine and walked none while throwing 96 pitches.

Bailey Horn got four outs and Chase Lee, making his major league debut, tossed 1⅓ innings.

Only one Tiger reached second base as Gleyber Torres walked and stole second with two outs in the first inning. But he was stranded on a Spencer Torkelson foul out.

San Diego scored in the top of the second. Xander Bogaerts singled as the leadoff hitter. Flaherty struck out the next two batters before Diaz lofted a knuckle curve over the left field wall for his first homer this season.

Marlins 4, Reds 3

Xavier Edwards’ swinging bunt in the seventh inning was the game’s key play as host Miami rallied past Cincinnati.

With a runner on second and two outs in a tie game, Reds reliever Graham Ashcraft (0-2) fielded the dribbler and threw wildly to first, allowing Otto Lopez to race home.

That gave the Marlins a 4-3 lead, and Miami’s bullpen completed a terrific performance. The Marlins got one scoreless inning apiece from Anthony Veneziano, Lake Bachar, Anthony Bender and Calvin Faucher. Bachar (1-0) earned his first major league win, and Faucher logged his second save of the season.

Marlins catcher Agustin Ramirez went 3-for-3 with two doubles and an RBI in his second big-league game.

Cincinnati was led by Noelvi Marte, who hit a massive 431-foot solo homer that had a 117-mph exit velocity.

Twins 4, White Sox 2

Trevor Larnach went 1-for-3 with a walk, a home run and two RBIs, and Minnesota held off a comeback bid for a win over Chicago in Minneapolis.

Jacob Amaya and Nick Maton had an RBI apiece for Chicago, which lost for the eighth time in its past nine games.

Twins right-hander Bailey Ober (2-1) allowed one run on eight hits in six innings.

White Sox right-hander Davis Martin (1-3) gave up two unearned runs on three hits in five innings.

Twins closer Jhoan Duran notched his second save despite needing 32 pitches and allowing one run in the ninth. He pumped his fist as he watched Buxton’s diving catch, which prevented the White Sox from scoring a pair of runs and making it 4-all.

The White Sox opened the scoring in the top of the second inning. Edgar Que-ro hit a leadoff single, advanced to third base on a single by Brooks Baldwin and scored on a sacrifice fly by Amaya.

Mets 5, Phillies 1

Pete Alonso and Luis Torrens had RBI hits during a three-run seventh inning for surging New York, which beat Philadelphia in the second game of a three-game series between the National League East rivals.

Griffin Canning and four relievers combined on an eight-hitter for the

Mets, who have won the first six games of a seven-game homestand. New York is 17-7, tied for the second-best 24-game start in franchise history and the best for the club since the 1988 team also opened 17-7.

Johan Rojas had an RBI single for the Phillies, who left nine runs on base as they lost their third straight.

Phillies starter Cristopher Sanchez (2-1) exited with left forearm soreness after just two innings. Sanchez allowed two runs on four hits and two walks while striking out two and throwing 58 pitches.

Astros 5, Blue Jays 1

Houston rode a first-inning uprising and a strong start by Ronel Blanco to a win over visiting Toronto.

The Astros have won four of their last five games and have moved back over .500 for the first time since their victory over the New York Mets on Opening Day. They pounced on Blue Jays right-hander Chris Bassitt (2-1) for three runs in the first inning to provide ample support for Blanco, who enjoyed his best start this season.

Blanco (2-2) cruised through his first two innings and was one batter shy of completing a full trip through the Toronto lineup without a blemish when Blue Jays center fielder Nathan Lukes turned on a 2-1 curveball and deposited the offering into the right-field seats. It was Lukes’ first homer this season and the second of his career.

Red Sox 8, Mariners 3

Triston Casas hit a three-run home run that helped propel Boston to a victory over visiting Seattle in the first matchup of a three-game series.

Casas gave Boston a 7-3 lead when he homered against reliever Trent Thornton in the seventh inning. The Red Sox received three hits from Wilyer Abreu, and two doubles and three RBIs from Alex Bregman.

Boston starting pitcher Brayan Bello (1-0) made his season debut after he missed spring training while recovering from a shoulder injury. He allowed a run on four hits in five innings, struck out three and walked three. Bello exited the mound after throwing 97 pitches.

Abreu and Ceddanne Rafaela each had two stolen bases for the Red Sox, who have won six of their last seven games.

Cardinals 10, Braves 4

Nolan Gorman’s tiebreaking three-run double in the eighth inning lifted visiting St. Louis to a win over Atlanta, ending its five-game losing streak.

In a 4-4 game, Gorman lined a changeup from Enyel De Los Santos (1-1) into the right field corner to clear the bases. Gorman has seven extra-base hits and 12 RBIs in his last seven games in Atlanta.

The Cardinals evened the three-game series and ended Atlanta’s four-game winning streak. It was only the second road win in 11 tries for St. Louis.

Steven Matz (2-0), the second pitcher used by the Cardinals, picked up the win. He threw 2⅓ scoreless innings, allowed one hit, one walk and fanned two. Kyle Leahy and Ryan Helsley each pitched a scoreless inning.

Neither starter received a decision. The Braves selected Scott Blewett, who the team acquired from Baltimore on Sunday, as the opener. He worked three innings and allowed two runs on four hits, issued two walks and struck out one.

Diamondbacks 5, Rays 1

Pavin Smith and Tim Tawa homered, Brandon Pfaadt pitched six strong innings and Arizona opened a six-game homestand with a victory over Tampa Bay in Phoenix.

Smith, who also doubled and walked, has six extra-base hits in the last six games (three homers and three doubles).

He is the Diamondbacks’ primary designated hitter.

Josh Naylor had two hits and drove in a run in a two-run eighth for Arizona, which has won seven of nine.

Chandler Simpson had two singles and a stolen base for the Rays in his third game since being promoted from Triple-A Durham on Saturday.

Jake Mangum also had two hits for the Rays, who were shut out in three of their previous five games and have lost six of seven.

Pfaadt (4-1) gave up one run on four hits in six innings, with five strikeouts, no walks and one hit batter. He retired the final six he faced after Mangum doubled to lead off the fifth.

Pirates 9, Angels 3

Andrew McCutchen’s three-run homer and five shutout innings by the bullpen lifted Pittsburgh to a victory over Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif.

McCutchen’s second homer of the season, off Angels starter Jose Soriano in the fourth inning, put Pittsburgh up 5-1 before five relievers combined to keep Los Angeles hitless after the fourth.

Chase Shugart (1-0) retired all six batters he faced in two innings, while David Bednar, Justin Lawrence, Dennis Santana and Ryan Borucki combined to throw the final three innings as Pittsburgh snapped a three-game skid.

The Pirates finished with a season-high 18 hits, including three each by Bryan Reynolds (two RBIs), Tommy Pham and Isiah Kiner-Falefa (two RBIs).

Taylor Ward homered for Los Angeles, his sixth of the season and one of just five hits for the Angels.

Soriano (2-3) struggled from the outset but worked out of trouble in the first two innings before the Pirates broke through in the third and fourth innings.

Brewers 11, Giants 3

Christian Yelich smacked a grand slam, Jake Bauers added a two-run shot to an eight-run sixth inning and visiting Milwaukee erupted for a win over San Francisco.

Jose Quintana (3-0) threw his third consecutive gem, limiting the Giants to one run in six innings, as the Brewers snapped a three-game road losing streak.

Seeking to draw even after a 5-2 loss to open a four-game series Monday, the Brewers used a three-run third inning to build an early lead before erupting in the sixth against Giants starter Jordan Hicks (1-3) and two relievers.

After errors by Willy Adames and Patrick Bailey produced the inning’s first run, Brice Turang made it 5-1 with a one-out single against Giants reliever Lou Trivino.

Jackson Chourio was hit by a pitch to load the bases, before Yelich launched his fifth career grand slam to center field, breaking the game open at 9-1. The homer was Yelich’s fifth of the season, the slam his first since April of 2022.

Rangers 8, Athletics 5

Marcus Semien hit a three-run homer and drove in four runs as Texas set the tone early and rolled to a victory over the Athletics in the opener of a three-game series in West Sacramento, Calif.

Wyatt Langford had three hits to lead the Texas attack, with Adolis Garcia and Semien recording two hits each. Langford, Josh Smith and Jake Burger each socked a solo homer for the Rangers.

The Rangers were the only major league team not to have scored seven runs in a game this year, but they put that to rest by the fifth inning, when they took a 7-2 lead.

Texas starter Patrick Corbin (2-2) was the beneficiary. Corbin allowed two runs – both of them on solo home runs – on seven hits over five-plus innings. He had four strikeouts and two walks and was lifted in favor of Shawn Armstrong after giving up two hits in the sixth.

The Rangers roughed up Athletics starter Osvaldo Bido, chasing him after he surrendered eight runs on eight hits and three walks with two strikeouts over 5½ innings.



