

High court rules Trump has some immunity

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday ruled for the first time that former presidents have some immunity from prosecution, extending the delay in the Washington criminal case against Donald Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss and all but ending prospects the former president could be tried before the November election.

In a historic 6-3 ruling, the justices returned Trump's case to the trial court to determine what is left of special counsel Jack Smith's indictment. The outcome means additional delay before Trump could face trial.

The court's decision in a second major Trump case this term, along with its ruling rejecting efforts to bar him from the ballot because of his actions following the 2020 election, underscores the direct and possibly uncomfortable role the justices are playing in the November election.

"Under our constitutional structure of separated powers, the nature of presidential power entitles a former president to absolute immunity from criminal prosecution for actions within his conclusive and pre-

clusive constitutional authority," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the court. "And he is entitled to at least presumptive immunity from prosecution for all his official acts. There is no immunity for unofficial acts."

Roberts was joined by the other five conservative justices. The three liberal justices dissented.

In her scathing dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote, "In every use of official power, the President is now a king above the law."

Reading from her opinion in the courtroom, Sotomayor said, "Because our Constitution does not shield a former president from answering for criminal and treasonous acts, I dissent." Sotomayor said the decision "makes a mockery of the principle, foundational to our Constitution and system of government, that no man is above the law."

The protection afforded presidents by the court, she said, "is just as bad as it sounds, and it is baseless."

Trump posted in all capital letters on his social media network shortly after the decision was released: "BIG WIN FOR OUR CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY. PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN!"

Smith's office declined to comment.

President Joe Biden's campaign said in a statement that the Supreme Court's immunity ruling "doesn't change the facts" about the events of Jan. 6.

The justices knocked out one aspect of the indictment. The opinion found Trump is "absolutely immune" from prosecution for alleged conduct involving discussions with the Justice Department.

Trump is also "at least presumptively immune" from allegations that he tried to pressure Vice President Mike Pence to reject certification of Biden's electoral vote win on Jan. 6, 2021. Prosecutors can try to make the case that Trump's pressure on Pence still can be part of the case against him, Roberts wrote.

The court directed a fact-finding analysis on one of the more striking allegations in the indictment — that Trump participated in a scheme to enlist fake electors in battleground states won by Biden who would falsely assert that Trump had won. Both sides had dramatically different interpretations as to whether that effort could be construed as official, and the conservative justices said de-

termining which side is correct would require additional analysis at the trial court level.

That work will fall to U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, who would preside over Trump's trial.

Trump still could face a trial, said Notre Dame law professor Derek Muller. "But the fact remains that it is almost impossible to happen before the election."

The ruling was the last of the term, and it came more than two months after the court heard arguments, far slower than in other epic high court cases involving the presidency, including the Watergate tapes case.

The Republican former president has denied doing anything wrong and has said this prosecution and three others are politically motivated.

Smith is leading the two federal probes of the former president, both of which have led to criminal charges. The Washington case focuses on Trump's alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election after he lost to Biden. The case in Florida revolves around the mishandling of classified documents. A separate case, in Georgia, also turns on Trump's actions after his defeat in 2020.

CENTCOM reports 3 Houthi drone boats destroyed

Stars and Stripes

U.S. Central Command reported U.S. forces in the Red Sea in a "self-defense engagement" destroyed three Houthi unmanned surface vehicles Sunday.

The vehicles, which the command did not describe further, "presented an imminent threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region," according

to a CENTCOM news release.

"This continued malign and reckless behavior by the Iranian-backed Houthis threatens regional stability and endangers the lives of mariners across the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden," the release states.

CENTCOM provided no further details on the attack, including who destroyed the unmanned vehicles or how.

The Houthis have used one-way, unmanned attack boats to target shipping in the region's sea lanes since at least January.

The U.S. Navy and other partners, including the Royal Navy, have patrolled the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden this year to counter attempts by Houthi insurgents in Yemen to interrupt commercial shipping.

New ACVs arrive for Marines on Okinawa

By JONATHAN SNYDER
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps received a shipment of new Amphibious Combat Vehicles or ACVs, eight-wheeled armored personnel carriers designed to move troops from ship to shore, at an Okinawa port over the weekend.

The ACVs arrived Sunday at the Naha Military Port for the III Marine Expeditionary Force, according to a Marine Corps news release on Sunday. Twelve new ACVs rolled into the port, 3rd Division spokesman Gunnery Sgt. Steve Cushman said Monday.

Marines of 4th Marines, 3rd Division offloaded the state-of-the-art combat vehicles, which replace an aging fleet of assault amphibious vehicles.

“III Marine Expeditionary Force is a modern, ready force,” III MEF commander Lt. Gen. Roger Turner said in the release.

The ACVs’ arrival realizes a

long-projected update to the current armed ship-to-shore connection and ground combat capabilities of the assault amphibious vehicles, the release said.

Their arrival on Okinawa for III MEF coincides with the Corps’ emphasis on retooling to meet the rising power in the region, China. The Pentagon defines China as its contemporary “pacing challenge.” The Marine strategy focuses on seizing and holding islands within the range of enemy fire and denying its forces access to key maritime straits.

