

## Trump warns ‘bad things’ looming for Iran

### President says 10-15 days should be ‘enough’ time to reach nuclear agreement

*Associated Press*

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran held annual military drills with Russia on Thursday as a second American aircraft carrier drew closer to the Middle East, with both the United States and Iran signaling they are prepared for war if talks on Tehran’s nuclear program fizzle out.

President Donald Trump said Thursday he believes 10 to 15 days is “enough time” for Iran to reach a deal. But the talks have been deadlocked for years, and Iran has refused to discuss wider U.S. and Israeli demands that it scale back its missile program and sever ties to armed groups. Indirect talks held in recent weeks made little visible progress, and one or both sides could be buying time for final war preparations.

Iran’s theocracy is more vul-

nerable than ever following 12 days of Israeli and U.S. strikes on its nuclear sites and military last year, as well as mass protests in January that were violently suppressed.

In a letter to the U.N. Security Council on Thursday, Amir Saeid Iravani, the Iranian ambassador to the U.N., said that while Iran does not seek “tension or war and will not initiate a war,” any U.S. aggression will be responded to “decisively and proportionately.”

“In such circumstances, all bases, facilities, and assets of the hostile force in the region would constitute legitimate targets in the context of Iran’s defensive response,” Iravani said.

Earlier this week, Iran conducted a drill that involved live-fire in the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow opening of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of the

world’s traded oil passes.

Tensions are also rising inside Iran, as mourners hold ceremonies honoring slain protesters 40 days after their killing by security forces. Some gatherings have seen antigovernment chants despite threats from authorities.

The movements of additional American warships and airplanes, with the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford near the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea, don’t guarantee a U.S. strike on Iran — but they bolster Trump’s ability to carry out one should he choose to do so.

He has so far held off on striking Iran after setting redlines over the killing of peaceful protesters and mass executions, while reengaging in nuclear talks that were disrupted by the war in June.

Iran has agreed to draw up a

written proposal to address U.S. concerns raised during this week’s indirect nuclear talks in Geneva, according to a senior U.S. official who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The official said top national security officials gathered Wednesday to discuss Iran, and were briefed that the “full forces” needed to carry out potential military action are expected to be in place by mid-March. The official did not provide a timeline for when Iran is expected to deliver its written response.

“It’s proven to be, over the years, not easy to make a meaningful deal with Iran, and we have to make a meaningful deal. Otherwise, bad things happen,” Trump said Thursday.

## Supreme Court strikes down Trump’s sweeping tariffs

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court struck down President Donald Trump’s far-reaching global tariffs on Friday, handing him a significant loss on an issue crucial to his economic agenda.

The decision centers on tariffs imposed under an emergency powers law, including the sweeping “reciprocal” tariffs he levied on nearly every other country.

It’s the first major piece of Trump’s broad agenda to come squarely before the nation’s highest court, which he helped shape with the appointments of three conservative jurists in his

first term.

The Republican president has been vocal about the case, calling it one of the most important in U.S. history and saying a ruling against him would be an economic body blow to the country. But legal opposition crossed the political spectrum, including libertarian and pro-business groups that are typically aligned with the GOP.

The Supreme Court ruling comes despite a series of short-term wins on the court’s emergency docket that have allowed Trump to push ahead with extraordinary flexes of executive power on issues ranging from high-profile firings to major

federal funding cuts.

The tariffs decision doesn’t stop Trump from imposing duties under other laws. While those have more limitations on the speed and severity of Trump’s actions, top administration officials have said they expect to keep the tariff framework in place under other authorities.

The Constitution gives Congress the power to levy tariffs. But the Trump administration argued that a 1977 law allowing the president to regulate importation during emergencies also allows him to set tariffs. Other presidents have used the law dozens of times, often to impose

sanctions, but Trump was the first president to invoke it for import taxes.

Trump set what he called “reciprocal” tariffs on most countries in April 2025 to address trade deficits that he declared a national emergency. Those came after he imposed duties on Canada, China and Mexico, ostensibly to address a drug trafficking emergency.

The challenges argued the emergency powers law doesn’t even mention tariffs and Trump’s use of it fails several legal tests, including one that doomed then-President Joe Biden’s \$500 billion student loan forgiveness program.

# Europeans seek anti-drone know-how

## 5 nations reach deal to create cheap defenses with Ukrainian expertise

*Associated Press*

WARSAW — Five European nations have announced a new program to produce low-cost air defense systems and autonomous drones using Ukrainian expertise hard-won over the past four years of war against Russia.

Friday's initiative of the E5 nations — France, Poland, Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy — comes as one of many European efforts to bolster defense along their borders, like a “drone wall” with Russia and Ukraine to better detect, track and intercept drones violating Europe's airspace.

Both Moscow and Kyiv have cutting-edge drone warfare capabilities forged in the grim laboratory of war where battlefield innovations have rewritten modern battle tactics. Poland is already working with Ukraine on drone technology in joint military training programs and

manufacturing projects.

