

Israel conducts raid in West Bank city

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Palestinian authorities say seven people were killed Friday during an Israeli military operation in the area of the West Bank city of Jenin, where the Israeli military said it had been carrying out “counterterrorism activity” that included an airstrike.

The military said Israeli soldiers had “encircled a building where terrorists have barricaded themselves in” and the soldiers had exchanged fire with those inside, while an airstrike had “struck several armed terrorists” in the area.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said seven had been killed, but did not specify whether they died in the exchange of fire or the airstrike. The Islamic Jihad militant group named four of the dead as its members.

The clashes in Jenin, a known militant stronghold where the army frequently operates, came a day after an Israeli anti-settlement monitoring group said the government plans to build nearly 5,300 new homes in settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The construction plans revealed by the Peace Now group are part of the hard-line government’s efforts to beef up settlements as part of a strategy of cementing Israel’s control over the West Bank to prevent a future Palestinian state. The Palestinians seek the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza — areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war — for an independent state.

Violence has spiraled in the West Bank since the start of Israel’s war in Gaza, sparked by

the Oct. 7 raid into southern Israel by Hamas militants who killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took more than 200 others as hostages. The Palestinian Health Ministry says more than 500 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank since the start of the war. Most have been killed during Israeli raids and violent protests.

The dead also include bystanders and Palestinians killed in attacks by Jewish settlers.

In Gaza, the war has so far killed more than 38,000 Palestinians, Gaza’s Health Ministry says. The ministry does not differentiate between combatants and civilians in its count, but it includes thousands of women and children.

Cease-fire talks appeared to be reviving after stalling for

weeks. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office said Thursday he was sending negotiators to resume the talks, a day after Hamas handed mediators its latest response to a U.S.-backed proposal for a deal.

The revival of negotiations appeared to mark another attempt by U.S., Qatari and Egyptian mediators to overcome the gap that has repeatedly thwarted a deal over the past months. Hamas wants an agreement that ensures Israeli troops fully leave Gaza and the war ends, while Netanyahu says the war cannot end before Hamas is eliminated.

Israeli negotiators are expected to arrive in Doha, Qatar’s capital, for the talks as early as Friday, with American, Egyptian and Qatari officials present.

Iran holds runoff vote pitting hard-liner and reformist

Associate Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran was holding a runoff presidential election Friday pitting a hard-line former nuclear negotiator against a reformist lawmaker, though both men earlier struggled to convince a skeptical public to cast ballots in the first round that saw the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic’s history.

Government officials up to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei predicted a higher participation rate as voting took place, with state television airing images of modest lines at some polling centers across the country. However, online videos purported to show some polls empty while a survey of several dozen sites in the capi-

tal, Tehran, saw light traffic amid a heavy security presence on the streets.

Khamenei has insisted the low turnout from the first round on June 28 didn’t represent a referendum on Iran’s Shiite theocracy. However, many remain disillusioned as Iran has been beset by years under crushing economic sanctions, bloody security force crackdowns on mass protests and tensions with the West over Tehran’s advancing nuclear program enriching uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

“I want to save the country from isolation we are stuck in, and from lies and the violence against women because Iranian women don’t deserve to be beaten up and insulted on the street

by extremists who want to destroy the country by cutting ties with big countries,” voter Ghazal Bakhtiari said. “We should have ties with America and powerful nations.”

The race pits former negotiator Saeed Jalili against reformist Masoud Pezeshkian. Jalili has had a recalcitrant reputation among Western diplomats during negotiations over Iran’s nuclear program, something that is paired with concern at home over his hard-line views on Iran’s mandatory headscarf, or hijab.

Pezeshkian, a heart surgeon, has campaigned on relaxing hijab enforcement and reaching out to the West, though he too for decades has supported Khamenei and Iran’s paramilitary

Revolutionary Guard.

Pezeshkian’s supporters have been warning Jalili will bring a “Taliban”-style government into Tehran, while Jalili has criticized Pezeshkian for running a campaign of fear-mongering.

Both contenders voted Friday in southern Tehran, home to many poor neighborhoods. Though Pezeshkian came out on top in the first round of voting on June 28, Jalili has been trying to secure the votes of people who supported hard-line parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, who came in third and later endorsed the former negotiator.