“Upgrading our fleet with amphibious combat vehicles capable of supporting sea denial and maritime operations will further bolster our ability to support deterrence efforts and respond to contingencies in the Indo-Pacific,” Turner said.

The amphibious vehicles will be transported to Camp Schwab over the next several days, the release said.

Marine jet with bat insignia flies high on social media

By JONATHAN SNYDER
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — The flagship stealth fighter at this base south of Hiroshima is sporting a new look, one to make Batman envious.

The F-35B Lightning II assigned to the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 242 appeared over the base June 11 with outgoing commander Lt. Col. Alexander Mellman on his final flight and the end of his 20-year career.

It bore the noteworthy insignia of the squadron’s namesake mascot.

“This paint scheme emphasizes the agility and stealth of the F-35B,” Col. Kyle Shoop, Marine Aircraft Group 12 commander, said Wednesday.

The squadron, also known as “The Bats,” unveiled the newly painted F-35B aircraft to showcase the new squadron logo, a black bat on the aircraft top-side, group spokesman Gunnery Sgt. Vitaliy Rusavskiy said.

“The Bats have a proud heri-

tage in Marine Corps aviation and continue that legacy as one of two permanently forward-based F-35B squadrons in the Indo-Pacific,” Shoop said.

Photos of the F-35 with the bat insignia taken by a tail spotter circulated on social media, including Facebook and X, creating a frenzy of interest.

“It’s good to see fighter aircraft getting art again,” Larry Oliver commented on a Facebook post June 22.

“I’ve thought the F-35 has always been ugly. Turns out all it needed was a bad ass paint job,” Mitchell Adams commented on Facebook on June 23.

Several comments aired concerns with the paint job impeding the aircraft’s stealth characteristics.

“The stealth fighter was painted in accordance with service regulations and the new paint does not affect operational capability of the aircraft,” Rusavskiy said.

Asked if the new bat insignia is a temporary or permanent addition, Rusavskiy did not respond.

US Raptors, Ospreys to join Australia’s largest air drill

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptor stealth fighters and Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey tiltrotors are scheduled to fly with aircraft of 21 other nations in Australia’s largest-ever modern airpower exercise this month.

Exercise Pitch Black runs from July 12 to Aug. 2 in the east coast state of Queensland and the Northern Territory, the Australian Defence Force said in a statement June 19.

“This will be the biggest single air exercise that we have hosted in the modern Air Force, with ap-

proximately 140 aircraft and more than 4400 personnel participating,” Australian Air Commodore Peter Robinson, who will lead the drills, said in the statement.

Pitch Black will involve “the most advanced air combat capabilities in the world,” and include air-to-air refueling, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, and airlift, the statement said.

For the first time the exercise will include aircraft from Italy, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Spain. Embedded personnel from Brunei and Fiji will participate for the first time, ac-

ording to the statement.

The Air Force F-22s will fly out of Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal in the Northern Territory during the drill, according to the Australian air force’s official website.

The fifth-generation fighters were practicing dynamic force employment at Tindal in 2022 for the last Pitch Black exercise.

The concept, laid out in the 2018 National Defense Strategy, means putting a major combat force into a fight while keeping options available to counter emerging threats. It also means being strategically predictable

but operationally unpredictable.

Pacific Air Forces in Hawaii did not respond Sunday to questions about the number of Raptors and the unit going to Pitch Black.

Meanwhile the Marines’ MV-22s will fly from RAAF Darwin, also in the Northern Territory, according to the Australian website.

RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland will take on an increased role in the exercise compared to 2022, with a greater number of tankers and transport aircraft operating from there, Robinson said.

Biden's family tells him to stay in the race

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden's family used a Sunday gathering at Camp David to urge him to stay in the race and keep fighting despite his dreadful debate performance, and some members criticized how his staff prepared him for the faceoff, according to four people familiar with the discussions.

Biden spent the day sequestered with first lady Jill Biden, his children and grandchildren. It was a previously scheduled trip to the presidential retreat in Maryland for a photo shoot with Annie Leibovitz for the upcoming Democratic National Convention.

But the gathering was also an exercise in trying to figure out how to quell Democratic anxiety that has exploded following Thursday's performance.

While his family was aware of how poorly he performed against

Donald Trump, they also continue to think he's the best person to beat the Republican presumptive nominee. They also believe he is capable of doing the job of president for another four years, according to the people who were not authorized to speak publicly about internal discussions and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Among the most vocal: Jill Biden and son Hunter, whom the president has long gone to for counsel and advice. Both believe the president shouldn't bow out when he's down, and believe that he can come back from what they see as one subpar performance. The family questioned how he was prepared for the debate by staff and wondered if they could have done something better, the people said.

Biden's campaign has spent the days since the debate — where he

appeared raspy, trailed off, and at times gave convoluted answers — working to keep donors and surrogates on board as Democrats increasingly questioned whether he should stay in the race.

