

## Biden planning blitz of public events

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The White House announced Tuesday that President Joe Biden will meet with congressional leaders and Democratic governors, sit for a network TV interview and hold a press conference in the coming days, a blitz designed to push back against growing pressure for the 81-year-old president to step aside in the 2024 race after his disastrous performance in last week's debate with Republican Donald Trump.

"We really want to turn the page on this," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said of the intensifying calls for Biden to bow out of the race. She added that the president had no intention of stepping aside, characterizing his debate failings as simply evidence of "a bad night" when he had a cold.

During a campaign event later Tuesday, Biden blamed it on

jet lag after two back-to-back European trips. "I wasn't very smart. I decided to travel around the world a couple of times," he said. The president added that he "didn't listen to my staff" about travel and joked that he "fell asleep on stage" during the debate.

But Democratic leaders were increasingly signaling that they were not buying White House attempts to brush off Biden's performance in the face-off as a momentary lapse, after he gave halting and nonsensical answers and trailed off at times.

There's growing anxiety among donors and on Capitol Hill about the president's ability to win come November, according to people who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss internal conversations. And it's not helping that Biden has yet to reach out to legislators, who are grow-

ing increasingly frustrated that the White House has not satisfactorily explained how such a seasoned politician could have performed so badly.

Questions swirled about whether this was an isolated incident or part of a pattern. Two people who spend time with Biden behind closed doors described him similarly: He was often very sharp and focused. But he also had moments, particularly later in the evening, when his thoughts seemed jumbled and he'd trail off mid-sentence or seem confused. Those people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss the president's interactions behind closed doors.

Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi told MSNBC that she believes "it is a legitimate question" whether Biden's performance was just "an episode or is this a condition."

"When people ask that question, it's legitimate — of both candidates," Pelosi said.

But she did not go so far as to ask him to step aside. Pelosi said she had not spoken with Biden since the debate, but she emphasized that the president is on "top of his game, in terms of knowing the issues and what is at stake." And a spokesperson later said Pelosi had full confidence in Biden and "looks forward to attending his inauguration on January 20, 2025."

Rep. Lloyd Doggett of Texas became the first Democratic member of Congress to publicly call for Biden to step down. Doggett, who is 77 and has been a fixture on Capitol Hill since the mid-1990s, said Biden should "make the painful and difficult decision" to withdraw, citing the president's inability to "effectively defend his many accomplishments" in the debate.

## Trump looms over cost-sharing talks with S. Korea

**BY DAVID CHOI**  
*Stars and Stripes*

The possibility of a second Donald Trump presidency looms over Seoul as the U.S. and South Korea renegotiate the cost-sharing agreement for stationing 28,500 American troops on the Korean Peninsula, according to experts.

U.S. State Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials last met June 27 in Seoul for the fourth round of talks to determine how much South Korea should spend on American forces in the country, as well as associated construction and civilian labor costs, according to a ministry news release that day.

As president, Trump claimed that maintaining U.S. forces in South Korea costs an annual \$5 billion and accused Seoul of not paying its fair share with just \$500 million a year.

"It's got to go up," Trump said during a Cabinet meeting at the White House on Feb. 12, 2019. "Right now, it costs us \$5 billion a year to defend."

Yang Uk, a research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, described Trump's \$5 billion price tag as "absurd" and that an overwhelming price hike would not be reasonable unless more conventional military or nuclear assets were deployed to South Korea.

"If the main thing is to deter war with North Korea — which is beefing up its tactical nuclear arsenal — you need a much more dedicated nuclear capacity in theater, which [South Korea] does not have right now," Yang said Tuesday.

Since its implementation in 1991, the six-year Special Measures Agreement, has determined how much Seoul would bear these costs; the current SMA expires at the end of 2025.

The previous SMA expired in 2020; however, due to deadlocked negotiations between Washington and Seoul, officials were not able to come to terms until the following year.

The U.S. military budgeted an

annual average \$3.3 billion from 2016 to 2019 to station its forces in South Korea, according to a 2021 U.S. Government Accountability Office report. During the same four-year period, South Korea spent an annual average of \$1.45 billion, much of which went toward relocating the bulk of U.S. military assets from Yongsan Garrison in the capital to Pyeongtaek and Daejeon city, the report said.

Under the SMA, South Korea agreed to spend around \$900 million in 2020 and over \$1 billion the following year. From then on, the cost was raised based on a proportional increase in South Korea's annual defense budget.

# Taxpayers would pay for F-35s damaged while awaiting upgrade

*Bloomberg News*

U.S. taxpayers could be on the hook for millions of dollars in repairs if F-35 fighter jets suffer major weather damage while waiting on a Texas tarmac for a long-delayed software upgrade, according to the Pentagon's contracts oversight agency.

The disclosure from the Defense Contract Management Agency is the latest twist in the saga of the Lockheed Martin fighter jet that's already projected to cost more than \$1.8 trillion over the course of its life cycle, including development, production and sustainment, making it the most expensive weapons system in history.

The "significant liability" stems from a standard clause in military aircraft contracts that limits Lockheed's maximum cost for repairs or replacement to \$100,000 per jet, according to the agency and the Government Accountability Office.