## MLB

## TUESDAY'S BOX SCORES

<b>Cleveland 3, N.Y. Yankees 2</b>	
<b>NY Yankees</b> .....100 001 000 – 2 6 1	
<b>CLE</b> .....000 003 00x – 3 6 1	

N.Y. Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Rice dh	4	1	1	1	0	1	.286
Judge rf	4	1	4	0	0	0	.411
Bellinger cf	4	1	0	0	0	2	.193
Goldschmidt 1b	3	0	1	0	1	1	.371
Chisholm Jr. 2b	3	0	0	1	2	0	.159
Volpe ss	1	0	0	0	1	1	.209
Dominguez lf	4	0	0	0	0	2	.181
Escarra c	2	0	0	0	0	0	.143
b-Reyes ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	.167
Wells c	1	0	0	0	0	0	.179
Cabrera 3b	4	0	0	0	1	1	.281
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	

Cleveland	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Kwan lf	4	1	2	0	0	0	.341
Jones rf	3	1	0	0	0	0	.172
a-Arias ph-2b	1	0	0	0	0	0	.271
Ramirez 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.263
Manzardo dh	4	1	1	1	0	1	.219
Santana lb	4	0	0	0	0	0	.213
Naylor c	3	0	0	0	1	0	.192
Martinez cf	3	0	1	1	0	0	.361
Schreemann 2b-rf	2	0	0	1	0	1	.235
Rocchio ss	3	0	0	0	0	0	.237
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	

a-grounded out for Jones in 7th. b-struck out for Escarra in 7th.

**E:** Chisholm Jr., Rocchio. **2B:** Judge (7), Manzardo (3). **HR:** Rice (6). **RBI:** Rice (10), Chisholm Jr. (15), Manzardo (18), Martinez (4). **SB:** Judge (3), Kwan (4), Jones (2), Ramirez (4), Naylor (1). **SF:** Chisholm Jr. **Runners left in scoring position:** N.Y. Yankees 2 (Volpe, Dominguez), Cleveland 4 (Manzardo, Rocchio 3). **RISP:** N.Y. Yankees: 1 for 6, Cleveland 3 for 9. **GIDP:** Goldschmidt, Volpe. **DP:** Cleveland 2.

N.Y. Yankees	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Warren	5.0	3	2	2	1	5	82	4.79
Leiter Jr. L, 2-2 BS, 2	0.2	3	1	1	1	1	21	3.48
Hill	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	8	2.38
Weaver	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0.00
Cleveland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Bibee W, 2-2	6.0	5	2	2	3	5	106	5.19
Herrin H, 5	1.0	0	0	0	0	2	14	2.00
Gaddis H, 8	1.0	1	0	0	1	2	22	0.00
Smith S, 2	1.0	0	0	0	0	4	138	

Warren pitched to 2 batters in the 6th.

**Inherited runners:** Leiter Jr. 2-0, Hill 3-3. **WP:** Leiter Jr. **Umpires:** HP-Carapazza, 1B-Ripperger, 2B-Fairchild, 3B-Mahrlay. T: 2:30. A: 21,549 (34,820).

<b>Miami 4, Cincinnati 3</b>	
<b>CIN</b> .....001 011 000 – 3 7 1	
<b>MIA</b> .....100 001 20x – 4 9 0	

Cincinnati	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Friedl cf	5	0	2	1	0	2	.300
McLain 2b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.196
De La Cruz ss	4	1	1	0	0	1	.242
Hays dh	4	1	0	0	1	1	.371
Lux lf	3	0	0	0	1	1	.116
Candelario 1b	3	0	0	1	0	1	.125
Marte 3b	3	1	1	1	0	0	.346
Fralley rf	4	0	0	0	1	1	.233
Trevino c	4	1	2	0	1	1	.308
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	

Miami	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Edwards ss	4	0	1	0	0	0	.284
Sanchez rf	2	0	0	0	0	2	.261
Wagman dh	4	2	1	0	0	0	.275
Ramirez c	3	0	3	1	1	0	.833
Stowers lf	3	0	1	1	2	3	.307
Norby 3b	4	1	1	0	0	1	.273
Mervis 1b	3	0	1	0	1	0	.232
Lopez 2b	4	1	1	1	0	0	.235
Myers cf	4	0	0	0	0	3	.286
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	

**E:** Ashcraft. **2B:** Friedl (4), Trevino (6), Ramirez 2 (3), Norby (2), Mervis (2). **HR:** Marte (2). **RBI:** Friedl (11), Candelario (9), Marte (8), Ramirez (1), Stowers (15), Lopez (10). **CS:** Ramirez (1). **SB:** Friedl (4), De La Cruz 2 (9), Hays (1), Stowers (2). **SF:** Candelario. **Runners left in scoring position:** Cincinnati 3 (McLain 2, Fralley), Miami 5 (Wagman, Stowers, Norby, Myers 2). **RISP:** Cincinnati 1 for 5, Miami 3 for 14.

Cincinnati	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Martinez	5.2	5	2	2	2	4	79	5.40
Ashcraft L, 0-2 BS, 1	1.0	3	2	1	1	2	25	0.84
Santillan	0.2	1	0	0	1	1	15	1.50
Barlow	0.2	0	0	0	1	0	4	4.50
Miami	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Cabrera	5.0	5	3	3	2	7	87	6.14
Veneziano	1.0	0	0	0	1	1	17	3.72
Badier W, 1-0	1.0	1	0	0	0	2	16	1.35
Bender H, 2	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	15	1.80
Faucher S, 2	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	10	4.32

Cabrera pitched to 2 batters in the 6th.

**Inherited runners:** Ashcraft 1-1, Santillan 2-2, Barlow 2-2, Veneziano 2-1. **IBB:** Barlow (1). **WP:** Martinez, Ashcraft. **Umpires:** HP-Conroy, 1B-Rehak, 2B-Barry, 3B-Miller. T: 2:28. A: 7,996 (37,446).

<b>San Diego 2, Detroit 0</b>	
<b>SD</b> .....020 000 000 – 2 6 0	
<b>DET</b> .....000 000 000 – 0 3 1	

San Diego	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Tatis Jr. rf	4	0	0	0	0	2	.344
Sheets 1b	4	0	0	0	0	2	.323
Machado dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.292
Bogerts ss	4	1	0	0	0	0	.268
Gonzalez lf	3	0	1	0	1	1	.303
b-Ornelas ph-lf	0	0	0	0	1	0	.000
Iglesias 3b	3	0	1	0	1	1	.278
Diaz c	4	1	0	0	0	0	.190
Wade cf	3	0	1	0	1	2	.286
McCoy 2b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	

Detroit	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Carpenter dh	4	0	0	0	0	0	.299
Torres 2b	3	0	0	0	1	0	.286
Greene lf	4	0	0	0	0	2	.217
Torkelson 1b	4	0	0	0	0	0	.273
Malloy rf	3	0	0	0	1	1	.182
a-Keith ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.188
Jung 3b	3	0	0	0	0	2	.000
Dingler c	3	0	1	0	1	1	.279
Sweeney ss	2	0	0	0	0	0	.203
Baez cf	3	0	1	0	1	1	.274
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	

a-flied out for Malloy in 9th. b-walked for Gonzalez in 9th.

**E:** Sweeney. **HR:** Diaz (1). **RBI:** Diaz 2 (4). **SB:** Torres (3). **Runners left in scoring position:** San Diego 2 (McCoy 2), Detroit 1 (Torkelson). **DP:** Detroit 1.

San Diego	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Pivetta W, 4-1	7.0	2	0	0	2	6	91	1.20
Adam H, 9	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	13	0.69
Suarez S, 10	1.0	0	0	0	1	12	0.00	

Detroit	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Flaherty L, 1-2	6.0	5	2	2	0	9	96	2.63
Horn	1.1	1	0	0	0	2	16	0.00
Lee	1.2	0	0	0	2	1	26	0.00

**Inherited runners:** Lee 1-1. **HBP:** Iglesias. **Umpires:** HP-Valentine, 1B-Hudson, 2B-Gibson, 3B-Blakney. T: 2:20. A: 19,321 (40,988).

<b>Washington 7, Baltimore 0</b>	
<b>BAL</b> .....000 000 000 – 0 1 1	
<b>WAS</b> .....210 021 10x – 7 14 0	

Baltimore	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Mullins cf	2	0	1	0	2	0	.290
Rutschman dh	3	0	0	0	1	0	.200
Henderson ss	4	0	0	0	1	1	.213
Mountcastle 1b	4	0	0	0	1	1	.229
O'Neill rf	4	0	0	0	1	0	.230
Kjerstad lf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.224
Westburg 3b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.187
Sanchez c	3	0	0	0	0	0	.120
Holliday 2b	2	0	0	0	1	2	.213
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	

Washington	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Wood lf	5	2	3	0	1	0	.253
Lowie 1b	4	1	1	2	0	3	.293
Garcia Jr. 2b	4	2	2	1	0	0	.225
Ruiz c	4	0	3	2	0	0	.329
Bell dh	4	0	0	0	0	0	.133
Crews rf	4	1	1	1	0	1	.189
Tena 3b	4	0	0	0	0	0	.286
Young cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.245
Nunez ss	4	0	0	0	0	2	.154
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	

**E:** Mullins. **2B:** Wood 2 (5), Ruiz 2 (4), Tena 2 (2), Young (2). **3B:** Tena (1). **HR:** Lowe (4), Crews (3). **RBI:** Lowe 2 (19), Garcia Jr. (6), Ruiz 2 (13), Crews (5). **Runners left in scoring position:** Baltimore 3 (Henderson, Mountcastle, O'Neill), Washington 5 (Wood 2, Crews 2, Nunez). **RISP:** Washington 3 for 16. **GIDP:** Bell. **DP:** Baltimore 1.