Pezeshkian offered no comments after voting, walking out with former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

Biden scrambles to save his reelection

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden is fighting to save his endangered reelection effort Friday as he holds a rally and sits down for a network television interview in a pivotal battleground state, with his every answer sure to be scrutinized for evidence of his competency and fitness to run for office.

It could be a watershed moment for Biden, who is under pressure to bow out of the campaign after his disastrous debate performance against Republican Donald Trump ignited concern that the 81-year-old Democrat is not up for the job for another four years.

The interview with ABC's George Stephanopoulos, being taped after a campaign rally in Madison, Wis., is expected to be intensive and probing, and two people familiar with the president's efforts said he had been preparing aggressively. They spoke on condition of anonymity

to discuss internal planning.

There was broad agreement that Biden cannot afford to have another "bad day," which is how he wrote off his debate flop. It was not clear that even a so-so performance would be enough to satisfy concerns about his fitness to serve.

While private angst among Democratic lawmakers, donors and strategists is running deep after Biden's damaging debate performance, most in the party have held public fire as they wait to see if the president can restore some confidence with his weekend travel schedule and his handling of the Stephanopoulos interview.

It will air in full on ABC on Friday night.

Biden's reelection campaign is pushing ahead with aggressive plans despite the uncertainty.

It plans to pair his in-person events with a fresh \$50 million ad campaign this month meant

to capitalize on high viewership moments like the Summer Olympics that begin in Paris on July 26.

Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, first lady Jill Biden and second gentleman Doug Emhoff are scheduled to travel to every battleground state this month, while organizers are planning to knock on more than 3 million doors in July and August to do personal outreach to voters in a new \$17 million effort.

Biden is scheduled to campaign in Pennsylvania on Sunday. He will also travel to southwestern states, including Nevada, after hosting the NATO summit in Washington next week, the campaign said Friday.

He'll also continue to focus his travel on the so-called "blue wall" states — Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan — that have been critical for him in the past.

In a strategy memo released

Friday morning, the campaign also specifically emphasized that the Biden would participate in "frequent off-the-cuff moments" — once a hallmark of the gregarious, glad-handling politician's career that have nonetheless dwindled throughout his presidency.

For Biden, every moment now is critical to restoring the lost confidence stemming from his shaky performance in Atlanta last week. Yet the president continued to make slipups that did not help that effort.

During an interview with WURD radio in Philadelphia that aired Thursday, Biden tripped up and said "I'm proud to be, as I said, the first vice president, the first Black woman to serve with a Black president" — scrambling some of his often-used lines about his pride in serving with the first Black president and choosing the first Black woman to be vice president.

New PM vows stability as UK victory exposes discontent

Bloomberg News

New British Prime Minister Keir Starmer promised a government of "stability and moderation" after leading his Labour Party to a landslide election victory that ended 14 years of Conservative rule that became characterized by turmoil and infighting.

In a dramatic reshaping of the political landscape, Labour took 412 of the 650 seats in the House of Commons, the most since Tony Blair's 1997 triumph. The Tories garnered 121, their worst-ever performance and calling time on Rishi Sunak's stewardship of the country and his party.

Starmer, 61, vowed to "reset" British politics in a speech outside No. 10 Downing Street in

London on Friday after he was formally appointed as premier by King Charles III at Buckingham Palace. "This will take a while, but have no doubt that the work of change begins immediately."

He said his administration would "rebuild Britain with wealth created in every community."

Any Labour euphoria over the size of its win, though, will be quickly overshadowed by the scale of the challenges facing the next government. As well as the task of getting the economy growing more quickly, the election exposed deeply entrenched divisions. Indeed, the emphatic result was down to the splitting of the Tory vote in favor of more radical forces as much as an

embrace of Labour policies.

Starmer has rebuilt his party since his left-wing predecessor Jeremy Corbyn led it to the worst performance in more than eight decades at the last election in 2019, a vote dominated by the U.K.'s tortuous departure from the European Union.

That lingering tension was confirmed by the rise of voices on the right and left fringes, from Brexit architect Nigel Farage's populist Reform U.K. party, to left-wing independents who campaigned against the war in Gaza.

After ousting the Conservatives, Starmer sought to draw a contrast with their time in office. Starmer assured Britons that "you have a government unburdened by doctrine."