The Pentagon would be re-

sponsible for the rest, up to the full cost of replacing the jets, which were built at a price tag of \$82.5 million to \$109 million each depending on the model.

"This insurance works very similar to commercial auto and aircraft insurance," the contract management agency said in a statement, disclosing the provision for the first time. "Provided the contractor meets the underwriting terms and conditions, then the U.S. will cover the costs over and above the deductible, with a few exceptions."

None of the parked aircraft have been damaged so far, according to the Pentagon's F-35 program office. But summer storms in Fort Worth can produce hail and winds up to 60 miles an hour, according to Jennifer Dunn, a National Weather Service meteorologist. Storms increase in severity in the fall, with hail, damaging winds, tornadoes and flooding more like-

ly, she said.

"If the aircraft is a complete loss, then the U.S. would either cover the cost of a new aircraft or determine not to replace the lost aircraft," the agency said. "Damage caused by tornado, hail and windstorm are covered; however, damage caused by a mechanic is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the task being performed."

The planes are there awaiting the TR-3 hardware and software upgrade, a program that has been dogged by delays and overruns that the government has also had to absorb. The first fully capable jets with the TR-3 upgrade were supposed to be delivered in July 2023, but the program has been plagued by problems with the new software and a new integrated core processor for combat missions.

The TR-3 upgrade is now expected to cost more than double its original \$718 million price tag.

# US Osprey operations resume at Yokota

**BY SETH ROBSON**

*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — CV-22 Osprey aircraft resumed flights from this airlift hub in western Tokyo on Tuesday, 216 days after a crash off Japan's southern coast killed eight airmen.

The return to flight by aircraft from the 21st Special Operations Squadron was announced by the 374th Airlift Wing in a news release that day.

The wing did not specify what type of flight operations the aircraft undertook or how many Ospreys were flown Tuesday.

The U.S. military grounded its fleet of about 400 Ospreys — tiltrotor aircraft that fly like airplanes but take off and land like helicopters — between Dec. 6 and March 8 as it investigated the Nov. 29 crash in southern Japan of a special operations Osprey based at Yokota.

Marine Corps and Navy Ospreys have been flying for months but the fleet will not be permitted to fly its full range of missions until mid-2025, the leader of the aircraft program told House lawmakers last month.

The Marines and Navy described their Ospreys' return to flight as a phased-in approach; the Air Force did likewise.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring the safety of the men and women who operate our aircraft and the safety of our community both on base and in Japan," Lt. Col. Matthew Davis, commander of the 21st Special Operations Squadron, said in the release.

# China, Philippines hold talks to ease tensions after intense clash at sea

*Associated Press*

MANILA, Philippines — China and the Philippines held a crucial meeting Tuesday to try to ease mounting tensions following their worst confrontation in the disputed South China Sea that sparked fears of a wider conflict that could involve the United States.

There was no mention of any major agreement, however, after the daylong meeting in Manila that could prevent a repeat of the June 17 clash at Second Thomas Shoal which

caused injuries to Philippine navy personnel and damaged two military boats.

The shoal off the northwestern Philippines has emerged as the most dangerous flashpoint in the disputed waters, which China claims virtually in its entirety.

Chinese coast guard, navy and suspected militia ships have surrounded the Philippine marines aboard a grounded ship to prevent delivery of food and other supplies to Manila's territorial

outpost.

The Chinese and Philippine delegations "affirmed their commitment to de-escalate tensions without prejudice to their respective positions," the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said in a statement Tuesday night. "There was substantial progress on developing measures to manage the situation at sea, but significant differences remain."

The Chinese government did not immediately issue any statement about the talks.

# LGBTQ+ students' federal protection blocked

*Associated Press*

TOPEKA, Kan. — Enforcement of a federal rule expanding anti-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ students has been blocked in four states and a patchwork of places elsewhere by a federal judge in Kansas.

U.S. District Judge John Broomes suggested in his ruling Tuesday that the Biden administration must now consider whether forcing compliance remains “worth the effort.”

Broomes' decision was the third against the rule from a federal judge in less than three weeks but more sweeping than the others. It applies in Alaska, Kansas, Utah and Wyoming, which sued over the new rule. It also applies to a Stillwater, Okla., middle school that has a student suing over the rule and to members of three groups backing Republican efforts nationwide to roll back LGBTQ+ rights. All of them are involved in one lawsuit.

Broomes, an appointee of former President Donald Trump, directed the three groups — Moms for Liberty, Young America's Foundation and Female Athletes United — to file a list of schools in which their mem-

bers' children are students so that their schools also do not comply with the rule. Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach, a Republican who argued the states' case before Broomes last month, said that could be thousands of schools.

The Biden administration rule is set to take effect in August under the Title IX civil rights law passed in 1972, barring sex discrimination in education. Broomes' order is to remain in effect through a trial of the lawsuit in Kansas, though the judge concluded that the states and three groups are likely to win.

Republicans have argued that the rule represents a ruse by the Biden administration to allow transgender females to play on girls' and women's sports teams, something banned or restricted in Kansas and at least 24 other states. The administration has said it does not apply to athletics. Opponents of the rule have also framed the issue as protecting women and girls' privacy and safety in bathrooms and locker rooms.