Baltimore	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Kremer L, 2-3	5.1	11	6	5	0	4	101	6.84
Bowman	1.2	2	1	0	1	0	20	2.45
Ulin	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	13	0.00
Washington	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Parker W, 3-1	6.0	1	0	0	0	4	99	1.39
Poche	0.1	0	0	0	2	0	19	15.00
Henry	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	20	0.00

**Inherited runners:** Bowman 1-1, Henry 2-2. **WP:** Kremer. **Umpires:** HP-Bacon, 1B-Bucknor, 2B-Iassogna, 3B-Segal. T: 2:24. A: 29,504 (41,565).

<b>Boston 8, Seattle 3</b>	
<b>SEA</b> .....100 002 000 – 3 6 1	
<b>BOS</b> .....101 020 40x – 8 11 0	

Seattle	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Rodriguez cf	4	0	1	0	1	0	.191
Polarco dh	4	1	0	0	1	1	.339
Raleigh c	4	0	1	0	1	0	.244
Arozarena lf	3	0	0	0	0	2	.193
Raley rf	1	0	0	0	0	0	.172
a-Solano ph-1b	2	0	0	0	0	0	.094
Teller 1b	2	0	0	0	0	0	.149
c-Williamson ph-3b	1	1	1	0	1	0	.250



National's pitcher Mitchell Parker delivers against the Baltimore Orioles during the second inning of an April 22 game at Nationals Park in Washington. GEOFF BURKE/IMAGN IMAGES



The Royals' Freddy Fermin celebrates after hitting a walk-off single during the 11th inning against the Colorado Rockies on April 22 in Kansas City, Missouri.

JAY BIGGERSTAFF/IMAGN IMAGES

Moore 2b-rf	3	1	0	0	1	1	.300
Mastrobuoni 3b	1	0	0	0	1	1	.276
b-Rivas ph-2b	2	0	0	0	0	0	.200
Crawford ss	4	0	2	0	0	0	.231
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	

Bregman 3b	5	0	2	3	0	0	.302
Story ss	5	0	0	0	0	3	.319
Abreu rf	4	1	3	0	1	0	.299
Campbell 2b	4	1	0	0	1	2	.300
Casas 1b	3	1	1	3	1	1	.165
Narvaez c	4	1	1	0	0	0	.203
Rafaela cf	3	2	2	0	1	1	.229
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	



# NHL: STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS

HURRICANES 3, DEVILS 1 CAROLINA LEADS SERIES 2-0

## Canes’ Martinook still troubles Devils in playoffs

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Jordan Martinook continued to haunt the Devils in the postseason, posting a goal and an assist as the Carolina Hurricanes beat New Jersey 3-1 on Tuesday night in Raleigh, N.C., to take a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference first-round series.

Game 3 of the best-of-seven series is Friday night in Newark, N.J.

Martinook has four goals and 13 points in seven career playoff games against New Jersey.

“I love playoffs, I feel like it brings the best out of me,” Martinook said.

Defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere and Seth Jarvis also scored for the Hurricanes. Frederik Andersen stopped 25 shots.

Jesper Bratt got the goal for the Devils. Jacob Markstrom made 25 saves.

Devils coach Sheldon Keefe said, “We were able to get to our game early. It’s a great response. Unfortunately, we weren’t able to build on it.”

Carolina, which has held New Jersey to two goals in the series, scored twice in the first six minutes of the second period to take a 2-1 lead.

Gostisbehere tied the game 2:57 into the second when he converted his own rebound. Three minutes later, Martinook’s short-handed goal put the Hurricanes on top. He scored from the left circle off the rush after taking a backhand pass from defenseman Dmitry Orlov in the neutral zone.

Jarvis added an empty-net goal with 37 seconds left.

It could have been worse for the Devils in the second period but defenseman Brett Pesce, a former Hurricane, knocked the puck away from the goal line when it was inches away and cleared another that was heading toward the net.

New Jersey got off to a fast start and took its first lead of the series 3:51 into the game, when Bratt put in the rebound of Erik Haula’s shot off the rush.

When Carolina got chances late in the first period, Markstrom made the



The Carolina Hurricanes’ Jordan Martinook celebrates his goal with defenseman Dmitry Orlov (7) against the New Jersey Devils on April 22 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

JAMES GUILLORY/IMAGN IMAGES

saves, including one on Jack Roslovic at the left post during a power play.

The Devils were without defensemen Luke Hughes and Brenden Dillon because of undisclosed injuries sustained in Game 1 on Sunday. They were replaced by Simon Nemec and Dennis Cholowski, who made their Stanley Cup playoff debuts.

Carolina 3, New Jersey 1				
New Jersey	1	0	0	1
Carolina	0	2	1	3
<b>First Period</b> —1, New Jersey, Bratt 1 (Haula, Hamilton), 3:51. Penalties—Palat, NJD (Hooking), 8:53. Cotter, NJD (Tripping), 13:09.				
<b>Second Period</b> —1, Carolina, Gostisbehere 1 (Blake, Aho), 2:57. 1, Carolina, Martinook 1 (Orlov), 5:54. Penalties—Aho, CAR (Slashing), 5:41. Meier, NJD (Roughing), 7:03. Chatfield, CAR (Roughing), 7:03. Blake, CAR (High-sticking), 13:14.				
<b>Third Period</b> —1, Carolina, Jarvis 1 (Martinook), 19:23. Penalties—Staal, CAR (Tripping), 5:55. Nemec, NJD (Tripping), 9:13.				
<b>Shots on Goal</b> —New Jersey 9-9-8-26. Carolina 6-12-10-28.				
<b>Power-play opportunities</b> —New Jersey 0 of 3; Carolina 0 of 3.				
<b>Goalies</b> —New Jersey, Markstrom 0-2-0 (27 shots-25 saves). Carolina, Andersen 2-0-0 (26-25). A-18,910 (18,680).				

PANTHERS 6, LIGHTNING 2 FLORIDA LEADS SERIES 1-0

## Tkachuk scores twice in return as Panthers cruise

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Florida Panthers winger Matthew Tkachuk returned to action with two goals and an assist, and the Stanley Cup champs swiped home-ice advantage by thumping the host Tampa Bay Lightning 6-2 to start their Eastern Conference first-round playoff series on Tuesday night.

Sidelined in the season’s final 25 games with a lower-body injury, Tkachuk tallied on two power plays in Game 1 of the Battle of Florida. Defenseman Nate Schmidt added one on the man advantage and another at even strength as Florida went 3-for-3 on the power play.

Sam Bennett and Sam Reinhart had a goal and an assist apiece for Florida, and Aleksander Barkov posted two helpers. Goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky made 20 saves.

Bennett said of opposing the Lightning, “(The hate) is there. It’s from a lot of playoff series. It’s a great rivalry and what makes hockey fun.”

Tampa Bay’s Jake Guentzel and Brayden Point scored, but star goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy surrendered six goals on just 16 shots.

“It’s definitely a salty feeling in here,” defenseman Ryan McDonagh said of the Lightning’s postgame mood. “We didn’t have a great start to the series like we talked about, but ... it’s a series here.”

Game 2 is Thursday night in Tampa. The Panthers quieted the frenzied home crowd when Mackie Samoskevich, playing in his first playoff game, saucered a waist-high pass that Bennett chipped in at 3:44 of the first period.

However, with four seconds left in the power play following Tkachuk’s roughing penalty, Guentzel, who led the NHL with 17 man-advantage goals, knotted it at 12:21 of the opening period.

Inside the final minute before the first intermission, Florida retook the lead on Reinhart’s redirection of a shot sent wide by Dmitry Kulikov.



Florida Panthers left wing Matthew Tkachuk celebrates after he scored a goal against the Tampa Bay Lightning on April 22 in Tampa, Florida.

KIM KLEMENT NEITZEL/IMAGN IMAGES

Florida went up 3-1 at 4:41 of the second on a goal by Schmidt, who swooped in for a tally after Eetu Luostarinen battled at the top of the crease with Vasilevskiy. Lightning coach Jon Cooper challenged for goalie interference, but the marker stood.

The failed challenge burned the home side, as Reinhart found Tkachuk wide open in the low slot on the ensuing power play. Tkachuk deked Vasilevskiy twice and fired a shot through his pads for a 4-1 edge just 14 seconds after Schmidt’s tally.