Those efforts were sparked by a spate of incidents in which Europe's borders and airports have been tested by rogue drones. Russia has been blamed for some of them but denies that anything was done on purpose or that it played a role.

“The U.K. and our E5 partners are stepping up — investing together in the next generation of air defense and autonomous systems to strengthen NATO's shield,” said Luke Polard, Britain's minister for defense readiness and industry.

“We have some of the best kit on the entire planet for shooting down air threats. The problem is to be effective at shooting down relatively low-cost missiles, drones and other threats facing us,” he said. “We need to make sure that we're matching the cost of the threats with the cost of defense.”

Poland's defense minister, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, said the group of countries signed an agreement to jointly invest in the production and procurement of drone-based strike capabilities as well as cheap drone defense systems in a program called Low-Cost Effectors and Autonomous Platforms.

“Combat technologies and techniques are changing rapidly — we must respond quickly and appropriately,” Kosiniak-Kamysz said. “We also signed a crucial commitment regarding the joint development of drone-based strike capabilities, low-cost joint production, and joint procurement of drone effectors, i.e. combat payloads, using artificial intelligence.”

When Russian drones entered Polish airspace in September 2025, Warsaw and its NATO allies used multimillion-dollar jets to respond to them;

the drones cost thousands and ended up crashing into the Polish countryside.

Low-cost kinetic or electronic effectors would allow the detection and destruction of drones at a fraction of the price.

Europe has scrambled to arm itself in the wake of President Donald Trump's deep criticism of NATO, European defense spending and once iron-clad alliances.

The EU has ramped up spending and is openly questioning even deeper military projects.

“Europe's security is more uncertain than it has been in decades,” said Kaja Kallas, the EU's foreign policy chief, citing Russian aggression, instability in the Middle East, China and a “redefined” alliance with the U.S. She said that the low-cost interceptor program exemplifies the European commitment to its own security.

## Inflation rose more quickly than expected in December

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — A key inflation gauge accelerated in December to the fastest pace in nearly a year, showing how prices are still rising more quickly than the Federal Reserve's target of 2% a year.

Prices rose 0.4% in December from the previous month, up from 0.2% in November, the Commerce Department said Friday in a report that was delayed by the six-week government shutdown last fall. The monthly increase was the highest since last February. Compared with a year ago, inflation

rose 2.9% in December, up from 2.8% in November. That is the largest yearly increase since March 2024.

Core prices — which exclude the volatile food and energy categories — also rose 0.4% in December from the previous month, up from 0.2% in November. That is also the highest since last February. Core prices jumped 3% in December from a year ago, faster than November's 2.8% increase.

The figures show that inflation remains elevated, though it's down from a peak of near 7% in 2022.

## HUD may limit noncitizens' access to public housing

*Associated Press*

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has proposed a rule that would limit public housing mostly to citizens, which advocates fear could lead to tens of thousands of people being evicted.

The rule, published Thursday in the Federal Register, calls for limiting funding for those in public housing and other HUD-related housing to citizens and eligible noncitizens. The rule would require every resident in HUD-funded housing to show proof of citizenship or eligible status, including those 62 years

and older who previously only had to show proof of age.

The measure would effectively bar mixed-status families — where some household members are eligible for help — from housing and is part of the government's immigration crackdown. A similar rule was proposed but never finalized during the first Trump administration.

The proposed rule will be made official when it's published in the Federal Register on Friday. HUD did not answer how long it may take before the rule takes effect.

# More detentions of legal refugees possible

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Trump administration has issued a sweeping new order that could lead to the arrest of tens of thousands of refugees who are lawfully in the United States but do not yet have permanent residency, overturning years of legal and immigration safeguards.

A memo filed by the Department of Homeland Security ahead of a Thursday federal court hearing in Minnesota says refugees applying for green cards must return to federal custody one year after they were admitted to the U.S. for review of their applications.

DHS “may maintain custody for the duration of the inspection and examination process,” said the memo, which was filed Wednesday.

Advocacy and resettlement groups slammed the order, which will likely face legal chal-

lenges and could sow confusion and fear among the nearly 200,000 refugees who came to the United States during the Biden administration.

The order is the latest in a series of immigration restrictions by the Trump administration, which has upended long-standing policies toward refugees, including dramatically reducing the number admitted into the country. A memo obtained by The Associated Press late last year said the administration was planning a review of all refugees admitted to the U.S. during the Biden administration, and immediately suspended green card approvals for refugees who arrived during those years.

The administration has cited national security and economic concerns for its changed policies. Experts say refugees let into the country already undergo extensive vetting.

The new order came hours before U.S. District Judge John Tunheim heard arguments Thursday on whether he should extend a temporary order that protects Minnesota refugees lawfully in the U.S. from being arrested and deported. Tunheim’s order applies only in Minnesota, but the implications of the new national policy was a major part of the discussion anyway.

How many people could be arrested under the new order was unclear.

Justice Department attorney Brantley Mayers said during Thursday’s hearing that the government should have the right to arrest refugees one year after entering the U.S., but indicated that would not always happen.