“Gender ideology does not belong in public schools and we are glad the courts made the correct call to support parental rights,”

Moms for Liberty co-founders Tina Descovich and Tiffany Justice said in a statement.

LGBTQ+ youth, their parents, health care providers and others say restrictions on transgender youth harms their mental health and makes an often marginalized group even more vulnerable.

The Department of Education did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment Tuesday.

Besides Broomes, two other federal judges issued rulings in mid-June blocking the new rule in 10 other states. The rule would protect LGBTQ+ students by expanding the definition of sexual harassment at schools and colleges and adding safeguards for victims.

Like the other judges, Broomes called the rule arbitrary and concluded that the Department of Education and its secretary, Miguel Cardona, exceeded the authority granted by Title IX. He also concluded that the rule violated the free speech and religious freedom rights of parents and students who reject transgender students' gender identities and want to espouse those views at school or elsewhere in public.

## Ruling protects migrant shelter at the border, accuses Texas of harassment

*Associated Press*

McALLEN, Texas — A judge blasted efforts by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton to shutter one of the oldest and largest migrant shelters on the U.S.-Mexico border in a scathing ruling Tuesday, accusing the Republican of “outrageous” conduct over his claims that the shelter encourages migrants to enter the country illegally.

Judge Francisco X. Dominguez ruled that Paxton's attempts to enforce a subpoena for records of migrants who have been served at Annunciation House in the last few years violated the El Paso shelter's constitutional rights. His ruling prevents Paxton from seeking the records and protects the shelter from what Dominguez called “harassment and overreaching” by Paxton's office.

Paxton's office did not respond to requests for comment, but the state is expected to appeal.

Annunciation House is one of several non-profit groups that help migrants from which Paxton's office has sought information in recent months. Dominguez wrote that he previously expressed concern that Paxton's office had not identified which laws Annunciation

House was allegedly breaking.

“The record before this Court makes clear that the Texas Attorney General's use of the request to examine documents from Annunciation House was a pretext to justify its harassment of Annunciation House employees and the persons seeking refuge,” he wrote.

“In fact, the record before the Court now establishes that the Attorney General was seeking evidence of alleged criminal activity all along,” Dominguez went on to say. “This is outrageous and intolerable.”

Paxton alleged that by providing shelter to migrants regardless of their legal status, Annunciation House was facilitating illegal immigration and human smuggling, and operating a stash house.

State officials visited the El Paso shelter in February demanding access to records — including medical and immigration documents — of migrants who had received services there since 2022. Officials from Annunciation House, a Catholic nonprofit that oversees a network of shelters, said they were willing to comply but needed time to determine what they could legally share without violating their clients' constitutional rights.

## Filings for jobless claims up, as are continuing claims

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits inched up last week and remain historically low, however the total number of people collecting jobless benefits continues to grow.

The Labor Department reported Wednesday that jobless claims for the week ending June 29 rose by 4,000 to 238,000 from 234,000 the previous week.

The total number of Americans collecting unemployment benefits rose for the ninth straight week, to 1.86 million, for the week of June 22. That's the most since November 2021.

Economists say that while the number of new people applying for jobless aid each week remains relatively modest, some who are receiving benefits are finding it harder to land new jobs. That suggests that demand for workers is waning, even as the economy remains strong. That, combined with recent data showing that inflation continues to ease, could point to the so-called “soft-landing” the Federal Reserve was aiming for when it began its campaign to increase interest rates.



# 2 Civil War soldiers to receive Medal of Honor

By MATTHEW ADAMS  
*Stars and Stripes*

ARLINGTON, Va. — Scott and Kimberly Chandler heard family stories growing up about their great-great-grandfather, George Wilson, being a spy.

“Hearing from my mom, it was talked about in hush terms or whispers,” Kimberly Chandler said.

Wilson was born in Belmont County, Ohio, in 1830. He was a tradesman who supported his family as a journeyman shoemaker, according to the Army. Wilson enlisted in the Union Army’s 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment on Aug. 31, 1861.

Philip Shadrach enlisted into the same regiment the following month. He was born in Somerset County, Pa., in 1840, and left orphaned at an early age. Less is known of Shadrach’s work, other than he was a “laborer.” But on Sept. 20, 1861, he left home and enlisted, according to the service.

The two men eventually vol-

unteered for the same mission and experienced the same fate.

Pvts. Wilson and Shadrach will be awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously Wednesday, becoming the last members of a unit known as Andrews’ Raiders to be recognized with the nation’s highest decoration for combat valor.

In one of the earliest special operations in Army history, Union soldiers dressed as civilians to infiltrate the Confederacy, hijack a train and drive it north for 87 miles, destroying enemy infrastructure along the way. As a result of what became known as the Great Locomotive Chase, six of the Union soldiers became the Army’s first recipients of the newly created Medal of Honor, according to the service.

The plan for the Great Locomotive Chase was hatched by James Andrews, a Kentucky-born civilian who served as a spy and scout. He proposed a group of volunteers penetrate the Confederacy with the aim of degrading the railway and com-

munication lines that supported the South’s stronghold of Chattanooga, Tenn.