The shift in the U.K. stands in contrast to some of its neighbors and allies. In France, parties are trying to figure out how to halt the rise of the far right after Marine Le Pen's National Rally dominated the first round of parliamentary elections last weekend.

In the U.S., Democrats are debating whether President Joe Biden is the man to stop Donald Trump.

Still, Labour won a massive parliamentary majority, but earned only around 34% of the vote share.

In a message to those who did not vote Labour, Starmer promised to show that politics can be a force for good.

The new premier will appoint his cabinet later on Friday.

Hurricane Beryl slams into Mexico's coast

Associated Press

TULUM, Mexico — Hurricane Beryl roared ashore on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula near the resort town of Tulum as a Category 2 storm early Friday, whipping trees and knocking out power after leaving a trail of destruction that killed at least 11 people across the Caribbean.

Beryl was expected to rapidly weaken to a tropical storm as it crosses over the peninsula before reemerging into the Gulf of Mexico and likely regaining hurricane strength, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said.

Once in the warm waters of the Gulf, Beryl is forecast to head toward northern Mexico near the Texas border, an area soaked by Tropical Storm Alberto just a couple of weeks ago.

Beryl spread destruction in Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Barbados this week after becoming the earliest storm to develop into a Category 5 hurricane in the Atlantic. Three people have been reported dead in Grenada, three in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, three in Venezuela and two in Jamaica, officials said.

After landfall in Mexico, Beryl's maximum wind speeds had decreased to 100 mph, but Tulum will continue to see "large and destructive waves," the hurricane center said. The area faces heavy rainfall and potential flooding in the coming hours, according to forecasts from Mexico's National Water Commission.

Mexican authorities had moved some tourists and residents out of low-lying areas around the Yucatan peninsula before landfall, but tens of thousands remained to tough out the strong winds and expected storm surge. Much of the area around Tulum is just a few yards above sea level.

The city was plunged into

darkness when the storm knocked out power as it came ashore. Screeching winds set off car alarms across the town. Wind and rain continued to whip the seaside city and surrounding areas Friday morning.

No deaths or wounded had been reported, but 40% of Tulum continued to be without electricity, said Laura Velázquez, national coordinator of Mexican Civil Protection.

"Don't go out yet. Wait until the hurricane completely passes," said Velázquez, speaking on a video in a morning press briefing.

Once a sleepy, laid-back village, in recent years Tulum has boomed with unrestrained development and now has about 50,000 permanent inhabitants and at least as many tourists on an average day. The resort now has its own international airport.

The storm's center early Friday was about 15 miles north-northwest of Tulum and was moving west-northwest at 16 mph, the hurricane center said. It had maximum sustained winds of 85 mph.

In Corpus Christi, Texas, where officials are bracing for the chance Beryl could turn northward and bring with it possible coastal flooding, strong winds and dangerous rip currents, the city announced it had distributed 10,000 sand bags in less than two hours on Friday, exhausting its supply. The city had already distributed 14,000 sand bags Wednesday.

Before the storm hit Mexico, official had set up shelters in schools and hotels. When the wind began gusting over Tulum's beaches Thursday, officials on four-wheelers with megaphones rolled along the sand telling people to leave and authorities evacuated beachside hotels.

3 dead, 8 hurt after truck hits during July 4 in NYC

Associated Press

Three people were killed and eight others were injured when a pickup truck drove into a group celebrating the Fourth of July holiday in New York City, authorities said.

A Ford F-150 came down a street "at a high rate of speed" shortly before 9 p.m. Thursday. The truck went through an intersection and past a stop sign, drove onto the sidewalk and into Corlears Hook Park on Manhattan's Lower East Side, New York Police Department Chief Jeffrey Maddrey said during a news conference.

Two of the victims were identified as Lucille Pinkney, 59, and her son Hernan Pinkney, 38. The third was not immediately identified.

The driver, Daniel Hyden, 44, was arrested on charges includ-

ing driving while intoxicated and aggravated unlicensed driving, police said.

Hyden was awaiting arraignment Friday and did not yet have an attorney who could speak for him, a spokesperson for the Manhattan district attorney's office said. No phone number for Hyden was listed in public records.

Fire Department Assistant Chief Michael Meyers said the first crew to arrive at the scene found the pickup truck on top of four of the victims. Firefighters worked to quickly extricate them before emergency medical personnel began treatment, Meyers said.