“That’s a discretion call for DHS to make,” he said, a comment met with skepticism by attorneys for the Minnesota refu-

gees.

Tunheim did not rule Thursday, saying he’d issue a written decision.

After the hearing, Sen. Tina Smith, D-Minn., said outside the courthouse that the government “failed to offer any coherent argument for their policy in either law or fact.” She wasn’t in court for the hearing, but said she’d been briefed about it.

“And so we will continue the fight for justice in the courts,” Smith said, flanked by attorneys and refugee rights supporters, including U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar.

Immigration advocates quickly pushed back against the new policy, with HIAS, an international Jewish nonprofit serving refugees and asylum-seekers, calling it “a transparent effort to detain and potentially deport thousands of people who are legally present in this country, people the U.S. government itself welcomed.”

## Trump’s refusal to invite all governors to meeting leads group to back out

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The National Governors Association is pulling out of an annual meeting at the White House after President Donald Trump declined to invite two Democratic governors, undercutting one of Washington’s few remaining bipartisan gatherings.

Trump is still expected to meet with governors at the White House on Friday but the event will not be facilitated by an organization founded more than a century ago to help state leaders from both parties advocate for their interests in Washington. The Republican president had refused to include Democratic Govs. Jared Polis of Colorado and Wes Moore of

Maryland and recently blasted them on social media as “not worthy of being there.”

The episode underscores the confrontational approach Trump has taken during his second term toward state leaders he does not like. He has at times threatened to withhold federal money or send in troops over the objections of local leaders. Now, even a ceremonial White House dinner has become a flash point and fellow Republicans openly acknowledge that Trump’s aim as president is not to unify the country.

“He’s not putting his mind to it,” Gov. Spencer Cox, R-Utah, said at an event sponsored by Politico. “He’s said very clearly that that’s not who he is.”

## Trump visits Ga. as GOP looks for midterm boost

Associated Press

ROME, Ga. — The White House said President Donald Trump was visiting Georgia to promote the economy.

But in the opening minutes of his first stop at a restaurant before touring a steel company, the president raised debunked claims of voter fraud, talked up his plan to require voters to show identification before casting ballots and discussed the recent FBI raid of election offices in the state’s most populous county.

“They came in, they took all those ballots; all those crooked ballots were taken,” Trump said. “And the Democrats are fighting like hell. They don’t want anyone to see those ballots. Let’s see what happens.”

Later at Coosa Steel Corp., the president charged that Demo-

crats “cheated like dogs” in the 2020 election.

The White House has long said Trump would focus more on the economy, and he frequently complains that he doesn’t get enough credit for it. But recent months have been dominated by other issues, including deadly clashes during deportation efforts in Minneapolis, potential military action in Iran and his false claims that the 2020 election was stolen.

Trump’s destination in Georgia suggests he has something else on his mind, too. He was appearing in the congressional district previously represented by Marjorie Taylor Greene, a former supporter who resigned in January after feuding with Trump.

There’s a special election to replace her on March 10.

# Saudi Arabia may have uranium enrichment under proposed deal

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Saudi Arabia could have some form of uranium enrichment within the kingdom under a proposed nuclear deal with the United States, congressional documents and an arms control group suggest, raising proliferation concerns as an atomic standoff between Iran and America continues.

Presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden both tried to reach a nuclear deal with the kingdom to share American technology. Nonproliferation experts warn any spinning centrifuges within Saudi Arabia could open the door to a possible weapons program for the kingdom, something its assertive crown prince has suggested he could pursue if Tehran obtains an atomic bomb.

Already, Saudi Arabia and nuclear-armed Pakistan signed a mutual defense pact last year

after Israel launched an attack on Qatar targeting Hamas officials. Pakistan's defense minister then said his nation's nuclear program "will be made available" to Saudi Arabia if needed, something seen as a warning for Israel, long believed to be the Middle East's only nuclear-armed state.

"Nuclear cooperation can be a positive mechanism for upholding nonproliferation norms and increasing transparency, but the devil is in the details," wrote Kelsey Davenport, the director for nonproliferation policy at the Arms Control Association in Washington.

The documents raise "concerns that the Trump administration has not carefully considered the proliferation risks posed by its proposed nuclear cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia or the precedent this agreement may set."

The congressional document,

also seen by the AP, shows the Trump administration aims to reach 20 nuclear business deals with nations around the world, including Saudi Arabia. The deal with Saudi Arabia could be worth billions of dollars, it adds.

The document contends that reaching a deal with the kingdom "will advance the national security interests of the United States, breaking with the failed policies of inaction and indecision that our competitors have capitalized on to disadvantage American industry and diminish the United States standing globally in this critical sector." China, France, Russia and South Korea are among the leading nations that sell nuclear power plant technology abroad.

The draft deal would see America and Saudi Arabia enter safeguard deals with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog.

# Kim lauds North Korea's economy as meeting opens

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un lauded his nation's improving economy and regional standing as he opened the country's most important political event, where he is expected to set his domestic and foreign policy agenda for the next five years and further entrench his family's authoritarian rule.