Andrews, another civilian and 22 volunteer Union soldiers, who later became known as Andrews’ Raiders, made their rendezvous point in Marietta, Ga.

Shane Makowicki, a historian with the U.S. Army Center of Military History, said the plan was hatched April 6, 1862. Wilson, Shadrach and the other soldiers volunteered one day later. They made it to Marietta on April 11.

On April 12, 22 of them commandeered a locomotive known as the General and proceeded north, tearing up railroad tracks and cutting telegraph wires as they went along. The General’s conductor, William Fuller, and two others began chasing the raiders — first on foot, then by a handcar, according to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

Andrews’ efforts driving the General were slowed by their sabotage efforts and because he

needed to permit oncoming trains to pass on the single-track railway. This allowed Fuller’s party to gain on the Union force. Running low on fuel and with the Texas, a locomotive commandeered by Fuller, on their heels, Andrews’ Raiders abandoned their effort just 18 miles short of Chattanooga.

After it became clear the mission failed, Shadrach and Wilson along with several others attempted to evade Confederate troops and escape. Some including Shadrach and Wilson were eventually captured.

“The event, if it would have been successful and cut off Chattanooga from Confederate supplies, it could have shortened the war by a year, year and half, two years,” author and historian Brad Quinlin told reporters Tuesday.

Andrews was tried as a spy and saboteur and executed on June 7, 1862. Seven others were subsequently hanged, including Shadrach and Wilson, on June 18.

## Officials plan to cull barred owls to save spotted owls

*Associated Press*

To save the imperiled spotted owl from potential extinction, U.S. wildlife officials are embracing a contentious plan to deploy trained shooters into dense West Coast forests to kill almost a half-million barred owls that are crowding out their smaller cousins.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Wednesday was expected to release its final plan to prop up declining spotted owl populations in Oregon, Washington state and California. The Associated Press obtained details in advance.

The plan calls for killing up to 470,000 barred owls over three decades after the birds from the

eastern U.S. encroached into the territory of two West Coast owls: northern spotted owls and California spotted owls. The smaller spotted owls have been unable to compete for food and habitat.

Past efforts to save spotted owls focused on protecting the forests where they live. But the proliferation of barred owls in recent years is undermining that earlier work, officials said.

“We’re at a crossroads. We have the science that indicates what we need to do to conserve the spotted owls, and that requires that we take action on the barred owls,” said Bridget Moran, a deputy state supervisor for the Fish and Wildlife Service in Oregon.

## Heat warnings affect nearly 90M in West, south-central US

*Associated Press*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Swaths of California sweltered Tuesday and things were only expected to get worse during the Fourth of July holiday week for parts of the United States, with nearly 90 million people under heat alerts.

The torrid conditions were being caused by a ridge of high pressure just off the West Coast and a separate ridge that spawned heat warnings and advisories from Kansas and Missouri to the Gulf Coast states, according to the National Weather Service.

California’s capital, Sacramento, was under an excessive heat warning expected to last until Sunday night, with

temperatures forecasted to reach between 105 degrees and 115 degrees.

About 70 miles north of Sacramento, crews working in scorching conditions were battling a wildfire in Butte County that forced the evacuation of about 13,000 people in and around Oroville. The blaze, dubbed the Thompson Fire, broke out before noon and sent up a huge plume of smoke as it swiftly grew to more than 3 square miles by evening, with zero containment.

Firefighters lined roads, trying to keep the flames from reaching homes as helicopters dropped water on the fast-moving blaze.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### 2 arrested near Oprah's ranch for illegal hunting

**H** KULA — Two men arrested last month on a public road within Oprah Winfrey's property on the Hawaiian island of Maui are suspected of illegal night hunting, state officials said Monday.

The two Maui men, both 19, were arrested just before midnight on June 21 after officers found them using a hunting spotlight on a public road that runs through Winfrey's ranch in Kula, the state Department of Land and Natural Resources said in a news release.

While they were not caught actively hunting, officers found a loaded shotgun and a loaded rifle in the pair's truck, and Winfrey's ranch surrounds the road where they were stopped, the state said.

The men were arrested on suspicion of hunting on private lands without permission, not having a hunting license and other violations. One of them was also arrested for an unregistered semi-automatic rifle.

### Man who confessed to killing 4 gets life in prison

**ME** WEST BATH — A man who confessed to killing his parents and two of their friends as well as wounding three people in a highway shooting pleaded guilty to murder and other charges on Monday, and a judge sentenced him to the maximum term of life in prison.

Joseph Eaton never provided a reason to law enforcement officials for the violent crimes he admitted committing in Maine last year, and he had no explanation for the victims' families and

friends who spoke in court.

Law enforcement officials say Eaton, now 35, confessed to fatally shooting his parents, David Eaton, 66, and Cynthia Eaton, 62; Patti Eger, 62; and Eger's husband, Robert Eger, 72. Also killed was the Egers' dog, which led authorities to add animal cruelty to the list of charges against Joseph Eaton. The shootings took place at the Egers' home in the rural town of Bowdoin. Eaton also confessed to shooting at vehicles on Interstate 295 in Yarmouth.