Police said those injured in the crash and taken to area hospitals included an 11-year-old boy, an 18-year-old woman and several people in their 30s.

US employers have added solid 206,000 jobs in June

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — America's employers delivered another healthy month of hiring in June, adding 206,000 jobs and once again displaying the U.S. economy's ability to withstand high interest rates.

Last month's job growth did mark a pullback from 218,000 in May. But it was still a solid gain, reflecting the resilience of America's consumer-driven economy, which is slowing but still growing steadily.

Still, Friday's report from the Labor Department contained several signs of a slowing job market. The unemployment rate ticked up from 4% to 4.1%, a still-low number but the highest rate since November 2021. The rate rose in large part because 277,000 people began looking for work in June, and not all of them found jobs right away.

The government also sharply

revised down its estimate of job growth for April and May by a combined 111,000. And it said average hourly pay rose just 0.3% from May and 3.9% from June 2023. The year-over-year figure was the smallest such rise since June 2021 and will likely be welcomed by the Federal Reserve in its drive to fully conquer inflation. Most economists think the Fed will begin cutting its benchmark rate in September, and the details in Friday's jobs report did nothing to counter that expectation.

Just two sectors — government and a category that includes healthcare and social assistance, neither of which captures the economy's underlying strength — accounted for roughly three-quarters of June's job growth. Economists also noted that job growth from April through June averaged 177,000.

Ex-Brazil head indicted for alleged laundering

Associated Press

SAO PAULO — The indictment of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro for money laundering and criminal association in connection with undeclared diamonds from Saudi Arabia marked the far-right leader's second formal accusation with more potentially in store.

Two sources with knowledge of the case confirmed Thursday's indictment by Federal Police, which followed another formal accusation in March against Bolsonaro for allegedly falsifying his COVID-19 vac-

ination certificate.

Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly.

Brazil's Supreme Court has yet to receive the police report with the latest indictment. Once it does, the country's prosecutor-general, Paulo Gonet, will analyze the document and decide whether to file charges and force Bolsonaro to stand trial.

The indictment dramatically raises the legal threats facing the divisive ex-leader that are applauded by his opponents but

denounced as political persecution by his supporters.

Bolsonaro did not immediately comment, but he and his lawyers have previously denied any wrongdoing in both those cases, as well as other investigations into the former president. One is probing his possible involvement in inciting an uprising in the capital Brasilia on Jan. 8, 2023, that sought to oust his successor from power.

Last year, Federal Police accused Bolsonaro of attempting to sneak in diamond jewelry reportedly worth \$3 million and selling two luxury watches.

Police said in August that Bolsonaro received cash from the nearly \$70,000 sale of two luxury watches he received as gifts from Saudi Arabia. Brazil requires its citizens arriving by plane from abroad to declare goods worth more than \$1,000 and, for any amount above that exemption, pay a tax equal to 50% of their value.

The jewelry would have been exempt from tax had it been a gift from Saudi Arabia to Brazil, but not Bolsonaro's to keep for himself. Rather, it would have been added to the presidential collection.

Hungarian PM meets with Putin for talks in rare visit

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán visited Moscow on Friday for a rare meeting by a European leader with Russian President Vladimir Putin and discussed peace proposals for Ukraine, which triggered condemnation from Kyiv and some European leaders and officials.

Orbán's visit comes only days after he made a similar unannounced trip to Ukraine, where he met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and proposed that Ukraine consider agreeing to an immediate cease-fire with Russia.

"The number of countries that can talk to both warring sides is diminishing," Orbán said. "Hungary is slowly becoming the only country in Europe that can speak to everyone."

Hungary assumed the rotating presidency of the EU at the beginning of July and, in comments at the beginning of their meeting that were televised, Putin suggested that Orbán had come to Moscow as a representative of the European Council. Several European officials dis-

missed that suggestion and said Orbán had no mandate for anything beyond a discussion about bilateral relations.

The Hungarian prime minister, widely seen as having the warmest relations with Vladimir Putin among all European Union leaders, has routinely blocked, delayed or watered down EU efforts to assist Kyiv and impose sanctions on Moscow for its actions in Ukraine.

Orbán said he told Putin that "Europe needs peace," adding that he asked Putin for his thoughts on existing peace plans and whether he believed a cease-fire could precede any potential peace talks.