Florida 6, Tampa Bay 2				
Florida	2	3	1	6
Tampa Bay	1	1	0	2
<b>First Period</b> —1, Florida, Bennett 1 (Samoskevich), 3:44. 1, Tampa Bay, Guentzel 1 (Kucherov, Hedman), 12:21. 1, Florida, Reinhart 1 (Kulikov, Verhaeghe), 19:15. Penalties—Tkachuk, FLA (Roughing), 10:25.				
<b>Second Period</b> —1, Florida, Schmidt 1 (Marchand, Bennett), 4:41. 1, Florida, Tkachuk 1 (Reinhart, Barkov), 4:55. 2, Florida, Tkachuk 2, 9:44. 1, Tampa Bay, Point 1 (McDonagh, Goncalves), 13:04. Penalties—Tampa Bay bench, served by Goncalves (Delay of Game), 4:41. Lilleberg, TBL (Interference), 9:12.				
<b>Third Period</b> —2, Florida, Schmidt 2 (Tkachuk, Barkov), 5:09. Penalties—Cernak, TBL (Interference), 3:14. Reinhart, FLA (Hooking), 9:25. Reinhart, FLA (Tripping), 13:46.				
<b>Shots on Goal</b> —Florida 6-7-3-16. Tampa Bay 10-6-6-22.				
<b>Power-play opportunities</b> —Florida 3 of 3; Tampa Bay 1 of 3.				
<b>Goalies</b> —Florida, Bobrovsky 1-0-0 (22 shots-20 saves). Tampa Bay, Vasilevskiy 0-1-0 (16-10). A-19,092 (19,092).				



Maple Leafs forward John Tavares (91) celebrates with forwards Auston Matthews (34) and Matthew Knies after scoring a goal against the Ottawa Senators on April 22 in Toronto. DAN HAMILTON/IMAGN IMAGES

## Maple Leafs

Continued from Page 1NS

The pressure paid off when Rielly moved to the edge of the crease and steered home a pass from William Nylander at 3:43.

The Senators reversed the flow when they took four shots on goal during a power play that started at 4:45, but Stolarz was solid.

The Maple Leafs took advantage of their first power play. Tavares scored from the right circle when his shot was deflected by a defender at 8:20 with Toronto’s Matthew Knies hovering on the doorstep. Artem Zub was off for tripping.

Ottawa came out stronger in the second period and took four shots on goal on an early power play.

The Maple Leafs can be vulnerable to the forecheck, and the Senators kept them bottled up for stretches in the first half of the second period.

Ottawa broke through on the power play at 15:41 of the second when Tkachuk’s between-the-legs pass from the side of the crease was knocked into the

net by Toronto defenseman Brandon Carlo. Nicholas Robertson was off for high-sticking.

Ottawa was gaining confidence and had a 13-3 edge in shots on goal in the second.

The Senators hemmed the Maple Leafs in for nearly a minute midway into the third but could not get a shot on goal. Toronto was effectively clogging the middle of the ice.

A turnover in the Toronto zone helped Ottawa tie the game when Gaudette deflected Tyler Kleven’s shot at 14:47 of the third.

“There is no reason to panic,” Senators coach Travis Green said. “I liked the way we played tonight.”

Toronto 3, Ottawa 2				
Ottawa	0	1	1	2
Toronto	2	0	0	3
<b>First Period</b> —1, Toronto, Rielly 2 (Nylander, Tavares), 3:43. 1, Toronto, Tavares 2 (Marner, Matthews), 8:20. Penalties—Tanev, TOR (High-sticking), 4:45. Zub, OTT (Tripping), 8:02.				
<b>Second Period</b> —1, Ottawa, Tkachuk 1 (Giroux, Chabot), 15:41. Penalties—Jarmkrok, TOR (Tripping), 2:56. Stolarz, TOR (Interference), 4:54. Greig, OTT (Roughing), 4:54. Robertson, TOR (High-sticking), 14:43.				
<b>Third Period</b> —1, Ottawa, Gaudette 1 (Kleven, Stuetzle), 14:47. Penalties—None.				
<b>Overtime</b> —1, Toronto, Domi 1 (Benoit), 3:09. Penalties—None.				
<b>Shots on Goal</b> —Ottawa 10-13-4-1-28. Toronto 7-3-9-2-21.				
<b>Power-play opportunities</b> —Ottawa 1 of 3; Toronto 1 of 1.				
<b>Goalies</b> —Ottawa, Ullmark (21 shots-18 saves). Toronto, Stolarz 2-0-0 (28-26).				

WILD 5, GOLDEN KNIGHTS 2 SERIES TIED 1-1

## Kaprizov, Wild thrash Knights to level series

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Kirill Kaprizov scored two goals and had an assist as the Minnesota Wild evened their series against the Vegas Golden Knights with a 5-2 victory in Game 2 of the Western Conference quarterfinals on Tuesday in Las Vegas.

Matt Boldy had a goal and an assist and Marcus Foligno and Mats Zuccarello also scored for Minnesota, which scored four times over a seven-shot stretch while building a 4-0 lead. Filip Gustavsson finished with 30 saves for the victory.

Noah Hanifin and Tomas Hertl scored goals and Adin Hill stopped 12 of 16 shots for Vegas. The best-of-seven series now moves to Saint Paul, Minn., for games on Thursday and Saturday.

Vegas, a 4-2 winner in Game 1, started quickly firing the first five shots on goal but couldn’t get one past Gustavsson. The Wild dominated the rest of the first period, scoring three times in a four-shot span.

Boldy, who scored both Minnesota goals in the opener, made it 1-0 at the 9:56 mark with a breakaway goal. He took a long saucer pass from Kaprizov and beat Hill with a wrist shot five-hole to give Minnesota its first lead of the series. Boldy became the second player in franchise history to score three consecutive goals in the postseason, joining Marian Gaborik (2003).

Foligno made it 2-0 when he slammed in a rebound of a Ryan Hartman shot from the low slot.

Minnesota 5, Vegas 2				
Minnesota	3	1	1	5
Vegas	0	1	1	2
<b>First Period</b> —1, Minnesota, Boldy 3 (Kaprizov, Brodin), 9:56. 1, Minnesota, Foligno 1 (Hartman), 11:35. 1, Minnesota, Zuccarello 1 (Johansson), 17:15. Penalties—None.				
<b>Second Period</b> —1, Minnesota, Kaprizov 1 (Boldy), 3:59. 1, Vegas, Hanifin 1, 12:04. Penalties—None.				
<b>Third Period</b> —1, Vegas, Hertl 2 (Pietrangelo, Saad), 2:26. 2, Minnesota, Kaprizov 2, 17:34. Penalties—McNabb, VGK (Holding), 8:56.				
<b>Shots on Goal</b> —Minnesota 10-3-4-17. Vegas 10-11-11-32.				
<b>Power-play opportunities</b> —Minnesota 0 of 1; Vegas 0 of 0.				
<b>Goalies</b> —Minnesota, Gustavsson 1-1-0 (32 shots-30 saves). Vegas, Hill 1-1-0 (16-12). A-18,311 (17,368).				



Minnesota Wild left wing Kirill Kaprizov (97) celebrates after scoring a goal against the Vegas Golden Knights on April 22. STEPHEN R. SYLVANIE/IMAGN IMAGES



## NHL: STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS

CANADIENS AT CAPITALS, 7 P.M. ET, ESPN WASHINGTON LEADS SERIES 1-0

# Attention turns to Game 2 after OT thriller

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Both the Washington Capitals and Montreal Canadiens hope to be quick studies in preparing for Game 2 of their best-of-seven Stanley Cup playoff series Wednesday in Washington.

The Capitals took Game 1 Monday, but they went to overtime to get the 3-2 victory on Alex Ovechkin's second goal of the night. It also doubled as the first overtime NHL postseason goal for the league's recently crowned all-time goal-scoring leader.

The team with the Eastern Conference's best regular-season record needed overtime because the Canadiens, who have just 13 players with postseason experience, rallied from a 2-0 deficit to tie the game with a pair of third-period goals 5:13 apart.

Even with the two scores he allowed in the third period, Capitals goalie Logan Thompson played well, stopping 33 of 35 shots in his first action since leaving an April 2 contest at Carolina after the first period due to an upper-body injury.

Washington coach Spencer Carbery said he loved how his team played to start. The pressure the Capitals applied to the Habs during the first 20 minutes paid off as Ovechkin gave the hosts a 1-0 lead on a power-play goal with 1:26 left in the opening period. It reminded Carbery of when his team played its best



Capitals left wing Alex Ovechkin celebrates his first-period goal against the Montreal Canadiens on April 21 in Washington. GEOFF BURKE-IMAGN IMAGES

hockey during the midpoint of the season.

"Give our guys a lot of credit for being able to turn that switch on, like you say, and hit the ground running in Game 1," Carbery told reporters Tuesday. "Now that's just the start. We're going to have

to find a way to string that (for) 60 (minutes) and making sure that it continues on through three periods and not just two."

Anthony Beauvillier doubled Washington's lead in the second period. The journeyman forward also set up Ovech-

kin's game-winner, and Dylan Strome assisted on all three Capitals goals.

Cole Caufield and Nick Suzuki rallied the Canadiens in the third period with their tallies (rookie Lane Hutsen assisted on both). Not only were they the top scorers for Montreal this season, but they were also part of the 2021 Stanley Cup finalist team, the last Habs squad to make the postseason.