All told, Eaton pleaded guilty to more than a dozen charges, including four counts of murder, and aggravated attempted murder. He received the maximum penalty for each of them.

### Union sues over full time office work requirement

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — A union that represents thousands of Philadelphia city employees asked a judge Tuesday to block Mayor Chelle Parker's requirement that they return to their offices full time as of July 15.

The lawsuit, filed by District Council 47 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, claims the mandate violates its contract and will harm city workers. The union, which represents 6,000 administrative and supervisory employees, also filed an unfair-practices complaint with the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board.

Parker announced the mandate in May, saying she wanted to create a more visible and accessible government. The decision ended the city's virtual work policy, put in place in 2021, and es-

entially returns employee scheduling to what it was before the coronavirus pandemic.

About 80% of the city's 26,000 employees have been working fully on site since last year, while the rest have worked on site 31 to 75 hours per pay period, Parker said. Former Mayor Jim Kenney had left hybrid work decisions up to department heads.

### More evaluation ordered for stabbing suspect

**MA** PLYMOUTH — A Massachusetts individual charged with assault with intent to murder after six people, including four girls at a movie theater, were stabbed and wounded in separate attacks, has been re-committed to Bridgewater State Hospital for further evaluation on criminal responsibility.

A judge ordered the extended evaluation after Jared Ravizza, 26, of Chilmark, a town on Martha's Vineyard, appeared in Plymouth District Court on Monday.

Ravizza was arraigned in May in connection with the stabbings of two employees at a McDonald's in Plymouth.

Ravizza has also been charged with eight counts of assault in connection with the stabbings of the four girls, ages 9 to 17, at the movie theater in Braintree on May 25.

### 6 teens charged as adults in rape take plea deals

**SD** RAPID CITY — Six teenage players from a South Dakota American Legion baseball team who were charged as adults in a rape case last summer have reached plea deals.

Three players from the Mitchell-based team pleaded guilty last month to being an accessory to a felony, and three others entered the same plea Monday, KELO-TV reported. All six players could face up to five years in prison at sentencing next month.

The players, who were 17 to 19 years old when a grand jury indicted them, were originally charged with second-degree rape and aiding and abetting second-degree rape.

South Dakota law requires minors ages 16 and older who are charged with such felonies to be tried as adults, although the minors can attempt to have their cases moved to juvenile court, prosecutors said.

### Groom shot in head at backyard wedding

**MO** ST. LOUIS — A St. Louis man remained hospitalized in critical condition Monday after being shot in the head by a masked gunman during his Friday night wedding reception.

Police said two masked gunmen entered the St. Louis backyard of the bride, Dulce Gonzalez, early Saturday as guests continued celebrating the couple's small home wedding, KSDK-TV reported Monday.

Her sister, Yaribeth Peña, told the station that two men wearing ski masks ordered guests not to move.

Police told the station that one gunman stood behind the groom, 32-year-old Manuel Gonzalez, as the other rifled through guests' pockets. Then one of the gunmen shot the groom in the head before they both fled.

— From wire reports

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# Gauff, Alcaraz through to third round

Associated Press

LONDON — Coco Gauff likes No. 1 Court at Wimbledon.

It's where she beat Venus Williams back in 2019 when Gauff made her Wimbledon debut at age 15.

On Wednesday, Gauff beat qualifier Anca Todoni 6-2, 6-1 to advance to the third round at the All England Club.

"This is the court where I first started here at Wimbledon. Court 1 is always a special place for me to play on," the 20-year-old Gauff said in her on-court interview.

The victory also allows Gauff, the No. 2 seed, to move another step away from last year's first-round exit.

"Overall, I just learned about life a lot," the U.S. Open champion said when asked about putting that three-set loss to Sofia Kenin behind her.

"I just realized that, yes, what I do I'm very passionate about,

but it's not ever that serious and sometimes the world can make you feel like there's so much pressure, there's so much expectation," she said. "At the end of the (day), it's a game. It's sport."

The 19-year-old Todoni is from Romania and was making her Grand Slam debut.

"I do think I could have played cleaner at some moments," Gauff said.

Five years ago, Gauff beat Williams — a five-time Wimbledon champion — 6-4, 6-4 in the first round and eventually reached the last 16, all in her Grand Slam debut.

Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz trailed 6-5 in the first set before coming back to beat Aleksander Vukic 7-6 (5), 6-2, 6-2, setting up a third-round meeting with No. 29 Frances Tiafoe after the American eliminated Borna Coric 7-6 (5), 6-1, 6-3.

When told by the on-court interviewer that Tiafoe said he's "coming after you," the 21-year-old Spaniard replied with a smile: "I'm going for him."

"We played a really good match in the U.S. Open," the No. 3 seed said of their 2022 semifinal that Alcaraz won at Flushing Meadows.

In other results, four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka was eliminated in the second round by No. 19 Emma Navarro by a score of 6-4, 6-1.

No. 11 Danielle Collins completed her first-round match — a 6-3, 7-6 (4) win over Clara Tauson. It had been suspended Tuesday night in the second set.