At this point in the delegate process, Biden would likely have to decide to drop out for there to be a new nominee. And the people he listens to most in the world — his wife and son — are telling him to stay in.

Even before the debate, the age of the 81-year-old Democratic president had been a liability with voters, and the prime-time faceoff appeared to reinforce the public's deep-seated concerns before perhaps the largest audience he will have in the four months until Election Day. CNN said more than 51 million people watched the debate.

While the president was huddled with his family, prominent

Democrats rallied to deliver a public show of support for his campaign on Sunday.

Sen. Raphael Warnock, a Georgia Democrat and Baptist minister, said there had been "more than a few Sundays when I wish I had preached a better sermon," relating the experience to Biden's debate performance.

"But after the sermon was over, it was my job to embody the message, to show up for the people that I serve. And that's what Joe Biden has been doing his entire life," Warnock said. It was an echo of the message from other supporters that Biden had a bad debate, but a lifetime of good governance.

But concern simmered among some Democrats that Biden's campaign and the Democratic National Committee were not taking seriously enough the impact of the debate.

GOP women who defied party on abortion voted out of SC Senate

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — The only three Republican women in the South Carolina Senate took on their party and stopped a total abortion ban from passing in their state last year. In return, they lost their jobs.

Voters removed Sens. Sandy Senn, Penry Gustafson and Katrina Shealy from office during primaries in June, and by doing so completely vacated the Republican wing of the five-member "Sister Senators," a female contingent that included two Democrats and was joined in their opposition to the abortion ban.

For Republicans, the departure of Senn, Gustafson and Shealy likely means there will be no women in the majority party of state Senate when the next session starts in 2025. It could also mean that women will not wield power for decades in the fiercely conservative state where they have long struggled to gain entry

into the Legislature.

The sudden departure of the Republican women presents a potential power issue because the Senate doles out clout and responsibility to the majority party based on seniority. Half the members in the GOP dominated state were elected in 2012 or before, so it will likely be the 2040s before any Republican woman elected in the future can rise to leadership or a committee chairmanship.

"Women, somebody else is going to have to stand up. Somebody else is going to have to come and make things right," Senn said in her farewell speech on June 26.

Barring a woman winning in November in a district dominated by the other party, there will be only two women in the 46-member state Senate in January.

Instead of a total ban on abortion, South Carolina ended up with a ban once cardiac activity is detected, typically six weeks into a pregnancy.

US urges Boeing fraud plea over 2 fatal crashes

Associated Press

The U.S. Justice Department is pushing Boeing to plead guilty to criminal fraud in connection with two deadly plane crashes involving its 737 Max jetliners, according to several people who heard federal prosecutors detail a proposed offer Sunday.

Boeing will have until the end of the week to accept or reject the offer, which includes the giant aerospace company agreeing to an independent monitor who would oversee its compliance with anti-fraud laws, they said.

The case stems from the department's determination that Boeing violated an agreement that was intended to resolve a 2021 charge of conspiracy to defraud the U.S. government. Prosecutors alleged at the time that Boeing misled regulators who approved the 737 Max and set pilot-training requirements to fly the plane. The company blamed two

relatively low-level employees for the fraud.

The Justice Department told relatives of some of the 346 people who died in the 2018 and 2019 crashes about the plea offer during a video meeting.

The family members, who want Boeing to face a criminal trial and to pay a \$24.8 billion fine, reacted angrily. One said prosecutors were gaslighting the families; another shouted at them for several minutes when given a chance to speak.

Prosecutors told the families that if Boeing rejects the plea offer, the Justice Department would seek a trial in the matter, meeting participants said.

Justice Department officials presented the offer to Boeing during a meeting later Sunday, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Boeing and the Justice Department declined to comment.

S. Korea suspects North's missile failed

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's military is trying to determine whether another North Korean ballistic missile, one of two launched early Monday, exploded in midflight, according to the country's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

North Korea fired a short-range ballistic missile from Jang-gong county in South Hwanghae province, about 65 miles southwest of Pyongyang, at around 5:05 a.m. Monday, according to a Joint Chiefs' text message the same day.

"We strongly condemn North

Korea's apparent provocation that seriously threatens peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," the Joint Chiefs said.

The short-range ballistic missile flew roughly 370 miles northeast, the Joint Chiefs said. No details were provided on where the missile landed.

North Korea routinely fires missiles eastward that fall into the Sea of Japan, or East Sea.

Ten minutes after the first missile, North Korea fired another unspecified type of ballistic missile from the same county that flew about 75 miles eastward, according to the Joint Chiefs.

The South Korean military is still analyzing the second missile and trying to determine whether it exploded in midair after an abnormal flight, the Joint Chiefs said.

The military was not ruling out other scenarios, including whether the missile landed within North Korea's borders, a South Korean Ministry of National Defense spokesman said in a separate text message to reporters on the customary condition of anonymity.

Details of the missiles are being shared with the United States and Japan's military, the Joint Chiefs said.

North Korea has fired over a dozen ballistic missiles in eight separate days of testing so far this year.