Canadiens netminder Sam Montembeault withstood the pressure from the Capitals to make 29 saves in his postseason debut.

Montreal coach Martin St. Louis, who played in 107 Stanley Cup playoff games during his 16-season career, likened making a postseason debut to facing a Major League Baseball pitcher throwing 98 miles per hour for the first time.

At first, he told reporters Tuesday, you likely would not make contact, but eventually that would change. He felt that many of his youngsters were able to catch up during the game.

"Did we calm down through that game a little bit? Yes, I think our nerves were better in the second half of that game," he said. "And I hope we can start the game (Wednesday) ... for a young team, I don't know, but I hope we can start the game in that kind of mindset."

"Just have a calm mind, understand what Washington is good at and try to execute through that."

STARS AT AVALANCHE, 9:30 P.M. ET SERIES TIED 1-1

# Emotions set to run high as Stars visit Avalanche

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

This Stanley Cup playoff first-round series was on the brink of being one-sided – but it is shaping up to be a long slog.

The Dallas Stars rallied to beat the Colorado Avalanche 4-3 in overtime on Monday night to send their Western Conference quarterfinal matchup to Denver tied 1-1, with Game 3 on Wednesday night.

And a rivalry that has a storied playoff history dating back to 1999 is adding a new twist: Mikko Rantanen coming off the opposing bench.

The 28-year-old Finnish winger helped Colorado win the Stanley Cup three seasons ago, but stalled contract negotiations led to a Jan. 24 trade to Carolina, which flipped him to Dallas at the March 7 deadline.

Rantanen played once in Denver since joining the Stars, a 4-3 overtime loss on March 16, but the playoffs, of course, are a different level of intensity.

That might be a reason the two-time All-Star has no points and is a minus-3 in the first two games, but unfamiliarity could also be a contributing factor. He played 20 games with Dallas before the playoffs after 619 in eight-plus seasons with the Avalanche – many of those games skating on the same line as Nathan MacKinnon.

"Look, he played in one place for a decade," Stars coach Pete DeBoer said. "And he played with one guy for almost a decade, and no one else in the league has that guy. He's got a lot on his plate. I don't think anyone should be surprised that this hasn't come easily and all at once."

The pressure increased after Jason Robertson, Dallas' leading goal-scorer,

went down with a knee injury in the last game of the regular season. Now, Rantanen will deal with an arena that once loved him but will be hostile toward him.

Adding to the emotion is the expected return of Colorado's beloved captain, Gabriel Landeskog, who has not played since Game 6 of the 2022 Stanley Cup Final. Landeskog has undergone multiple surgeries on his right knee, including a cartilage transplant in 2023.

Landeskog was added to the active roster before Game 2 and warmed up with the team prior to the opening face-off.

However, he was scratched in favor of Miles Wood.

"Gabe wanted to get into a groove and take warmup, get in the room and be a part of it, so that's why I did that," Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said.

With the injury to forward Ross Colton and the miscue by Wood in overtime on Monday night, Landeskog's first NHL game in nearly three years could occur Wednesday night. He was a top-six forward before his injury but will likely skate as a bottom-six forward – unless the second line continues to struggle.

Brock Nelson, Valeri Nichushkin and Jonathan Drouin didn't score in the first two games, and Bednar was blunt when asked what he needs from that trio.

"I need to see more," he said Monday night.

He has been happy with goaltender Mackenzie Blackwood, who entered the series with no playoff experience but has played well with 58 saves on 63 shots, including big saves that helped Colorado win Game 1.



Stars right wing Mikko Rantanen, left, and Colorado Avalanche defenseman Josh Manson chase the puck on April 21 in Dallas. JEROME MIRON/IMAGN IMAGES

OILERS AT KINGS, 10 P.M. ET, TBS LOS ANGELES LEADS SERIES 1-0



Edmonton Oilers goaltender Stuart Skinner defends the goal in Game 1 of a first-round playoff series on April 21 in Los Angeles. KIRBY LEE/IMAGN IMAGES

# Oilers in familiar territory heading into Game 2 in LA

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

The route taken to this point was unique, but the visiting Edmonton Oilers are not in unfamiliar territory heading into Game 2 of their Western Conference first-round series with the Los Angeles Kings on Wednesday.

Sure, the 6-5 Los Angeles victory in the series opener was a roller coaster ride for the ages, but the result is very familiar. Edmonton lost the first game in two of the three series meetings between these clubs in this run of four consecutive Stanley Cup playoff first-round clashes.

The Oilers responded to win both of those series in which they trailed, so there is no panic from the club that is looking to beat the Kings for the fourth consecutive year.

"We've been in this position a ton of times and we know what to expect," Edmonton goaltender Stuart Skinner said. "We gotta be patient, we gotta be strong defensively, being able to play that chess match. It's a tough building to win in, but we've done it before."

The teams certainly have a whale of a first game to replicate for its entertainment value. The Kings staked a 4-0 lead before the end of the second period and even had a 5-2 edge seven minutes into the third period.

But the Oilers roared back and tied the clash with 88 seconds remaining in regulation, only to see Kings forward Phillip Danault score the winner with 42 seconds on the clock.

Sure it was a gut punch to lose after such a comeback, but the Oilers do not appear flustered.

"There's highs and lows throughout the course of a series, throughout the

course of a game," Edmonton captain Connor McDavid said.

In each of the past three years, the series has ended up tied 1-1, a trend the Kings will look to change before they head to Edmonton for the third and fourth games.

The way they managed to pull off the victory just as it appeared disaster was nearing certainly is a boost for the Kings. Seeing how the Oilers can explode offensively when the Kings are not strong defensively is also a great lesson to receive in a victory.

"Obviously we've got to do better job of closing that game out, but a win's a win and we'll take that, we'll enjoy it and we'll move on," Los Angeles forward Quinton Byfield said. "This happened not last year but the year before. We had a (big lead) and they came back on us and ended up winning that game. No lead is safe in playoffs."

The Kings can also take solace in how well they controlled the game through the first two periods. Edmonton had trouble breaking through the Los Angeles defenders, especially in the neutral zone, managing only six shots on net through the clash's midway point, while the Kings were generating all kinds of chances.

Moreover, the Kings were able to win the special teams battle, which was a big issue the other way in those previous series.

"I would say just a good start," Kings coach Jim Hiller said. "You know, we didn't like exactly how it ended. We had a chance, more than one chance, to put the puck into the empty net and end the game in a less dramatic fashion, which is really what we wanted, but it's hockey."



NFL

NOTEBOOK

RB McCaffrey ‘feeling great’ after tough ’24

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Limited to four games last season due to injuries, San Francisco 49ers star running back Christian McCaffrey is fully recovered and participating in the team’s offseason program, which began Tuesday.

McCaffrey, 28, missed the first eight games of the 2024 season due to bilateral Achilles tendinitis, then sat out the final five games with a posterior cruciate ligament injury in his right knee.

“I’m feeling great,” McCaffrey told reporters. “It’s been such a smooth process, a lot of hard work. As soon as that injury happened in Buffalo (in Week 13), I was kind of. . . . This was my goal, to not miss a day of OTAs, be back, ready to go, with nothing hindering me, and that’s where I’m at.”

A two-time All-Pro and three-time Pro Bowl selection, McCaffrey was able to said he was able to train at full speed early in the offseason.

“It’s been great,” McCaffrey said. “Yeah, everything’s been really smooth, and pumped to be back here.”

McCaffrey finished the season with 50 carries for 202 yards plus 15 receptions for 146 yards. He had no touchdowns.

Cousins attends Falcons’ voluntary workouts amid uncertain future

With his future in flux, Kirk Cousins attended the first day of the Atlanta Falcons’ offseason workouts, multiple reports said.

The decision came as a surprise, as the Falcons and head coach Raheem Morris expected him to skip out on the voluntary program.

“I’m not going to be foolish to think that he’s going to show up for voluntary work,” Morris said at the league meeting. “... I don’t think he’ll be there. If he is, we’ll welcome him with open arms. But I’m not going to be foolish enough to make myself get worked up and angry about Kirk Cousins missing voluntary workouts.”

The veteran quarterback wants to be released to seek a starting job in 2025, but the Falcons may hold onto Cousins as a backup to Michael Penix Jr.

Atlanta is also open to listening to offers for Cousins, but reports indicate the



The Bills’ Terrel Bernard tackles the 49ers Christian McCaffrey (23) during a Dec. 1 game in Orchard Park, New York. TINA MACINTYRE-YEE/DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE

team would want any trade partner to take on some of his guaranteed money.

Bills RB Cook absent from voluntary workouts

The Buffalo Bills opened up their first week of their voluntary offseason workouts with one notable piece missing: starting running back James Cook.

Buffalo general manager Brandon Beane noted that Cook was absent from the team workouts, although Beane emphasized that, when it comes to this week, “It’s voluntary.” Beane cautioned to assume that Cook was absent due to contract talks.

Entering the final year of his rookie deal, Cook has seen three teammates from his 2022 draft class earn four-year contract extension this offseason: wide receiver Khalil Shakir, linebacker Terrel Bernard and cornerback Christian Benford.