No. 20 Beatriz Haddad Maia advanced to the third round by beating Magdalena Frech 7-5, 6-3.

On the men's side, No. 16 Ugo Humbert eliminated Botić van de Zandschulp 7-6 (9), 6-1, 6-3.

Also Wednesday, tournament

organizers announced that Andy Murray and Emma Raducanu will team up in mixed doubles, a pairing of the two biggest stars of British tennis.

The 37-year-old Murray owns three Grand Slam titles, including from the All England Club in 2013 and 2016. The 21-year-old Raducanu won the 2021 U.S. Open at age 18 and became the first qualifier to claim a major trophy.

Murray withdrew from singles at Wimbledon on Tuesday, a little more than a week after having surgery to remove a cyst from his spine. He is also entered in men's doubles with his older brother, Jamie.

Murray has said this will be his final appearance at the tournament. He is planning to retire after the Paris Olympics, which start later this month.

The All England Club awarded a wild-card entry to Murray and Raducanu on Wednesday.

# Cavendish breaks Merckx's record for stage victories

Associated Press

SAINT-VULBAS, France — Mark Cavendish wrote a new chapter of Tour de France history in what is expected to be his last appearance at cycling's biggest race.

The veteran Isle of Man sprinter broke Eddy Merckx's longstanding record for most career Tour de France stage wins with his 35th victory on Wednesday.

The 39-year-old Cavendish sprinted for the win in the fifth stage of the Tour, pulling away some 100 meters from the line despite being bunched in. He crossed the line ahead of Jasper Philipsen and then jumped into the arms of a teammate.

Two-time champion Tadej Pogacar retained the race leader's yellow jersey, but the day belonged to Cavendish.

He equaled Merckx's mark of

34 wins during the 2021 Tour and went close to No. 35 in the seventh stage last year when he was narrowly beaten to the line by Philipsen. He then crashed a day later and broke his right collarbone.

Merckx, the Belgian considered the most dominant rider in cycling history, won his 34 individual stages at the Tour from 1969-75.

Cavendish's decision to give it one more shot paid off.

"I just wanted to get the run-in to do it. I'm a little bit in disbelief. Astana put a big gamble on this year to make sure we're good at the Tour de France," Cavendish said. "We've done it."

With his 2023 race ending early, Cavendish decided to put off retirement by a year and came back to try again.

Finally, Cavendish made cycling history — 16 years after

winning his first Tour stage back in 2008.

Other riders were happy for Cavendish, with several stopping to speak with or hug him after the 110-mile leg from Saint-Jean-De-Maurienne to Saint-Vulbas.

Merckx amassed his wins in the 1960s and 70s, an era during which his domination was such that he earned the nickname "The Cannibal." Unlike Merckx, who won a record five Tours, Cavendish, who specializes in the sprints, has never won the overall title.

But Cavendish's speed, prowess and longevity among his fellow sprinters have no equal at the Tour.

Cavendish won the Tour de France best sprinter's green jersey twice. He also has won stages at all three Grand Tours — Tour de France, Giro d'Italia,

Spanish Vuelta — and became a world champion in 2011.

Cavendish joined Astana after his contract with Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl expired and he was overlooked for the 2022 edition of the Tour.

Cavendish had faced a difficult opening three stages of the Tour. During the first stage, he appeared to struggle with stomach and heat issues.

But that hadn't damaged his confidence.

"I know how it works, my trainer and everyone around me knows how it is. If everybody knew how it was, everyone would be a bike rider and my job would be a lot harder," Cavendish said Wednesday. "I've done 15 Tours de France. I don't like to have bad days, I don't like to suffer but I know it's just in the head and to push through it."



# Clark, Reese head WNBA All-Star team

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Caitlin Clark and Angel Reese will team up on the WNBA All-Star team to play against the U.S. Olympic team led by A'ja Wilson and Breanna Stewart.

The pair of remarkable rookies were selected Tuesday by a combination of votes from the media, players and fans as well as the league's 12 coaches to play in the game in Phoenix on July 20. It's the 20th All-Star Game in the league's history.

"I don't think I've ever been her teammate before, even at USA Basketball. I know people will be really excited about it, but I hope it doesn't take away from everyone else," Clark said. "This is a huge accomplishment for everybody on Team USA and everyone on Team WNBA. They all deserve the same praise. I don't want it to take away from any of that and be the focal point of All-Star weekend because that's not fair to them."

Clark was the leading vote-getter from the fans, receiving 700,735 with her Indiana teammate Aliyah Boston finishing second 72,000 votes behind. Reese was fifth with 381,518 votes. Wilson and Stewart were third and fourth. Wilson garnered 607,300 votes and Stewart had 424,135.

Clark and Reese have been a boon for the WNBA in ratings, merchandise sales and attendance. They are also playing well on the court with Clark third in assists with 6.9 and Reese leading the WNBA in rebounds at 11.4.

"They just told me I'm an All-Star. I'm just so happy," an emotional Reese said after her Sky beat the Atlanta Dream. "I know the work I've put in. Coming into this league so many people doubted me and didn't think my game would translate and I wouldn't be the player I was in college, or better, or would be worse, or wouldn't be where I

am right now. But I trust the process and I'm thankful I dropped to No. 7 (pick in the draft) and was able to come to Chicago."