The Workers' Party congress, which will likely run for days in Pyongyang, comes as Kim carves out a more forceful regional presence, leveraging an advancing nuclear arsenal and a growing alignment with Moscow that have deepened his standoffs with Washington and Seoul.

The meeting will likely provide the stage for Kim to unveil his key political and military objectives and further consolidate his authoritarian grip before thousands of ruling party delegates.

Some analysts say Kim could also use the congress to position his teenage daughter — believed to be named Kim Ju Ae and about 13 — as a potential successor, formalizing the regime's fourth-generation succession.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency reported Friday the meeting began the previous day. It did not immediately report any direct comments from Kim on his standoffs with the United States and South Korea or his nuclear weapons program.

Entering his 15th year in power, Kim is in a much stronger position than when he last convened the congress in 2021, when North Korea was experiencing a crippled economy worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic and the wreckage of his failed diplomacy with President Donald Trump.

# Police continue to search ex-prince's former stately home, a day after arrest

Associated Press

LONDON — Police continued on Friday to search the former home of Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, a day after the former prince was held in custody for almost 11 hours on suspicion of misconduct in public office linked to his friendship with the late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Following one of the most tumultuous days in the modern history of Britain's royal family, the former Prince Andrew is back at his new home on the Sandringham estate, King Charles III's private retreat.

Police have concluded their search there but are still searching Royal Lodge, his 30-room

former home in the grounds of Windsor Castle, just west of the capital.

Mountbatten-Windsor, who was pictured slouched in the back of his chauffeur-driven car following his release Thursday evening, remains under investigation, which means he has neither been charged nor exonerated by Thames Valley Police, the force responsible for areas west of London.

His arrest follows years of allegations over his links with Epstein, who took his own life in a New York prison in 2019. The accusation at the heart of his arrest is that Mountbatten-Windsor — who was known as Prince Andrew until October when his

brother stripped him of his titles and honors — shared confidential trade information with the disgraced financier when he was a trade envoy for the U.K.

Specifically, emails released last month by the U.S. Department of Justice appeared to show Mountbatten-Windsor sharing reports of official visits to Hong Kong, Vietnam and Singapore.

One, from 2010, appeared to be forwarded by Andrew five minutes after he had received it. Another a few weeks later appeared to show him sending Epstein a confidential brief on investment opportunities in the reconstruction of Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

# 'Skimo' awards its 1st Olympic golds

Associated Press

BORMIO, Italy — They skied uphill through a diamond-shaped pattern and climbed a flight of on-slope stairs in their ski boots. Far from done, they endured more lung-searing climbing, with skis back on, and then a downhill dash to the finish line.

All the while, their course looked like a giant snow globe with Mother Nature adding to the scene.

Now that's an entrance.

Ski mountaineering made its long-awaited Olympics debut Thursday, and the sport crowned its first champion at the Milan Cortina Games in Marianne Fatton, of Switzerland. Shortly after, Oriol Cardona Coll, of Spain, followed suit to take the men's race.

A win for them, though, was a win for a niche Alpine sport that traces its roots back to the late 19th century.

"It's a magical day," said Fatton, who's also the reigning world champion. "It's history for our sport, and for us as athletes, and it's wonderful."

With snow falling, Fatton navigated the uphill-then-downhill sprint course in a time of 2 minutes, 59.77 seconds. She edged Emily Harrop, of France, by 2.38 seconds. Spain's Ana Alonso Rodriguez took bronze as she competed on a torn ACL.

The men's version saw Cardona Coll jump out to a big lead and never look back. Well, briefly, on the downhill section, just to see if anyone was closing in on him.

They weren't.

Ski mountaineering, called "skimo" for short, was voted into the Olympic program in 2021. The falling snow provided the fitting backdrop for a sport that is more than just a sprint. There are also vertical and endurance races. But not at the Olympics.

The compactness of the sprint was ideal for the Winter Games — a quick ski-jaunt up and back down. To be on the medal stand, it took weathering three rounds of three or so minutes each — less for the men — and that stretched their fitness to the fullest.

"I think the show today was pretty special," said Harrop, who will be one of the favorites in the mixed team relay event Sat-

urday. "There was a lot of suspense."

This particular gold medal carried a lot of weight given the stakes. Fatton claimed the coveted title of "first ever" to earn an Olympic title in their sport. Cardona Coll wasn't far behind as the men's race was staged 20 minutes later. Asked how the gold medal felt around his neck, Cardona Coll simply laughed: "It feels heavy."

"There was a lot of pressure," he said of being the favorite. "I'm relaxed now."

Fatton had quick transitions — from ski boots back to skis in particular — which paved the way to her gold medal. Her mom, Anna Janouskova, competed for Czechia in cross-country skiing at the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France.

Just being in front of the crowd was a special moment for skimo athletes.

"Standing in the start and seeing the Olympic rings on the hillside got really real," said American Anna Gibson, who made it to the semifinal round.