The communist regime claimed it last fired an intermediate-range, solid-fueled ballistic missile with several independently targetable warheads Wednesday, according to its state-run Korean Central News Agency.

KCNA's report said the test was successful; however, South Korea's military said the missile failed and exploded in mid-air.

The tests follow the first large-scale trilateral exercise between the U.S., South Korea and Japan.

Israel frees head of Gaza hospital after 7 months

Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip — Israel released the director of Gaza's main hospital on Monday after holding him for seven months without charge or trial over allegations the facility had been used as a Hamas command center. He said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured.

The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selmia, apparently taken in order to free up space in overcrowded detention centers, sparked uproar from across the political spectrum, with government ministers and opposition leaders saying he should have remained behind bars.

They reiterated allegations that he had played a role in Hamas' alleged use of Shifa Hospital, which Israeli forces have raided twice since the start of the nearly nine-month war with Hamas. Abu Selmia and other health officials have repeatedly denied those accusations, and the fact that he was released without charge or trial was likely to raise further questions about them.

Abu Selmia was released back into Gaza along with 54 other Palestinian detainees, many of whom also alleged abuse. The allegations could not be independently confirmed but matched other accounts of Palestinians who have been held in Israeli custody.

"Our detainees have been subjected to all kinds of torture behind bars," Abu Selmia said at a news conference after his release. "There was almost daily torture." He said guards broke his finger and caused his head to bleed during beatings, in which they used batons and dogs.

He said the medical staff at different facilities where he was held had also taken part in the abuse "in violation of all laws." He said some detainees had limbs amputated because of poor medical care.

There was no immediate response from the prison service, which has previously denied similar accusations.

Israeli forces raided Shifa Hospital in November, alleging that Hamas had created an elaborate command and control center inside the facility.

Hurricane Beryl takes aim at southeastern Caribbean

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — A dangerous and extremely powerful Hurricane Beryl made landfall Monday on the Caribbean island of Carriacou after becoming the earliest storm of Category 4 strength to form in the Atlantic, fueled by record warm waters.

The hurricane had winds up to 150 mph, just shy of a Category 5 storm, as it blew off roofs, uprooted trees and caused other damage on Carriacou, one of the islands of Grenada, and elsewhere in the southeast Caribbean.

"This is an extremely dangerous and life-threatening situation," the National Hurricane Center said. "Take action now to protect your life!"

Hurricane warnings were in effect for Barbados, Grenada, Tobago and St. Vincent and the Grenadines as thousands of people hunkered down in homes and shelters. The last strong hurricane to hit the southeast Caribbean was Hurricane Ivan 20 years ago, which killed dozens of people in Grenada.

NBC Radio in St. Vincent and

the Grenadines said it received reports of roofs being torn off churches and schools as communications began collapsing across the southeast Caribbean.

Late Monday morning, Beryl was located 30 miles northeast of Grenada, with maximum sustained winds of 150 miles per hour, and was moving west-northwest at 20 mph.

Officials in Barbados received more than a dozen reports of roof damage, fallen trees and downed electric posts across the island, said Kerry Hinds, emergency management director.

Once Beryl passes, drones will assess damage and speed up response, said Wilfred Abrahams, minister of home affairs and information. Before, it used to take two hours to receive information as crews fanned out across the island, versus seven minutes with drones, he noted.

A tropical storm warning was in effect for St. Lucia, Martinique and Trinidad. A tropical storm watch was issued for Haiti's entire southern coast, and from Punta Palenque in the Dominican Republic west to the border with Haiti.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Ex-university lab manager convicted in hoax blast

MA BOSTON — A former lab manager at Northeastern University has been convicted of staging a hoax explosion at the Boston campus and then lying about what happened to a federal agent.

Jason Duhaime, 46, from San Antonio, was convicted on three counts by a federal jury. He faces up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 for each offense.

Duhaime worked as the university's new technology manager and director of the Immersive Media Lab. In September 2022, he called the university police to say he'd collected several packages from a mail area, including two Pelican hard plastic cases, and that when he opened one of the cases, it exploded and sharp objects flew out and injured his arms.

But Duhaime's story quickly unraveled, according to the FBI. They didn't find anything in the cases. The FBI said Duhaime had superficial injuries to his arms, but no damage to his shirt sleeves.

Driver sentenced for 8 killed outside shelter

TX BROWNSVILLE — A Texas jury found a driver guilty of intoxication manslaughter over the deaths of eight people who were struck by an SUV that plowed into a crowded bus stop outside a migrant shelter on the U.S.-Mexico border.

George Alvarez, 35, was found guilty of eight counts of intoxication manslaughter. He was also convicted on 10 counts of aggravated assault with a

deadly weapon and sentenced by a judge to serve 60 years in prison.

The jury handed down the punishment more than a year after authorities said Alvarez lost control of the vehicle after running a red light.

Brownsville Police Chief Felix Saucedo said at the time of the crash that the SUV ran a red light, lost control, flipped on its side and hit 18 people. Six people died at the scene and 12 people were critically injured.