It's the eighth time that two rookies have been on the team. The last was Shoni Schimmel and Chiney Ogumike in 2014.

Joining the rookies on the WNBA team were DeWanna Bonner and Brionna Jones of Connecticut, Allisha Gray of Atlanta, Dearica Hamby of Los Angeles, Jonquel Jones of New York, Kayla McBride of Minnesota, Kelsey Mitchell of Indiana, Nneka Ogumike of Seattle and Arike Ogunbowale of Dallas.

Ogunbowale was the MVP of the 2021 All-Star Game, which featured the same format of the U.S. team playing a league All-Star team. The WNBA team won that game.

"She's had an incredible season to this point," Minnesota coach Cheryl Reeve said of McBride. "She's doing every-

thing for us, so deserving of this All-Star nod."

The U.S. team, which will be going for an eighth consecutive Olympic gold medal in Paris later this month, also features Brittney Griner and Diana Taurasi. The pair of Phoenix players will get a chance to play in front of their home crowd in the exhibition game. Taurasi will be vying for a record sixth Olympic gold medal.

Three of Wilson's Las Vegas teammates — Chelsea Gray, Kelsey Plum and Jackie Young — are on the U.S. team. Gray was on the Tokyo Olympic squad while Plum and Young both helped the Americans win the inaugural 3-on-3 gold medal.

Other returners from the Tokyo Games include Napheesa Collier and Jewell Loyd. Several first-time Olympians will join the team with Alyssa Thomas, Sabrina Ionescu and Kahleah Copper.

## Calls growing for US men's soccer coach to step down

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jürgen Klopp, Thierry Henry and Marcelo Bielsa are among those being speculated about as candidates to take over from Gregg Berhalter as U.S. coach ahead of the 2026 World Cup.

Jesse Marsch, Hugo Pérez, Pellegrino Matarazzo and David Wagner could be considered if Berhalter is fired or quits. Among high-level European club coaches, Massimiliano Allegri and Mauricio Pochettino also are available.

Berhalter remained as coach Tuesday, a day after the U.S. was eliminated from the Copa America in the first round with a 1-0 loss to Uruguay. He has a contract through the 2026 tournament, which will be co-hosted by the U.S., but has lost the support of a significant portion of the fan base.

"I don't think anybody would bat an eye. Most teams and federations, it would be a fait accompli," former U.S. defender Alexi Lalas, now Fox's lead soccer analyst, said Tuesday. "At a time where we need to be energized and excited about the leadership going into the next two years, I think we

find ourselves questioning and negative and cynical and divided, let's be honest, relative to what can be in 2026."

Some aren't convinced the USSF will force out Berhalter, given the length of time it took to make decisions the last two times the job was open.

"If this were any other country, I think the decision would probably have been a lot easier, but I think they're going to be reluctant to make any changes, at least anytime soon," said Tony Meola, the starting goalkeeper at the 1990 and 1994 World Cups.

Kasey Keller, the goalkeeper in 1998 and 2006, said a top European manager would force the U.S. to increase the salary of newly hired women's coach Emma Hayes.

"It's not that simple because of what the federation has done and the decisions they've made on how they're going to implement budgets for the men and the women," said Keller, now an ESPN analyst. "When the fan base starts talking about managers that are available, you can't not separate budgetary constraints — Well, I want Taylor Swift to play at my birthday

party, but I have a budget of 100 grand. Well, it's not going to work out for you. Sorry. ...

"Emma Hayes is thinking, oh God, this is the best thing that's ever happened to me. Please, fan base, keep yelling and yelling and yelling to go sign somebody for \$6 million."

Led by Christian Pulisic, Tyler Adams and Weston McKennie, the current player pool has the most illustrious pedigree in American soccer history. In last month's friendly against Colombia, for the first time all 11 starters played for clubs in England, Germany, Italy, Spain and France.

Yet, the team has seven wins, six losses and one draw since Berhalter returned to the bench last September.

Matt Crocker was hired as USSF sporting director in April 2023 and made last year's decision to bring back Berhalter. He again would lead a search.

"Matt Crocker, this is on him in that he's hired Gregg, and so if there is a problem it means admitting not just a mistake but a colossal mistake," Lalas said.

# Naylor walks off White Sox in Guardians' win

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Pinch-hitter Bo Naylor delivered a sacrifice fly to center field with one out in the ninth inning, sending the Cleveland Guardians to a 7-6 win over the Chicago White Sox on Tuesday night.

Andrés Giménez opened the inning with a single off Michael Kopech (2-7), went to second on a groundout and took third on a wild pitch by the right-hander, who snagged his cleat on the mound while making his delivery.

Naylor, who has bumped his average over .200 by hitting .304 in his last 15 games, then lifted a 3-2 pitch deep enough to score Giménez as center fielder Luis Robert Jr., playing more shallow than usual, didn't bother making a throw home.

Naylor said he wasn't surprised Robert didn't try to get Giménez.