The course made for entertaining theater, resembling almost a snow park of assorted obstacles.

First, the athletes weaved their way through a set pattern before taking off their skis to climb the steps in their ski boots, storing their skis in a backpack. They put them back on for another sprint to the top.

Upon reaching the summit of the course, athletes hopped in the air to rip off their "skins," pieces of fabric on the bottom of the skis that allow athletes to hurry uphill. After that, it was all downhill from there as they flew along the Stelvio course toward the finish line.

The individual sprints were set up in a bracket-style format. The top finishers kept advancing until they reached the final, which consisted of six athletes.

Also:

■ Nikita Filippov earned silver in the men's event Thursday and became the first individual neutral athlete to win a medal in Italy. Filippov is one of the few Russians competing in the Milan Cortina Games, under "AIN," the French acronym for "individual neutral athlete." That means they

formally aren't representing their country. They're also not allowed to wear any Russian symbols. Many sports barred Russian athletes from competing as part of the diplomatic fallout after Russian troops moved into Ukraine days after the last Winter Olympics in 2022.

Filippov finished 1.52 seconds behind Cardona Coll in the finals. France's Thibault Anselmet won the bronze.

## Norway sweeps Nordic combined events; sport's future uncertain

TESERO, Italy — Norway swept the Nordic combined events at the Milan Cortina Winter Games with a victory in the team sprint through heavy snowfall Thursday in what could be the final time the sport is featured in the Olympics.

Finland took silver in a dramatic home-straight sprint, missing gold by 0.5 seconds, and Austria won bronze on a day when a snowstorm made for tough travel in the two-man 15-kilometer cross-country ski relay.

"It feels incredibly good. I don't think it has fully sunk in yet," said Jens Luraas Oftebro, of Norway. "It was a very exciting finish. There was no plan to decide the race in the final sprint. I'm not that cold-blooded."

The event dates to the original Olympics in 1924 and opens with a ski jump that determines the starting order for the cross-country ski race. The rest of the field starts behind the leader according to the ranking from their jump. The first to cross the line is the winner.

The hybrid contest, which is the only winter sport without women, faces elimination from the International Olympic Committee because it draws a small audience and is dominated by Norway, Austria, Germany and Japan. The IOC is due to make its decision later this year.

Oftebro, who ran away with gold in the normal- and large-hill individual events, teamed up with Andreas Skoglund to capture a third medal for the country that invented the sport.

The U.S. team of Niklas Malacinski and Ben Loomis finished seventh.

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# Liu dazzles, ends US Olympic drought

Nearly perfect free skate nets 1st individual gold medal in American women's figure skating since 2002

*Associated Press*

MILAN — Alysia Liu had just delivered a near-flawless Olympic free skate Thursday night, one that left a packed crowd inside the Milano Ice Skating Arena standing and roaring, when a television camera zoomed in on the American star as she was heading off the ice.

"That's what I'm f----- talking about!" Liu shouted into the lens.

Oh, they'll be talking about her for quite a while.

The 20-year-old from the San Francisco Bay Area, who walked away from the sport before finding her way back again — and finding herself in the process — delivered the U.S. its first women's figure skating gold medal in 24 years. She finished with 226.79 points to upstage Japanese teammates Kaori Sakamoto and Ami Nakai, who took silver and bronze at the Milan Cortina Games.

"I think my story is more important than anything to me," Liu said, her frenulum piercing glinting in the light as she smiled, "and that's what I will hold dear, and this journey has been incredible, and my life has just been — I have no complaints."

The moment Nakai's score was read after the final program of the night, U.S. teammate Amber Glenn jumped into the kiss-

and-cry and raised Liu's hand in triumph. Liu sheepishly turned and applauded the 17-year-old Nakai, who raced over and hugged her.

It was the first individual gold medal for an American woman since 2002, when Sarah Hughes stood atop the podium in Salt Lake City, and it was the second gold for Liu at the Milan Cortina Games. She and Glenn helped the Americans win team gold.

"Her story of taking a step back, mental health, I think it really attests to you never know what the journey to success is going to be," said Glenn, who finished fifth. "I really hope that can reach the skating community, that it's OK to take time."

It was a bittersweet silver medal for Sakamoto, the three-time world champion, who intends to retire after this season. One of the most popular figure skaters of her generation earned a bronze medal four years ago in Beijing and had her heart set on gold.

"I'm really regretful," said Sakamoto, who finished with 224.90 points. "I feel like I'm so disappointed, to be honest."

Liu's latest gold medal, meanwhile, blended right into her glittering gold-sequined dress, only the blue ribbon standing out. And it seemed the perfect complement to the golden stripes running through her

dark brown hair, which are meant to resemble the growth rings on a tree.

Liu has done a whole lot of growing up over the years.

She was the youngest U.S. champion ever when she won the first of back-to-back titles at 13 years old. But after finishing sixth at the Beijing Games, Liu was so burned out that she abruptly retired. She spent the next two years doing bucket-list things like climbing up to the base camp of Mount Everest and enrolling at UCLA, where she is studying psychology.