The two leaders also discussed bilateral relations, and Putin said they exchanged views on the current state of Russia-EU relations, which are "now at their lowest point."

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Orbán's decision to visit Moscow was made "without approval or coordination" with Kyiv. It added that "the principle of 'no agreements on Ukraine without Ukraine' remains inviolable for our country."

Court: Andrew Tate can leave Romania but remain in the EU

Associated Press

BUCHAREST, Romania — A court in Romania's capital ruled Friday that social media influencer Andrew Tate can leave Romania but must remain within the European Union as he awaits trial on charges of human trafficking, rape and forming a criminal gang to sexually exploit women.

The Bucharest Tribunal's decision to allow Tate, 37, to leave the country was hailed by his spokesperson, Mateea Petrescu, as a "significant victory and a major step forward" in the case. It is not clear whether prosecutors can or will appeal the court's decision.

Tate, a former professional kickboxer and dual British U.S. citizen, was initially arrested in December 2022 near Bucharest along with his brother Tristan and two Romanian women. Romanian prosecutors formally indicted all four in June last year and all four have denied the allegations.

After Friday's decision, Tate wrote on X: "I AM FREE. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 3 YEARS I CAN LEAVE ROMANIA. THE SHAM CASE IS FALLING APART."

"We embrace and applaud the decision of the court today, I consider it a reflection of the exemplary behavior and assistance of my clients," said Eugen Vidineac, one of Tate's lawyers, adding that the Tates are "still determined to clear their name and reputation."

On April 26, the Bucharest Tribunal ruled that the prosecutors' case file against Tate met the legal criteria and that a trial could start but did not set a date for it to begin.

That ruling came after the legal case had been discussed for months in the preliminary chamber stages, a process in which the defendants can challenge prosecutors' evidence and case file.

After the Tate brothers' arrest, they were held for three months in police detention before being moved to house arrest.

They were later restricted to Bucharest municipality and nearby Ilfov county, and then to Romania.

Vidineac said the ability to travel within the 27-nation EU bloc will allow the Tates to "pursue professional opportunities without restriction."

Bertoletti, Sudo win top dog honors

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Patrick Bertoletti gobbled up 58 hot dogs to win his first men's title Thursday at the annual Nathan's Famous Fourth of July hot dog eating contest, taking advantage of the absence of the event's biggest star. In the women's competition, defending champion Miki Sudo won her 10th title and set a new world record by downing 51 links.

Joey "Jaws" Chestnut, the reigning men's champion and winner of 16 out of 17 previous competitions, didn't attend this year over a sponsorship tiff. Instead, he competed later in the day against four soldiers at a U.S. Army base in El Paso, Texas, where he wolfed down 57 hot dogs in five minutes.

Bertoletti, 39, of Chicago, won in a tight, 10-minute race, defeating 13 competitors from around the world. He said he lost weight and practiced for three months with "an urgency" to prepare for the event, thinking he had a good chance of winning.

"With Joey not here, I knew I had a shot," Bertoletti said.

"I was able to unlock something that I don't know where it

came from."

Bertoletti bested his prior record of 55 hot dogs at the event, which is held every Independence Day on New York's Coney Island, a beachfront destination with amusement parks and a carnivalesque summer culture.

Earlier, in the women's competition, Sudo, a 38-year-old dental hygiene student from Florida, once again carried the day and set the new record a year after forcing down 39½ hot dogs in 2023.

"I'm just happy to call this mine for another year," Sudo said after winning the pink belt.

Sudo defeated 13 competitors, including 28-year-old rival Mayoi Ebihara of Japan, who came in second after eating 37 hot dogs. She was also the runner-up in 2023.

Bertoletti's victory marks the first time the famed mustard belt has gone to someone besides Chestnut since 2015.

Thousands of fans, some wearing foam hot dog hats, flock each year to the event held outside the original Nathan's location in Coney Island. Rich Shea, CEO of event organizer Major League Eating, noted how peo-

ple still came out in droves even though Chestnut was not there.

"Just a great competitor, a great guy, a grown man, and a man who's made a choice not to be here today," he said of the popular eating champ on ESPN. "But fortunately for us, tens of thousands of people are crowding around Nathan's Famous. It's a pilgrimage every year. This is not a paid Hollywood crowd."

Last year Chestnut, of Indiana, chewed his way to the title by downing 62 dogs and buns in 10 minutes. The record, which he set in 2021, is 76.