"A guy like Gimi with elite speed, it's definitely going to be a tough play," said Naylor, who had a walk-off hit against the White Sox earlier this season. "But I knew that once I got it up there, I had all the confidence in my guy to make it there."

Robert, who hit a two-run homer and drove in four runs, said he had no chance of getting Giménez.

White Sox manager Pedro Grifol, who was ejected in the seventh for arguing, defended Robert's decision not to make a throw.

"He's playing in. He going

back," said Grifol. "Even if he runs back and comes in, there's no play there. If we're going to dissect that, we're making something out of nothing. You're not going to throw that guy out from there."

Rookie Daniel Schneemann and Tyler Freeman hit two-run homers for the Guardians, who won their sixth straight at Progressive Field and improved MLB's best home record to 27-9 — matching the 1938 club for the best start after 36 games.

**Mets 7, Nationals 2 (10):** Brandon Nimmo had two RBIs and visiting New York beat Washington for its second consecutive extra-innings victory.

As part of a five-run 10th, José Iglesias doubled to put the Mets ahead. Brandon Nimmo, who cut his forehead when he fainted and fell Sunday night, also doubled and Pete Alonso crushed his 18th homer.

**Cardinals 7, Pirates 4:** Nolan Gorman hit his second career grand slam, and visiting St. Louis beat Pittsburgh.

Matt Carpenter dropped a soft single into left to load the bases with no outs in the fourth inning. Gorman followed with his 17th homer of the season, a 415-foot drive to left-center on a 1-2 sweeper from Mitch Keller (9-5).

**Blue Jays 7, Astros 6:** George Springer hit a three-run home run against his former team, Spencer Horwitz added a solo homer and host Toronto held on to beat Houston.

Yordan Alvarez homered and scored twice as Houston almost came back from a 7-0 deficit, but the Astros lost for just the second time in their last 12 games.

**Phillies 6, Cubs 4:** Trea Turner hit two long home runs, and major league-leading Philadelphia hung on to beat struggling Chicago.

The visiting Phillies were rolling along with a 6-1 lead before the Cubs made things interesting in the ninth. José Ruiz quickly gave up a three-run homer to Seiya Suzuki before Jeff Hoffman came in. Hoffman then got two strikeouts before retiring Dansby Swanson on a line drive to right for his seventh save.

**Red Sox 8, Marlins 3:** Kutter Crawford (4-7) gave up three hits and one run with seven strikeouts over six solid innings, Ceddanne Rafaela and Jarren Duran homered and visiting Boston beat Miami.

**Reds 5, Yankees 4:** Elly De La Cruz tripled and homered in his first game at Yankee Stadium, helping visiting Cincinnati overcome Aaron Judge's major league-leading 32nd home run in a victory over New York.

**Twins 5, Tigers 3:** Manny Margot and Carlos Correa went deep to keep their team's club-record home run streak going at 20 games, and host Minnesota beat Detroit.

**Giants 5, Braves 3:** Jorge Soler and LaMonte Wade Jr. hit back-to-back homers to help

visiting San Francisco beat Atlanta.

**Rangers 7, Padres 0:** Nathaniel Lowe hit a pair of two-run homers, Nathan Eovaldi (5-3) allowed one hit over seven innings and host Texas beat San Diego to end its 11-game losing streak in the series.

**Brewers 4, Rockies 3:** Willy Adames hit a tying sacrifice fly in the ninth inning, Rhys Hoskins was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded to score the go-ahead run and visiting Milwaukee rallied past Colorado.

**Athletics 7, Angels 5:** Lawrence Butler and Brent Rooker hit home runs, Mitch Spence gave up one hit over 5½ innings, and host Oakland beat Los Angeles.

**Orioles 2, Mariners 0:** Grayson Rodriguez allowed just two hits over 6½ shutout innings, and Anthony Santander drove in the go-ahead run with a fourth-inning RBI single as visiting Baltimore beat Seattle.

**Rays 5, Royals 1:** Zack Littell pitched five innings of four-hit ball before rain arrived, four relievers allowed one run the rest of the way once play resumed, and visiting Tampa Bay beat Kansas City in a game that ended just after midnight Wednesday after a 2½-hour delay.

**Dodgers 6, Diamondbacks 5:** Teoscar Hernández singled in the winning run in the ninth inning for his third RBI of the game, and host Los Angeles beat Arizona.

## Ohtani won't participate in Home Run Derby

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Shohei Ohtani won't participate in the Home Run Derby on July 15 despite the Japanese superstar ranking second in the majors with 27 homers for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Ohtani has taken part in the Derby just once, exiting in the first round in 2021 at Coors Field in Denver. This year's event is at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas.

"I'm in the middle of my rehab progression, so it's not going to look like I'll be participating," he said through a translator on Tuesday night.

Ohtani is only hitting, not pitching, this season as he recovers from an injured elbow ligament. He had a procedure in September before agreeing to a \$700 million, 10-year deal with the Dodgers in December.

"He signed up here to help us win a championship and nothing should get in the way of that," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said.

"In any other normal situation where he wasn't rehabbing, I think he would love to participate. I know that it's weighed heavy on him, but I do think the rehab process is something that ultimately makes him feel better about bowing out," Roberts said.