It was on a skiing trip a couple of years ago, when Liu felt the same familiar adrenaline rush she once felt while skating, that she began to think about a comeback. But this time, Liu would be skating on her terms, more carefree and self-assured than she'd been as a child prodigy, when her life revolved around the practice rink.

"I mean, it's just how my life has gone," Liu said, shrugging. "Everything in general has led me to this point."

Even during warmups Thursday night, Liu skated with a grin on her face, never showing any outward signs of pressure. She took the time to wave at friends and family in the stands who had been keeping her out late for dinners, which she called "super fun."

"What I was feeling," Liu said, "was happy and confident."

Glenn must have felt the same way a couple of hours earlier. Her season-best free skate not only gave her a score of 214.91 points but it nearly put her on the podium, too.

Liu, who last year captured the first world title by an American woman since 2006, was perfect from her opening triple flip to her closing combination sequence. As the last bits of Donna Summer's version of "MacArthur Park" faded away, and the roar of the fans filled the void, Liu gave a casual flip of her ponytail as if to say, "So what?"

Her coaches, Phillip DiGiulio and Massimo Scali, were a little more rambunctious. They punched the air, gave each other a big hug, then headed over to greet their star pupil when she stepped off the ice to await her score.

The score that ultimately would give her an Olympic title and end a long drought for U.S. women.

"I don't need this," Liu said of the gold medal hanging around her neck, "but what I needed was the stage, and I got that. So it was all good, no matter what happened. I mean, if I fell on every jump, I would still be wearing this dress. So it's all good."

## Norway wins 17th gold, most in one Winter Olympics

*Associated Press*

ANTERSELVA, Italy — Johannes Dale-Skjevdal was the only biathlete to hit all 20 of his targets in the 15-kilometer mass start race Friday and skied his way to gold — Norway's 17th gold medal of the Milan Cortina Winter Olympics — breaking the record for the most golds won by a nation at a Winter

Olympics.

Norway had set the record at the 2022 Beijing Olympics with 16 gold medals.

Dale-Skjevdal had taken the lead after the first standing bout with clean shooting and completed the five laps on newly packed snow and gusty winds in 39 minutes, 17.1 seconds. His teammate Sturla Holm Lae-

greid only missed one target and finished 10.5 seconds back for silver — his fifth medal of these Olympic Games.

Philipp Horn, of Germany, only missed one target on his last shooting bout and left the range in third place, but France's Quentin Fillon Maillet, who missed four on the day, chased Horn and passed him on

a big hill, taking him to the finish for a bronze, 25.6 seconds behind Dale-Skjevdal.

Fillon Maillet, who was on the gold medal-winning team in the mixed relay and men's relay, also won gold in the sprint.

Only the top 30 biathletes compete in the mass start race — based on World Cup rankings and Olympic performance.

# US women rally, beat Canada in OT

Associated Press

MILAN — A last Olympic goal for Hilary Knight, a gold medal-winning overtime one for Megan Keller, and the Americans cemented their reputation as one of the most dominant women's hockey teams to take the ice.

After romping through their first six outings at the Milan Cortina Games, the U.S. overcame the final test by rallying to beat Canada and earn its third gold medal with a 2-1 victory Thursday night.

"This team's got so much resolve. Never quit. Always ready to fight and go to battle," Knight said. "It's just a testament to the preparation of our group and the love that we have in that room, and the way we found a way to get the job done at the end of the night."

Knight, appearing in her fifth and final Olympics, forced overtime by tipping in Laila Edwards' shot with 2:04 left in regulation — and with goalie Aerin Frankel pulled for an extra attacker. The goal was her 15th and 33rd point of her Olympic career, setting U.S. records for both categories.

The sides were playing 3-on-3 to finish a game where fans alternated chants of "USA!" and "Ca-na-da!" Keller secured the win on a backhand 4:07 into overtime, breaking up the left wing and pushing past Claire Thompson, driving to the net and beating Ann-Renee Desbiens over her right pad to spark an emotional and teary-eyed celebration.

"I'm lost for words," Keller said. "This is an incredible feeling. I love these girls so much. This group deserves it. Just the effort and the faith that we kept through this four-year journey is something very special."

Frankel stopped 30 shots.

Kristin O'Neill scored a short-handed goal for Canada and Desbiens finished with 31 saves. Canada pushed the U.S. to the

## Men's hockey team inspired by American women's gold

Associated Press

MILAN — Quinn and Jack Hughes watched in person as the U.S. women's hockey team beat Canada in the gold medal game Thursday night in an overtime thriller that showcased the face of the sport in Hilary Knight and her likely successor in that spot, Laila Edwards.

The Hughes brothers had a family stake in the matter. Their mom, Ellen, had a role in the women's championship as a player development consultant.

"Happy for her, happy for the whole team, everyone on the coaching staff," Quinn Hughes said. "You knew that game was going to be tough, but I think they deserved it."

Players from either team have also gotten to know each other from hanging out in the athletes' village, Jack said, giving the men even more rooting interest.