“Try not to look too far into it,” Beane said.

“We could all assume he’s not here because he’s unhappy with his contract or whatever, but that’s not fair. He hasn’t told me that. No one’s told me that he said that, but I think that’s kind of unfair to say he’s not here because of that.”

Legendary announcer Patrick dies at age 80

Longtime NFL “Sunday Night Football” play-by-play announcer Mike Patrick has died. He was 80.

Patrick reportedly died of natural causes on Sunday in Fairfax, Va. The City of Clarksburg, W.Va., Patrick’s hometown, confirmed his death.

Patrick spent 36 years at ESPN from 1982-2018, including 19 seasons (1987-2005) on the NFL Sunday broadcast crew. He called ESPN’s first NFL regular-season broadcast in 1987.

Patrick also handled play-by-play on college football and college basketball broadcasts as well as the College World Series.

Steelers RB Warren signs 1-year restricted free agent tender

Jaylen Warren, in line to be the Pittsburgh Steelers’ starting running back for the first time this coming season, signed a one-year restricted free agent tender with the team.

The contract, worth \$5.346 million, ostensibly keeps Warren under team control for the 2025 season. If another team submitted an offer sheet to Warren that the Steelers failed to match, it

would cost that team a second-round pick in the NFL draft, which starts Thursday.

Warren, 26, has never started in 48 regular-season and two playoff games for Pittsburgh since he was signed as an undrafted free agent in 2022.

Titans GM says team won’t trade out of No. 1 pick

The Tennessee Titans entertained offers but decided they will not trade the No. 1 overall pick in the NFL draft.

New Titans general manager Mike Borgonzi said at the team’s pre-draft press conference that other teams were interested in trading up, but “the entire organization” came to the consensus decision to keep

“As we got towards the end of the process, we decided that ultimately we’re going to stay,” Borgonzi said.

Borgonzi wasn’t tipping who the Titans plan to select No. 1, but it’s widely expected to be Miami quarterback Cam Ward. A large contingent from the franchise attended Miami’s pro day to see Ward, including team owner Amy Adams Strunk.

The Titans previously drafted quarterbacks Malik Willis and Will Levis in 2022 and 2023. But Tennessee dealt Willis to Green Bay last August and appear ready to move on from Levis, who has a 5-16 record as a starter in two mediocre NFL seasons.

Sharpe refutes accuser’s claims amid reports of settlement offer

Pro Football Hall of Famer and ESPN commentator Shannon Sharpe and his lawyer are challenging a civil lawsuit in which a woman accuses him of rape.

Sharpe, in a video posted to Instagram on Tuesday, said the suit is a “shakedown” and that he believes a 30-second clip of a “sex tape” will be deceptively cut to make him appear guilty of sexual assault.

Therefore, Sharpe said he wants the full 10-minute recording to be publicly released, believing it will vindicate him.

The lawsuit seeks more than \$50 million in damages. Sharpe’s attorney, Lanny Davis, said the accuser turned down a \$10 million settlement before filing suit.

Draft

Continued from Page 1

been somewhat overlooked in the last six months. But the Alcorn State and New Mexico transfer showed off as one of the biggest standouts at the East-West Shrine Bowl, and his stellar Big 12 Pro Day numbers – a 4.45-second 40-yard dash and 41½-inch vertical leap – underscored his explosiveness. The 5-10, 206-pound slasher can change direction in an instant, and his combination of elusiveness and strength make him exceedingly difficult to bring down at the second level.

**RB Jaydon Blue, Texas:** Unearthing gems in the middle to later portions of the draft is often a matter of finding players with a superpower. Blue has one: his speed. The 5-9, 196-pound ball carrier can outrace an entire defense once he gets to the perimeter, and his confident cuts can punish anyone who overcommits.

**WR Dont'e Thornton Jr., Tennessee:** It's easy to understand the appeal of a 6-5, 205-pound target who led the Football Bowl Subdivision with 25.4 yards per catch last season. Tennessee's scheme undoubtedly juiced some of his numbers, but Thornton dusted some of college football's best defenses when defensive backs didn't properly respect his deep speed.

**WR Isaac TeSlaa, Arkansas:** A former high school quarterback and Division II standout at Hillsdale College before transferring to Arkansas in 2023, TeSlaa might be one of this draft's ultimate developmental players. At 6-4 and 214 pounds, he creates mismatches as a downfield threat who can be trusted to pluck passes away from his body and in contested-catch scenarios. But trouble with his releases and creating separation could keep him in the big slot role he's accustomed to, unless he learns how to beat press coverage consistently and shake defenders underneath.

**OT Logan Brown, Kansas:** The former five-star recruit came along slowly at Wisconsin before being dismissed in 2022 for an unspecified "internal inci-



Arizona running back Jacory Croskey-Merritt runs for a touchdown during an Aug. 31 game in Tucson, Arizona. ARYANNA FRANK/USA TODAY SPORTS

dent." After missing most of the following season at Kansas due to a leg injury, he revived his career last season with a strong performance at right tackle for the Jayhawks. A smooth mover at 6-6 and 311 pounds, he's the rare middle-round prospect who could actually hang in pass protection against NFL speed rushers while still having more than enough strength to hold up at the point of attack.

**DT Jamaree Caldwell, Oregon:** Though Derrick Harmon was the breakout star of the Ducks' defensive line in 2024, Caldwell did plenty to help himself by creating opportunities for others. The 6-2, 332-pounder commands the line of scrimmage by demanding double teams and not letting up in his rush. But he's more nimble than many space-eaters up front, giving him potential to disrupt the passing game by more than merely pushing the pocket.

**DE Bradyn Swinson, LSU:** This might be testing the definition of the term sleeper, as Swinson could be ticketed for a spot on Day 2. But a position that seldom produces high-end starters past the first two rounds – Maxx Crosby and Trey Hendrickson

notwithstanding – requires some recalibrating when identifying potential under-the-radar breakout players. Speedy and pliable, Swinson is more dynamic off the edge than many pass rushers expected to be selected earlier in the draft.

**DE/OLB David Walker, Central Arkansas:** There aren't many pass rushers more prolific than Walker, who posted 31 sacks and 63 tackles for loss in three seasons at Central Arkansas after transferring from Southern Arkansas. But is that production indicative of what he can achieve against much more formidable competition? The 6-1, 263-pounder is accustomed to walking back blockers who simply can't stand their ground against him.

**LB Smael Mondon Jr., Georgia:** It might seem difficult to fly under the radar as a three-year starter for the most dominant defense – and program – of that stretch. Mondon, however, never received the top billing that many of his former Georgia teammates did. Nagging injuries and inconsistency in diagnosing plays kept the former five-star recruit from fully flourishing in Athens.

**LB Collin Oliver, Oklahoma State:** As a true freshman in 2021, Oliver broke

out in a major way with 11½ sacks. But he never built on that high or even recaptured it, and he only played in two games last season before being sidelined with a foot injury. The dreaded tweener label seems bound to follow the 6-2, 240-pounder, but he has the requisite explosiveness and fluidity to thrive as a pass rusher. His subpar size and strength, however, might relegate him to a designated pass rusher role.

**LB Nick Martin, Oklahoma State:** It might seem odd to have two selections on this list from a team that ranked second to last in the FBS with more than 500 yards allowed per game. But like Oliver, Martin shouldn't have his pro potential defined by the shortcomings that surrounded him. Undersized at 6-0 and 221 pounds, he compensates for his build by rallying to the ball in a hurry – look no further than 2023, when he was able to catch up to former Texas wide receiver Xavier Worthy and trip up the future 40-yard dash record-setter.

**CB Tommi Hill, Nebraska:** A foot injury derailed Hill's final season in Nebraska and makes him a bit of a tricky evaluation. At 6-1 and 213 pounds with the long speed to stick with receivers downfield, he has a rare blend of physical tools that will allow him to match up well with taller targets. But his safety-like makeup can also be his undoing at times, as a lack of suddenness threatens to leave him with limited opportunities to close in on passes despite his sound ball skills.

**CB Upton Stout, Western Kentucky:** Through the pre-draft process, Stout has evoked comparisons to former Louisiana Tech standout Amik Robertson and even likened himself to the current Detroit Lions cornerback – and with good reason. Despite standing just 5-9 and 181 pounds, the cornerback operates with a fearless abandon, rocketing to the catch point or ball carrier.

**S Billy Bowman Jr., Oklahoma:** At 5-10 and 192 pounds, Bowman almost operates as a cornerback on the back end – for better or worse. On one hand, his coverage credentials are unimpeachable, as he notched 11 interceptions in the last three seasons and is comfortable handling almost any assignment.