Family store perched near damaged dam demolished

MN RAPIDAN — County officials bought and demolished a Minnesota family store that was precariously perched beside a cliff near a flood-damaged dam, officials said.

Blue Earth County bought the Rapidan Dam Store and then removed the structure to lessen the downstream impact if it tumbled into the Blue Earth River, the county said in a statement.

For decades, the Hruska family had operated the store and lived in a nearby house but recent heavy rain caused the river to rise dramatically upstream and cut a channel between the Rapidan Dam and the riverbank. The house collapsed into the river and the river continued to erode the land near the store.

City plans to rein in solar power on vacant lots

MI DETROIT — Detroit is using something it has plenty of — vacant land — to produce something the city needs — clean and relatively inexpensive energy.

The city is looking to build solar energy arrays on about 200 acres. The arrays would produce enough clean energy to offset the electricity used currently by 127 municipal buildings.

Detroit will use \$14 million from an existing utility fund for up-front costs that include acquiring and clearing the land. The solar fields are expected to ultimately save the city \$4.4 million per year.

Over the past year, neighborhood groups held meetings to consider hosting solar fields. Those selected will receive \$15,000 to \$25,000 in community benefits to pay for energy efficiency upgrades. They can choose to use the benefits for new windows, roof repairs, new energy efficient appliances, new furnaces and hot water heaters, better home insulation, smart thermostats, energy-efficient lighting and battery backup for outages.

Agency to prohibit bear baits in national preserves

AK JUNEAU — The National Park Service said it intends to ban hunters from baiting bears in national preserves in Alaska.

The new rule, set to take effect later this summer, would bar sport hunters from using bait, such as bacon grease, pastries, syrup or dog food, to attract bears, the agency said in a statement. Baiting "encourages bears to become conditioned to human-provided food, increasing the likelihood of negative human-bear interactions," the agency said.

The issue has been a subject of intense debate and litigation. Conservation groups in 2020

sued over a Trump administration-era rule that allowed certain hunting practices authorized by the state — including bear baiting — to take place on federally run national preserves.

Feds charge 5 with attempting to bribe juror

MN MINNEAPOLIS — Five people were charged with trying to bribe a juror in one of the country's largest COVID-19-related fraud cases with a bag of \$120,000 in cash, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the FBI announced.

Abdiaziz Shafii Farah, Abdimajid Mohamed Nur, Said Shafii Farah, Abdulkarim Shafii Farah and Ladan Mohamed Ali were each charged with one count of conspiracy to bribe a juror, one count of bribery of a juror and one count of corruptly influencing a juror.

Abdiaziz Shafii Farah was also charged with one count of obstruction of justice.

According to an FBI agent's affidavit, a woman rang the doorbell at the home of "Juror #52" in the Minneapolis suburb of Spring Lake Park the night before the case went to the jury. A relative answered the door and was handed a gift bag with a curly ribbon and images of flowers and butterflies. The woman said it was a "present" for the juror.

"The woman told the relative to tell Juror #52 to say not guilty tomorrow and there would be more of that present tomorrow," the agent wrote. "After the woman left, the relative looked in the gift bag and saw it contained a substantial amount of cash."

— From wire reports

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Biles heads women gymnasts in Paris

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — They all had a reason to come back. Every single one of them.

Simone Biles to move past those wrenching two weeks in Japan three years ago, when the gymnastics superstar prioritized her mental health and safety over glory, a decision that inspired some and maddened others.

Suni Lee to prove — perhaps to herself most of all — that the all-around gold medal she earned while Biles watched from the stands wasn't a fluke.

Jordan Chiles to turn the team silver she helped secure at the 2020 Games into gold.

Jade Carey to be an official member of the five-woman Olympic squad after earning her way to Tokyo as an individual qualifier, a pathway not available to the U.S. this time around and, frankly, one she had no interest in exploring again anyway.

They're all stepping back into the unique spotlight — oh, and 16-year-old newcomer Hezly Rivera, too — only the sport's biggest stage can provide.

Their reasons are deeply personal. Their motivation, however, is not.

"This is definitely our redemption tour," Biles said after sewing up a third trip to the

Olympics by winning the U.S. trials on Sunday night. "I feel like we all have more to give."

Perhaps no one more than Biles, who at 27 is the oldest American woman to make an Olympic gymnastics team since the 1950s. She never expected to still be doing this nearly a decade after becoming a crossover sensation at the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro.

And here she is. Still working. Still pushing. Not to shut up the critics who still flood her mentions on social media wondering if she'll "quit" again, but because she remains determined to extract everything she can out of her remarkable talent.

"Nobody's forcing me to do it," said Biles, who posted a two-day total of 117.225 to claim the all-around by nearly six points over Lee. "I wake up every day and choose to grind in the gym and come out here and perform for myself. Just to remind myself that I can still do it."

And do it at a level that no one else in her sport — and when she's at her best, maybe sports in general — can match.

A trip to France has never really been in doubt since Biles returned from a two-year break last summer. All she's done over the

last 12 months is win a sixth world all-around title and capture her eighth and ninth national championships — both records — while doing the hardest gymnastics of her life.