"All of us, we were obviously really pumped up for them," Jack Hughes said. "That was all about the girls, and we were super excited for them."

J.T. Miller also took his daughter, Quinn Hughes said, and the rest of the men's team watched at the end of their hall in the treatment room in the village they share with the women. Megan Keller's OT goal was a cause for celebration.

"We were going nuts," Dy-

brink just nine days after it was beaten 5-0 by the Americans in the preliminary round.

O'Neill's goal 54 seconds into the second period ended the Americans' shutout streak of 5 hours, 52 minutes and 17 seconds, dating to the second peri-

od of a 5-1 opening win over Czechia. The U.S. had not trailed in the tournament.

"We went through ups and downs," Canadian captain Marie-Philip Poulin said. "Just letting them know this does not define them. I'm proud of them."

lan Larkin said. "It's a pretty cool moment and great for them. For Megan Keller, that's a great story: a Michigan girl, very proud for her. Great moment for USA Hockey."

Coach Mike Sullivan opened his remarks following the team's game day skate by congratulating the women's team. There's also a staff connection: Assistant John Hynes worked with women's coach John Wroblewski at the U.S. National Team Development Program.

"We were talking about it last night; we were talking about it again this morning," Sullivan said. "It's a great thrill. Those girls, what a terrific hockey team and they'll be an inspiration for the next generation of girls growing up in the United States. ... We couldn't be more proud of them."

The U.S. women outscored opponents 33-2 on the way to gold. The also-unbeaten U.S. men face Slovakia in the semifinals on Friday night, and Sullivan hopes his team is inspired by what the women accomplished.

"Without a doubt," Sullivan said. "You look at how dominant they've been throughout the course of their tournament and before; that's one of the best women's teams I think I've seen. We certainly aspire to do the same on the men's side."

They showed up. Sadly lost in overtime but keep their head high because it's truly an honor to be on their side."

A fierce rivalry that began with the U.S. beating Canada to win gold at the 1998 Nagano Games — the first to feature women's hockey — continued living up to its billing.

The U.S. also won gold in 2018 in Pyeongchang. Canada has won the other five gold medals, and settled for its third silver.

This year's final marked the seventh of 12 Olympic meetings between the two nations to be decided by one goal and the third to go past regulation. Counting world championship play, the U.S. evened its record to 25-25 against Canada.

"We got this," Edwards said, referring to the message delivered during intermission before overtime.

And they did.

A team featuring a mix of experience and talented and speedy youth delivered on the vision coach John Wroblewski instilled upon taking over four years ago, months after the U.S. lost the gold-medal game to Canada in Beijing.

"In my opinion, I think this is the best hockey team women's hockey has ever seen," Kelly Pannek said, noting how the Americans overcame adversity against their fiercest rival.

"I think that's a part of being a champion, right?" Pannek said. "We knew they were going to respond in the way that they do. And they gave us everything."

Although the final couldn't have been closer, the Americans were dominant in Milan, going 7-0 and outscoring their opponents by a combined 33-2.

Earlier, Alina Muller scored 9:09 into overtime for her second bronze medal-clinching goal in Switzerland's 2-1 win over Sweden. Muller also scored Switzerland's decisive goal in a 4-3 win over Sweden in 2014.

# Cunningham powers Pistons past Knicks

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Cade Cunningham had 42 points and 13 assists to lead the Detroit Pistons to a 126-111 victory over the New York Knicks on Thursday night.

The Pistons have defeated the Knicks in the teams' three meetings this season.

Paul Reed scored 18 points, Tobias Harris had 11 points and 10 rebounds, and Ausar Thompson added 10 points for Eastern Conference-leading Detroit.

Jalen Brunson led New York with 30 points, and Karl-Anthony Towns finished with 21 points and 11 rebounds.

Landry Shamet scored 15 points and Josh Hart had 11 as the Knicks shot a miserable 23% (8 of 35) from 3-point range.

The Knicks scored the first five points of the game, taking their biggest lead at 9-2. The Pistons then went on a 21-8 run, taking the lead for good.

The Knicks pulled within 62-60 on Towns' basket early in the third quarter. Duncan Robinson answered with back-to-back 3s and the Pistons extended their lead to 13 points before settling for a 90-79 advantage heading into the final quarter.

**Cavaliers 112, Nets 84:** Donovan Mitchell scored 17 points, James Harden added 16 and Cleveland routed visiting Brooklyn to extend its winning streak to a season-high six games.

The Cavaliers have also won five straight at home and 11 of their past 12 overall. It was the second straight game and sixth time this season they haven't trailed in a game.

Michael Porter Jr. had 14 points and Ochai Agbaji 13 for Brooklyn, which is 5-20 since Dec. 29.

**Rockets 105, Hornets 101:** Kevin Durant made two free throws with 3.2 seconds left for the last of his 35 points, and Houston held on to win at Charlotte.

Jabari Smith Jr. added 15 points, and Reed Sheppard and Alperen Sengun each had 13 for Houston. The Rockets overcame an 11-point first-half deficit.