SCOREBOARD

All times Eastern				
MLB				
American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
N.Y. Yankees	14	10	.583	—
Boston	14	11	.560	½
Toronto	12	12	.500	2
Baltimore	9	13	.409	4
Tampa Bay	9	14	.391	4½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	14	9	.609	—
Detroit	14	10	.583	½
Kansas City	10	14	.417	4½
Minnesota	8	15	.348	6
Chi. White Sox	5	18	.217	9
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	14	9	.609	—
Seattle	12	11	.522	2
Houston	12	11	.522	2
L.A. Angels	11	11	.500	2½
Athletics	10	13	.435	4
National League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
N.Y. Mets	17	7	.708	—
Philadelphia	13	11	.542	4
Miami	11	12	.478	5½
Washington	10	13	.435	6½
Atlanta	9	14	.391	7½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago Cubs	15	10	.600	—
Milwaukee	13	11	.542	1½
Cincinnati	11	13	.458	3½
St. Louis	10	14	.417	4½
Pittsburgh	9	15	.375	5½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Diego	17	7	.708	—
L.A. Dodgers	16	8	.667	1
San Francisco	15	9	.625	2
Arizona	14	9	.609	2½
Colorado	4	18	.182	12

Monday's Scores	
Boston 4, Chi. White Sox 2	
Cleveland 6, N.Y. Yankees 4	
Detroit 6, San Diego 4	
Miami 6, Cincinnati 3	
N.Y. Mets 5, Philadelphia 4	
Atlanta 7, St. Louis 6	
Houston 7, Toronto 0	
San Francisco 5, Milwaukee 2	
Tuesday's Scores	
Cleveland 3, N.Y. Yankees 2	
San Diego 2, Detroit 0	
Miami 4, Cincinnati 3	
Washington 7, Baltimore 0	
Boston 8, Seattle 3	
N.Y. Mets 5, Philadelphia 1	
St. Louis 10, Atlanta 4	
Chicago Cubs 11, L.A. Dodgers 10	
Minnesota 4, Chi. White Sox 2	
Kansas City 4, Colorado 3	
Houston 5, Toronto 1	
Pittsburgh 9, L.A. Angels 3	
Arizona 5, Tampa Bay 1	
Milwaukee 11, San Francisco 3	
Texas 8, Athletics 5	
Wednesday's Games	
St. Louis (Mikolas 0-1) at Atlanta (Elder 0-0), 12:15 p.m.	
N.Y. Yankees (Rodon 1-2) at Cleveland (Ortiz 0-2), 1:10 p.m.	
San Diego (Hart 1-0) at Detroit (Olson 1-1), 1:10 p.m.	
Philadelphia (Wheeler 1-0) at N.Y. Mets (Peterson 1-0), 1:10 p.m.	
Cincinnati (Singer 2-0) at Miami (Alcantara 1-0), 1:10 p.m.	
Baltimore (Sugano 1-1) at Washington (Williams 1-0), 6:45 p.m.	
Seattle (Hancock 0-1) at Boston (Newcomb 0-1), 6:45 p.m.	
L.A. Dodgers (TBD) at Chicago Cubs (Boyd 1-0), 7 p.m.	
Toronto (Francis 1-1) at Houston (Gusto 1-0), 7:40 p.m.	

Chi. White Sox (TBD) at Minnesota (Festa), 7:40 p.m.	
Colorado (Marquez 0-1) at Kansas City (Lorenzen 1-1), 7:40 p.m.	
Pittsburgh (Heaney 0-0) at L.A. Angels (Kochanowicz 1-0), 9:38 p.m.	
Tampa Bay (Bradley 1-0) at Arizona (Rodriguez 0-1), 9:40 p.m.	
Milwaukee (Peralta 1-1) at San Francisco (Webb 1-0), 9:45 p.m.	
Texas (Rockner 0-1) at Athletics (Sears 1-1), 10:05 p.m.	
<b>Thursday's Games</b>	
Chi. White Sox (Smith 0-0) at Minnesota (Paddack 0-1), 1:10 p.m.	
Seattle (Woo 1-0) at Boston (Crochet 1-1), 1:35 p.m.	
Colorado (Dollander 1-0) at Kansas City (Ragans 0-0), 2:10 p.m.	
Milwaukee (Myers) at San Francisco (Roupp 0-1), 3:45 p.m.	
Baltimore (Povich 0-1) at Washington (Gore 1-1), 6:45 p.m.	
Pittsburgh (Mlodzinski 1-1) at L.A. Angels (Anderson 0-0), 9:29 p.m.	
Tampa Bay (Rasmussen 1-0) at Arizona (Burnes 0-1), 9:40 p.m.	
Texas (deGrom 0-0) at Athletics (Ginn), 10:05 p.m.	

MLB Leaders	
American League	
<b>Batting Average</b> — Judge, New York .384; Goldschmidt, New York .372; Aranda, Tampa Bay .355; Wilson, Athletics .354; Springer, Toronto .349; Story, Boston .337; Kwan, Cleveland .333; Mangum, Tampa Bay .328; Campbell, Boston .316; Carpenter, Detroit .315.	
<b>Home Runs</b> — Raleigh, Seattle 9; Soderstrom, Athletics 9; Trout, Los Angeles 8; Torkelson, Detroit 7; Manzardo, Cleveland 7; Judge, New York 7; Chisholm Jr., New York 7; Mullins, Baltimore 6; Grisham, New York 6; Rooker, Athletics 6.	
<b>RBI</b> — Judge, New York 25; Torkelson, Detroit 21; Soderstrom, Athletics 19; Mullins, Baltimore 19; Arozarena, Seattle 17; Manzardo, Cleveland 17; Trout, Los Angeles 16; Bregman, Boston 16; Raleigh, Seattle 16; Story, Boston 15.	
<b>Stolen Bases</b> — Mangum, Tampa Bay 8; Gimenez, Toronto 7; Robert Jr., Chicago 7; Meyers, Houston 7; Story, Boston 6; Taveras, Texas 6; Arozarena, Seattle 6; Duran, Boston 6; Witt Jr., Kansas City 6; Buxton, Minnesota 5.	
<b>Wins</b> — Fried, New York 4; Clase, Cleveland 3; Springs, Athletics 3; Mize, Detroit 3; Brown, Houston 3; Buehler, Boston 3; Mahle, Texas 3; Carrasco, New York 2; Chapman, Boston 2; Gausman, Toronto 2.	
<b>ERA</b> — Mahle, Texas 0.68; Bassitt, Toronto 0.77; Crochet, Boston 1.13; Brown, Houston 1.16; Fried, New York 1.42; Bubic, Kansas City 1.88; Anderson, Los Angeles 2.08; Mize, Detroit 2.22; Gilbert, Seattle 2.63; Eovaldi, Texas 2.64.	
<b>Strikeouts</b> — Ragans, Kansas City 42; Gilbert, Seattle 41; Rodon, New York 37; Crochet, Boston 35; Eovaldi, Texas 31; Bassitt, Toronto 31; Brown, Houston 31; Peipiot, Tampa Bay 31; Fried, New York 30; Baz, Tampa Bay 30.	
<b>Saves</b> — Munoz, Seattle 7; Jackson, Texas 6; Hader, Houston 6; Miller, Athletics 6; Estevez, Kansas City 5; Hoffman, Toronto 5; Jansen, Los Angeles 5; Chapman, Boston 4; Kahnle, Detroit 4; Williams, New York 4.	
National League	
<b>Batting Average</b> — Donovan, St. Louis .356; Tatis Jr., San Diego .349; Alonso, New York .341; Frelick, Milwaukee .338; Naylor, Arizona .333; Lee, San Francisco .329; Ozuna, Atlanta .323; Carroll, Arizona .323; Fitzgerald, San Francisco .318; Busch, Chicago .316.	
<b>Home Runs</b> — Tatis Jr., San Diego 8; Carroll, Arizona 7; Wood, Washington 7; Flores, San Francisco 7; Schwarber, Philadelphia 7; Edman, Los Angeles 7; Suarez, Arizona 6; Kelly, Chicago 6; Suzuki, Chicago 6;	

Ohtani, Los Angeles 6.
<b>RBI</b> — Flores, San Francisco 24; Alonso, New York 24; Tucker, Chicago 23; De La Cruz, Cincinnati 22; Chourio, Milwaukee 19; Perdomo, Arizona 19; Carroll, Arizona 19; Kelly, Chicago 18; Suzuki, Chicago 18; Hernandez, Los Angeles 17.
<b>Stolen Bases</b> — Cruz, Pittsburgh 10; Turang, Milwaukee 8; Crow-Armstrong, Chicago 8; Scott II, St. Louis 8; De La Cruz, Cincinnati 7; Frelick, Milwaukee 7; Tatis Jr., San Diego 7; Machado, San Diego 6; Berti, Chicago 6; Turner, Philadelphia 6.
<b>Wins</b> — Steele, Chicago 3; King, San Diego 3; Singer, Cincinnati 3; Yamamoto, Los Angeles 3; Megill, New York 3; Pfaadt, Arizona 3; Gray, St. Louis 3; Ray, San Francisco 3; Kelly, Arizona 3; Senga, New York 3.
<b>ERA</b> — Yamamoto, Los Angeles 0.93; Megill, New York 1.09; Pivetta, San Diego 1.57; Parker, Washington 1.85; Peralta, Milwaukee 1.91; Luzardo, Philadelphia 2.08; Meyer, Miami 2.10; Heaney, Pittsburgh 2.13; Imanaga, Chicago 2.22; Greene, Cincinnati 2.35.
<b>Strikeouts</b> — Gore, Washington 45; Wheeler, Philadelphia 41; Meyer, Miami 41; Webb, San Francisco 38; Yamamoto, Los Angeles 38; Luzardo, Philadelphia 36; Greene, Cincinnati 35; Holmes, New York 34; Peralta, Milwaukee 33; Sale, Atlanta 32.
<b>Saves</b> — Suarez, San Diego 9; Finnegan, Washington 8; Scott, Los Angeles 8; Diaz, New York 6; Alvarado, Philadelphia 5; Walker, San Francisco 5; Pressly, Chicago 4; Pagan, Cincinnati 4; Puk, Arizona 4; Iglesias, Atlanta 4.