She will be a prohibitive favorite when she steps onto the Bercy Arena floor, though there is plenty to work on before women's qualifying on July 28. Yet there are things to clean up over the next four weeks.

Biles backpedaled after landing her Yurchenko double pike vault, a testament to both the vault's difficulty and the immense power she generates during a skill few male gymnasts try and even fewer land as cleanly.

She hopped off the beam after failing to land her side aerial, though she wasn't quite as frustrated as she was during a sloppy performance on Friday that left her uttering an expletive for all the world to hear.

Biles finished with a flourish on floor exercise, her signature event. Though there was a small step out of bounds, there was also the unmatched world-class tumbling that recently drew a shoutout from pop star Taylor Swift, whose song "Ready For It" opens Biles' routine.

McLaughlin-Levrone breaks record in 400 hurdles

Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. — For the better part of two years, Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone all but disappeared from the 400-meter hurdles course.

Turns out, she wasn't hiding or looking for something else to do. Just getting better at what she does best.

The 24-year-old Olympic champion lowered the world record for the fifth time Sunday, closing out U.S. Olympic trials with 10 leaps over the barriers, then an all-out sprint toward the finish line in 50.65 seconds. She broke her last record by .03 seconds.

This one came on the last day of trials at Hayward Field. Her first record came back in 2021 — also on the last day of trials and also at Hayward Field.

In fact, this marked the fourth

of her five world records she's set on the track at the University of Oregon, which has hosted the lion's share of American track's greatest moments over the past quarter century.

To say she expected this, though, would not be the case.

"Just shock. Honestly shock," said McLaughlin-Levrone, who covered her mouth in amazement when she crossed and saw the time. "I know when it first came up it said, '50.67.' I was like, 'There's just no way.'"

Then the clock adjusted down two ticks.

"I wasn't expecting that time," she said.

Counting the two preliminary rounds at trials this week, this was only McLaughlin-Levrone's fourth 400-meter hurdles race of the season. Unlike other times when she's taken the

track, there wasn't a huge amount of buzz about her mark of 50.68 — set at world championships in 2022, also here at Hayward — going down this time.

A closer look shows this was all simply part of the plan.

She spent her time working on the shorter hurdles, along with 200- and 400-meter sprints, both of which she had hinted might be in her future as her main event. Really, what all those races were doing were making her better at her main job. All of them are good for speed. The short hurdles helped her master the difficult art of jumping off either foot.

"She ran in Atlanta, and she was having problems attacking the hurdles and getting her steps together" because of all her newfound speed, hurdling

great Edwin Moses said of McLaughlin-Levrone's first 400-hurdles race of 2024. "I told her I'd had similar problems and that her brain just had to catch up with her physicality."

It did, and in an event that used to be decided by steps or slivers, McLaughlin-Levrone's victory came by 1.99 seconds over Anna Cockrell and 2.12 over Jasmine Jones.

The latest record doesn't so much reset the storyline for the Olympics — McLaughlin-Levrone would've been the big-time favorite either way — as it forces track to once again rethink what's possible.

Now, instead of a much-anticipated showdown with Femke Bol of the Netherlands, the conversation will turn to when the 50-second mark might come tumbling down in this race.

Logano gets 1st NASCAR Cup Series win of year

Associated Press

LEBANON, Tenn. — Joey Logano felt he couldn't get to the finish line fast enough with his No. 22 Ford sputtering and nearly out of gas.

First, he had to hold off the driver with the fastest car to win the rain-delayed race that seemingly wouldn't end Sunday night at Nashville Superspeedway in a NASCAR Cup Series-record fifth overtime.

Logano had a pack of pursuers on his bumper and knew he had to make one more move to block Tyler Reddick in Turn 4. Then Logano went "bonkers" after making it over the line first in the Ally 400.

"Definitely as close as you can cut it, for sure," Logano said about stretching his fuel almost to the last drop.

Logano held off Reddick's charge in Turn 1 on the final lap and again in Turn 4. He then beat Zane Smith, Reddick, Ryan Preece and Chris Buescher to the line in the race that started nearly six hours earlier and went 31 laps longer than the 300 that were scheduled.

The fuel light in Logano's Ford came on going into Turn 3 after the engine sputtered on the backstretch, and Logano — who ran the last 110 laps without stopping on the 1.33-mile concrete oval — said it stumbled across the line. All the caution laps helped stretch a tank expected to last 85 laps at best.

"It's a much-needed win for sure," a smiling and relieved Logano said about his first vic-

tory this year and 33rd of his career.

If the finish wasn't thrilling enough, the mayhem continued. Chase Briscoe ran out of fuel. Daniel Suarez and Martin Truex Jr. made contact, spinning Truex into the wall. Chase Elliott spun off Turn 4 and into the grass.

Smith wasn't happy at finishing second, though he said he wouldn't do anything different after the rookie's best Cup finish.

"I felt like I chose the right lane, and it's crazy how much different these cars drive with cleaner air," Smith said. "Just proud of our strategy there."