Grant Williams led the Hornets with 20 points. Brandon Miller scored 17 points, but was 1 of 12 from 3-point range.

LaMelo Ball, playing a day after being involved in a two-car crash in downtown Charlotte, had 11 points, seven assists and seven rebounds.

**Wizards 112, Pacers 105:** Bub Carrington and Anthony Gill each scored 13 points and helped spark a decisive fourth-quarter run as host Washington outlasted Indiana.

Kadary Richmond and Jaden Hardy also had 13 points each as Washington snapped a

three-game slide on a day it announced Trae Young is still at least a week from his team debut.

Jarace Walker scored 19 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for the Pacers, who fell to 2-3 during a six-game road trip wrapped around the All-Star break.

**Hawks 117, 76ers 107:** Jalen Johnson had 32 points and 10 rebounds and CJ McCollum added 23 points as Atlanta beat host Philadelphia in the teams' first game after the All-Star break.

Dyson Daniels finished with 15 points, Nickeil Alexander-Walker scored 14, and Zaccharie Risacher and Jock Landale each had 10 as the Hawks snapped a three-game losing streak with their third victory over Philadelphia this season.

Tyrese Maxey scored 28 points and Rising Stars MVP VJ Edgecombe added 20 for the Sixers, who were without center Joel Embiid, who missed the game due to soreness in his right shin.

Kelly Oubre Jr. scored 17 points and Quentin Grimes scored 10 of his 14 points in the first half for Philly.

**Raptors 110, Bulls 101:** Brandon Ingram scored 31 points as Toronto returned from the All-Star break with a victory at Chicago.

Assistant coach Wes Unseld Jr. directed the Bulls with head coach Billy Donovan away following his father's death.

Chicago has lost seven straight, also falling to the Raptors two weeks ago in Toronto.

Ingram also had eight rebounds and six assists. Scottie Barnes, Immanuel Quickley and Ja'Kobe Walter each had 14 points, and RJ Barrett added 13.

Simons led Chicago with 20 points in his fifth game since coming over from Boston in a trade. Isaac Okoro added 16.

**Spurs 121, Suns 94:** Stephon Castle scored 20 points, Victor Wembanyama added 17 and host San Antonio beat short-handed Phoenix for its seventh straight victory.

San Antonio also will face Sacramento on Saturday in Austin, Texas, a city the Spurs covet as part of a megaregion that they've cultivated for years.

Castle converted 8 of 11 shots from the field and had four assists and three steals in 21 minutes. Wembanyama had 11 rebounds and five blocks while playing 25 minutes. De'Aaron Fox added 15 points and eight assists in 22 minutes.

Jalen Green, playing in just his eighth game of an injury-plagued season, led Phoenix with 26 points. Mark Williams had 11 points and 10 rebounds.

Suns star Devin Booker played only nine minutes, all early in the game, before leaving with right hip soreness.

**Magic 131, Kings 94:** Paolo Banchero scored 30 points and Orlando won at Sacramento for its franchise-record 15th straight loss.

Orlando made a team-record 27 3-pointers on 50 attempts. Banchero was 5 of 7 from 3-point range and had six assists and five rebounds in the opener of a four-game trip.

The Kings broke the futility record a day after star center Domantas Sabonis and guard Zach LaVine had season-ending surgeries. The franchise had 14-game losing streaks in 1959-60 and 1971-72 while playing as the Cincinnati Royals.

The NBA record for consecutive losses is 28, set by Philadelphia over the 2014-15 and 2015-16 seasons and matched by Detroit in 2023-24.

Orlando broke the team record for 3-pointers of 25 set Jan. 3, 2004, at Sacramento in a 138-135 loss in double overtime.

**Celtics 121, Warriors 110:** Jaylen Brown had 23 points, 15 rebounds and 13 assists for his third triple-double of the season, and visiting Boston rolled over a Golden State team playing without Stephen Curry.

Payton Pritchard added 26 points and Sam Hauser scored 16 to help Boston win for the seventh time in eight games and spoil the Golden State debut of former Celtic Kristaps Porzingis.

Brown, the leading scorer in the Eastern Conference before the All-Star break, matched his career-high in rebounds, all on the defensive end. His 13 assists are a career-best.

De'Anthony Melton had 18 points and Will Richard and Gui Santos had 17 each for the Warriors. Porzingis had 12 points.

**Clippers 115, Nuggets 114:** Benedict Mathurin scored 38 points in his home debut as Los Angeles held off visiting Denver.

Denver's Jamal Murray had a chance to tie it on three free throws with 0.9 seconds remaining after a foul from Derrick Jones Jr. Murray made the first two before missing the third, with time expiring on the rebound.

Kawhi Leonard added 23 points, and Jones had 22 to help the Clippers improve to 21-7 since Dec. 20. Both teams were coming off the All-Star break.

Nikloa Jokic had 22 points and 17 rebounds for Denver. Murray scored 20 points, Bruce Brown had 19, and Cam Johnson and Julian Strawther added 18 each.