NBA	
Playoffs	
First Round (Best-of-7)	
Sunday's Games	
Oklahoma City 131, Memphis 80	
Boston 103, Orlando 86, Celtics lead series 1-0	
Cleveland 121, Miami 100, Cavaliers lead series 1-0	
Golden State 95, Houston 85, Warriors lead series 1-0	
Monday's Games	
Detroit 100, N.Y. Knicks 94, series tied 1-1	
L.A. Clippers 105, Denver 102, series tied 1-1	
Tuesday's Scores	
Indiana 123, Milwaukee 115, Pacers leads series 2-0	
Oklahoma City 118, Memphis 99, Thunder lead series 2-0	
L.A. Lakers 94, Minnesota 85, series tied 1-1	
Wednesday's Games	
Orlando at Boston, 7 p.m.	
Miami at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.	
Golden State at Houston, 9:30 p.m.	
Thursday's Games	
N.Y. Knicks at Detroit, 7 p.m.	
Oklahoma City at Memphis, 9:30 p.m.	
Denver at L.A. Clippers, 10 p.m.	

NHL	
Playoffs	
First Round (Best-of-7)	
Sunday's Games	
Carolina 4, New Jersey 1	
Toronto 6, Ottawa 2	
Vegas 4, Minnesota 2	
Monday's Games	
Washington 3, Montreal 2 (OT), Capitals lead series 1-0	
Winnipeg 2, St. Louis 1, Jets lead series 2-0	
Dallas 4, Colorado 3 (OT), series tied 1-1	
L.A. Kings 6, Edmonton 5, Kings lead series 1-0	
Tuesday's Scores	

Carolina 3, New Jersey 1, Hurricanes lead series 2-0  
Toronto 3, Ottawa 2, OT, Maple Leafs lead series 2-0  
Florida 6, Tampa Bay 2, Panthers lead series 1-0  
Minnesota 5, Vegas 2, series tied 1-1

**Wednesday's Games**

Montreal at Washington, 7 p.m.  
Dallas at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.  
Edmonton at L.A. Kings, 10 p.m.

**Thursday's Games**

Florida at Tampa Bay, 6:30 p.m.  
Toronto at Ottawa, 7 p.m.  
Vegas at Minnesota, 9 p.m.  
Winnipeg at St. Louis, 9:30 p.m.

Soccer

MLS

Eastern Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Charlotte FC	6	2	1	19	16	7
Cincinnati	6	2	1	19	13	11
Inter Miami CF	5	0	3	18	13	6
Columbus	5	1	3	18	12	7
Philadelphia	5	3	1	16	16	9
Nashville	4	4	1	13	12	11
Orlando City	3	2	4	13	15	12
Chicago	3	3	3	12	16	15
NY Red Bulls	3	3	3	12	10	9
NY City FC	3	4	2	11	11	13
New England	3	4	1	10	6	7
Atlanta	2	4	3	9	11	16
D.C. United	2	4	3	9	11	19
Toronto FC	1	4	4	7	8	13
CF Montreal	0	6	3	3	4	13

Western Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Vancouver	6	1	2	20	17	6
Austin FC	5	3	1	16	7	8
Minnesota	4	1	4	16	11	7
Portland	4	2	3	15	16	13
Colorado	4	2	3	15	13	13
San Diego FC	4	3	2	14	15	12
Los Angeles FC	4	4	1	13	13	14
Seattle	3	3	3	12	12	11
FC Dallas	3	3	3	12	10	11
San Jose	3	5	1	10	19	17
Real Salt Lake	3	6	0	9	8	14
Saint Louis	2	4	3	9	5	6
Sporting KC	2	6	1	7	15	19
Houston	1	4	4	7	8	14
LA Galaxy	0	6	3	3	6	16

Saturday's Games

Sporting KC at Cincinnati, 2:30 p.m.

NY City FC at Toronto FC, 2:30 p.m.

CF Montreal at NY Red Bulls, 4:30 p.m.

D.C. United at Philadelphia, 4:30 p.m.

Atlanta at Orlando City, 7:15 p.m.

New England at Charlotte FC, 7:30 p.m.

Real Salt Lake at San Diego FC, 7:30 p.m.

San Jose at Columbus, 7:30 p.m.

Austin FC at Houston, 8:30 p.m.

Chicago at Nashville, 8:30 p.m.

Seattle at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.

NWSL

	W	L	D	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	5	0	0	15	12	1
Orlando	4	1	0	12	11	2
Washington	4	1	0	12	7	3
Gotham	2	2	2	8	9	8
Portland	2	2	2	8	7	6
Angel City	2	1	2	8	7	8
San Diego	2	2	1	7	9	8
Seattle	2	2	1	7	5	5
Bay	2	2	1	7	5	5
Houston	1	3	1	4	4	8
Utah	1	3	1	4	4	8
Louisville	1	3	1	4	3	9
Chicago	1	4	0	3	3	11
North Carolina	0	3	2	2	3	7

Portland 4, Gotham 1

Friday's Games

Utah at Houston, 8 pm

Angel City at Orlando, 8 pm

Saturday's Games

Gotham at Washington, 1 pm

Kansas City at North Carolina, 7 pm

San Diego at Chicago, 7:30 pm

Seattle at Bay, 10 pm

Sunday's Games

Louisville at Portland, 4 pm

FOOTBALL						
UFL Standings						
XFL Conference						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arlington	3	1	0	0.750	83	43
DC	3	1	0	0.750	80	62
St. Louis	2	2	0	0.500	87	72
San Antonio	1	3	0	0.250	65	103
USFL Conference						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Birmingham	3	1	0	0.750	65	55
Michigan	3	1	0	0.750	91	65
Houston	1	3	0	0.250	49	82
Memphis	0	4	0	0.000	50	88
Friday's Game						
Memphis at Birmingham						

# GOLF

## PGA Money Leaders

### Through April 21

- 1, Rory McIlroy, \$13,257,558
- 2, Collin Morikawa, \$5,894,964
- 3, Ludvig Aberg, \$5,659,723
- 4, Russell Henley, \$5,643,775
- 5, Hideki Matsuyama, \$4,674,913
- 6, J.J. Spaun, \$4,634,392
- 7, Scottie Scheffler, \$4,349,197
- 8, Sepp Straka, \$4,195,617
- 9, Corey Connors, \$4,153,631
- 10, Justin Rose, \$4,055,476
- 11, Maverick McNealy, \$3,848,051
- 12, Shane Lowry, \$3,688,611
- 13, Justin Thomas, \$3,320,663
- 14, Sungjae Im, \$3,041,500
- 15, Lucas Glover, \$3,033,613
- 16, Tom Hoge, \$3,018,118
- 17, Michael Kim, \$2,944,173
- 18, Thomas Detry, \$2,757,678
- 19, Nick Taylor, \$2,731,464
- 20, Min Woo Lee, \$2,713,336
- 21, Harris English, \$2,634,204
- 22, Akshay Bhatia, \$2,491,994
- 23, Brian Harman, \$2,453,200
- 24, Jason Day, \$2,328,872
- 25, Daniel Berger, \$2,308,816
- 26, Patrick Cantlay, \$2,301,380
- 27, Tommy Fleetwood, \$2,124,188
- 28, Denny McCarthy, \$2,118,130
- 29, Andrew Novak, \$2,098,205
- 30, Joe Highsmith, \$2,095,856
- 31, Viktor Hovland, \$2,032,023
- 32, Jacob Bridgeman, \$1,950,029
- 33, Keegan Bradley, \$1,920,628
- 34, Robert MacIntyre, \$1,871,762
- 35, Aaron Rai, \$1,798,425
- 36, Patrick Rodgers, \$1,797,112
- 37, Ryan Gerard, \$1,778,572
- 38, Taylor Pendrith, \$1,772,226
- 39, Bud Cauley, \$1,687,545
- 40, Sam Stevens, \$1,686,791
- 41, Tony Finau, \$1,567,701
- 42, Stephan Jaeger, \$1,528,558
- 43, Jake Knapp, \$1,494,373
- 44, Nico Echavarria, \$1,439,946
- 45, Brian Campbell, \$1,426,375
- 46, Ben Griffin, \$1,368,690
- 47, Davis Thompson, \$1,368,635
- 48, Jordan Spieth, \$1,339,868
- 49, Gary Woodland, \$1,297,954
- 50, Byeong Hun An, \$1,294,322