Reddick was upset with himself on pit road, convinced he let his second victory of the year slip through his fingers.

"All the good cars ran out of fuel, and we were in position to pass the 22," Reddick said about Logano. "He hadn't been good all day long, and I didn't get the job done."

Denny Hamlin, who started on the pole and took the lead with seven laps left in regulation, was two laps from winning when Austin Cindric's crash set up the chaotic finish. Hamlin finished 12th after pitting in overtime to avoid running out of fuel.

"It certainly stinks," Hamlin said,

A thunderstorm that forced NASCAR to halt the race at 137 laps for 1 hour, 21 minutes washed off the traction that had built up. As a result, several cars got loose and crashed into the wall or slid into the grass.

Sources: Big NBA free agents already signing

Associated Press

Paul George is going back to the Eastern Conference, and surely has made Joel Embiid very happy in the process.

George will sign a four-year, \$212 million contract with the Philadelphia 76ers, a person with knowledge of the move told The Associated Press early Monday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal cannot be finalized until July 6 by NBA rule.

The move was finalized a few hours into the start of NBA free agency, but Embiid — Philadelphia's center and the 2022-23 NBA MVP — began planting the seeds for this at least a couple of weeks ago. He and George made a television appearance together during the NBA Finals, one where the Philadelphia center suggested he'd like to see the veteran wing join him with the 76ers.

And it happened. The Los Angeles Clippers, now George's former team, said earlier Sunday night that he would not be back with them going forward — and from there, it was just a matter of the nine-time All-Star working out terms with the 76ers.

"Paul has informed us that he is signing his next contract with another team," the Clippers said in a release.

The team added: "We negotiated for months with Paul and his representative on

a contract that would make sense for both sides, and we were left far apart. The gap was significant. We understand and respect Paul's decision to look elsewhere for his next contract."

George had a \$48.8 million option for this coming season but did not exercise it, entering free agency — which opened Sunday night — instead. It was believed there was a chance George and the Clippers could have still gotten something done, but the team made it clear those hopes are gone.

"We will miss Paul," the Clippers said.

At 34, George is still elite — averaging 22.6 points this past season, the ninth consecutive season in which he has averaged at least 20 points per game.

Meanwhile, James Harden is staying with the Clippers on a two-year contract that includes a player option, a person with knowledge of that decision told AP earlier Sunday.

Harden's deal — which could be worth up to \$70 million if he opts into 2025-26 — was agreed upon in principle before free agency technically started, said the person who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity because neither Harden nor the Clippers had announced the agreement.

Harden, a 10-time NBA All-Star, averaged 16.6 points and 8.5 assists last season for the Clippers, who will move into their

new Intuit Dome home when this coming season starts.

Elsewhere, veteran guard Chris Paul is going to team up with rookie of the year Victor Wembanyama in San Antonio on a one-year deal, a person with knowledge of that agreement said.

Paul was waived earlier Sunday by the Golden State Warriors, who would have had to pay him \$30 million for the coming season otherwise. ESPN reported the Spurs will pay Paul around \$11 million. The 39-year-old Paul averaged 9.2 points and 6.8 assists in 58 games with the Warriors last season.

And Kentavious Caldwell-Pope is going to bring his championship experience to the Orlando Magic, a team that made a big jump this past season and is now trying to become an even stronger contender in the East. A two-time champion guard, Caldwell-Pope was finalizing a three-year, \$66 million deal with the Magic, a person with knowledge of the decision said.

It's a big get for the rising Magic, who won 47 games — their most in 13 years — and got back to the playoffs this past season. Caldwell-Pope was part of title-winning teams with the Los Angeles Lakers in 2020 and the Denver Nuggets in 2023. He averaged 10.1 points for the Nuggets this past season while shooting nearly 41% from 3-point range.

Alcaraz tested by qualifier in Wimbledon opener

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz had goosebumps walking onto Centre Court before his opening match at Wimbledon on Monday, a 7-6 (3), 7-5, 6-2 win over qualifier Mark Lajal.

Lajal proved to be something of a speed bump for Alcaraz, who acknowledged that his 269th-ranked Estonian opponent “surprised me a little bit” on Day 1 at the All England Club.

Alcaraz, who won his third major championship at the French Open three weeks ago, defeated Novak Djokovic in last year’s final on the grass at Wimbledon but said he was

still nervous before Monday’s match.

“When I walk into the court, I got goosebumps. I remembered last year. It was a great feeling,” the 21-year-old Spaniard said in his on-court interview. “But I try not to think about it. It’s a new year — totally different tournament. I have to be focused on my game just to play at the same level as last year if I want to repeat the same (success) as last year.”

Earlier, Aryna Sabalenka and Victoria Azarenka both pulled out of the tournament because of respective shoulder injuries.

Sabalenka, a two-time Australian Open champion, said she was “heartbroken” to an-

nounce her withdrawal after it became clear in a practice session that she wasn’t ready.

The No. 3 seed was seen as top contender at the All England Club, which has had seven different women win the title in the last seven years.

Azarenka is also a two-time champion at Melbourne Park.

Former Grand Slam champion Emma Raducanu survived a tough opening set to beat Renata Zarazua, a “lucky loser” from the qualifying tournament. Her scheduled opponent — 22nd-seeded Ekaterina Alexandrova — withdrew Monday because of illness.

Ninth-seeded Maria Sakkari was among the early winners Monday, and said after beating

McCartney Kessler 6-3, 6-1 that the women’s draw is wide open.

“We could name like 20, 25 girls that could win the tournament right now,” Sakkari said.

Seventh-seeded Jasmine Paolini, the French Open runner-up last month, got past the first round at Wimbledon for the first time on her fourth try. The Italian beat Sara Sorribes Tormo 7-5, 6-3.

On the men’s side, fifth-seeded Daniil Medvedev beat Aleksander Kovacevic 6-3, 6-4, 6-2, and eighth-seeded Casper Ruud defeated Alex Bolt 7-6 (2), 6-4, 6-4. Unseeded Canadian Denis Shapovalov eliminated No. 19 Nicolas Jarry 6-1, 7-5, 6-4.

Rangers’ Langford hits for cycle in win over Orioles

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Texas rookie Wyatt Langford became the first major leaguer to hit for the cycle this season, and the Rangers routed the Baltimore Orioles 11-2 on Sunday night to snap a six-game skid.

Derek Hill homered twice and Andrew Heaney (3-9) struck out 10 in seven innings for the Rangers, who had dropped the first three games of the series to fall nine games under .500. The defending World Series champions never trailed Sunday, scoring multiple runs in the second, fourth, fifth and eighth innings.

Langford tripled in the fourth, doubled in the fifth and singled in the sixth. Then the 22-year-old outfielder hit a drive down the left-field line in the eighth for a three-run homer to make it 11-2.

“I was trying to hit a home run,” Langford said. “It kind of speaks for itself.”

It was the first career four-hit game for Langford, who was drafted last year by the Rangers with the No. 4 overall pick and made a swift rise to the majors

to make Texas’ opening-day roster this season.

Kansas City 6, Guardians 2: Seth Lugo (11-2) struck out 10 in six shutout innings to earn his major league-high 11th win, and Salvador Perez hit a two-run homer as host Kansas City beat Cleveland.

Bobby Witt Jr. had a run-scoring triple among his three hits for the Royals, who took three of four from the AL Central leaders.

Cardinals 2, Reds 0: Lance Lynn (4-3) pitched six shutout innings of two-run ball, and host St. Louis beat Cincinnati for a split of their four-game series.

Pedro Pagés had a career-high three hits for St. Louis.

Astros 10, Mets 5 (11): Houston moved over .500 for the first time this season, beating host New York for its ninth win in 10 games as Jake Myers hit a tiebreaking single in a five-run 11th inning.

Houston star Jose Altuve was ejected in the seventh after he threw his bat and helmet when umpires called him out on what appeared to be a foul ball.

Pirates 4, Braves 2: Oneil

Cruz and Rowdy Tellez each hit a two-run homer in the fifth inning, and visiting Pittsburgh beat Atlanta to avoid a three-game sweep.

Rays 5, Nationals 0: Taj Bradley tied a career high with 11 strikeouts, Isaac Paredes homered and host Tampa Bay beat Washington.

Red Sox 4, Padres 1: Rafael Devers hit a two-run homer, Jarren Duran added a solo shot and host Boston ended San Diego’s five-game winning streak.

Yankees 8, Blue Jays 1: Aaron Judge hit his major league-leading 31st home run, Gerrit Cole pitched five innings for his first win of the season and visiting New York beat Toronto to split their four-game series.

Brewers 7, Cubs 1: Brice Turang hit host his team’s fifth grand slam in its last eight games as part of a seven-run fourth inning, as host Milwaukee rolled past Chicago.

Phillies 7, Marlins 6: Alec Bohm homered, Trea Turner hit a go-ahead, two-run single in the seventh inning and host Philadelphia rallied for a victory over Miami.

Rockies 5, White Sox 4 (14): Ryan McMahon scored on Michael Toggia’s sacrifice fly in the 14th inning, and visiting Colorado stopped a five-game slide by topping Chicago.

Giants 10, Dodgers 4: Matt Chapman homered and drove in three runs, and host San Francisco hit a season-high 10 doubles to rout Los Angeles in front of a sellout crowd of 40,428 at Oracle Park.

Diamondbacks 5, Athletics 1: Brandon Pfaadt pitched six innings of one-run ball and Blaze Alexander hit a two-run single during host Arizona’s three-run seventh inning, helping it beat Oakland.

Tigers 7, Angels 6: Justyn-Henry Malloy hit an inside-the-park homer in the fourth inning, Carson Kelly added a three-run homer and visiting Detroit snapped its four-game losing streak with a victory over Los Angeles.

Twins 5, Mariners 3: Trevor Larnach hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the eighth inning to extend visiting Minnesota’s home run streak to 19 games and lift it to a win over Seattle.