Chestnut was initially disinvited from the event over a sponsorship deal with Impossible Foods, which specializes in plant-based meat substitutes and which advertised on ESPN throughout the event Thursday.

Major League Eating has since said it walked back the ban, but Chestnut decided to spend the holiday with the troops anyway. Chestnut said he wouldn't return to the Coney Island contest without an apology.

The event in El Paso was held on an Army base that's not easily accessible by the public. Still, a few hundred fans showed

up to support Chestnut, some wearing hot dog costumes and another wearing a T-shirt that read, "Let Joey eat." Chestnut's tally of 57 bested the four Fort Bliss soldiers, who ate a combined 49.

Ahead of the event, Chestnut expressed fear that he might not perform well without the support of the large and raucous Coney Island crowd. But afterward he said he had hit a "record-setting pace."

"I love you guys," Chestnut told the fans at Fort Bliss after acknowledging the military service of his father, grandfather and brother. "You guys pushed me so hard, thank you so much."

The event was sponsored by Impossible Foods, though its vegan products were not used in the competition. Company CEO Peter McGuinness appeared on stage with Chestnut and representatives of Operation Homefront, a charity that supports military families. He presented the organization with a \$106,000 donation check; \$1,000 for each hot dog eaten.

Chestnut will next compete with pro rival Takeru Kobayashi on Sept. 2 in a head-to-head Netflix special.

Ryan Garcia expelled by WBC after using racial slur

Associated Press

Ryan Garcia was expelled by the World Boxing Council on Thursday after he repeatedly used racial slurs against Black people and disparaged Muslims in comments livestreamed on social media.

WBC President Mauricio Sulaiman announced the penalty

against Garcia on the social media platform X.

"Exercising my authority as president of the WBC, I am hereby expelling Ryan Garcia from any activity with our organization," Sulaiman posted.

"We reject any form of dis-

crimination."

Garcia posted an apology of sorts on X. "I was trolling I want all the killing to stop," Garcia wrote. "I love everyone sorry if I offended you."

An attorney for Garcia did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Last month, Garcia was suspended for a year by the New York State Athletic Commission, which also ruled that his April 20 victory over Devin Haney would be considered a no-contest after he tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs.

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Irvin, Nationals shut out Mets, 1-0

Associated Press

Jake Irvin allowed just one hit and issued one walk in eight innings, Jesse Winker hit a pinch-hit home run and the Washington Nationals beat the New York Mets 1-0 on Thursday in the traditional 11 a.m. Fourth of July game in the nation's capital.

Irvin (7-6) pumped his chest and gestured to the crowd for applause after striking out Tyrone Taylor on his 99th pitch and walking off the mound following the longest outing of his major league career. That was Irvin's eighth strikeout, and he faced just one batter over the minimum. Irvin retired the final 17 batters he faced.

The Mets were blanked for the seventh time this season and were held to only one hit in a game for the first time since a loss to Milwaukee on opening day.

Cardinals 3, Pirates 2 (10): Pedro Pages doubled home pinch runner Michael Siani and then scored on Alec Burleson's RBI single as visiting St. Louis edged Pittsburgh in 10 innings.

St. Louis took two of three from its NL Central Division rivals by winning a series finale for the 12th time in its past 13 chances.

Burleson and Dylan Carlson had two hits apiece for the Cardinals.

Guardians 8, White Sox 4: All-Star Steven Kwan homered, went 3 for 4 with two RBIs and officially took over as the majors' leading hitter while sending host Cleveland to a win over the Chicago White Sox.

Kwan connected for his eighth homer leading off the third inning against Justin Anderson as the AL Central-leading Guardians took two of three in the series and improved baseball's best home record to 28-10.

Astros 5, Blue Jays 3: Mauricio Dubón hit a tiebreaking single in the fifth inning, Jeremy Peña added a solo home run and visiting Houston beat Toronto

for their 12th win in 14 games.

Framber Valdez pitched six innings to win his third straight start as the Astros extended their team-record Fourth of July winning streak to seven.

Twins 12, Tigers 3: Jose Miranda went 5 for 5 with three doubles, four runs scored and three RBIs as host Minnesota beat Detroit in a game called in the seventh inning due to rain.

Ryan Jeffers had three hits and four RBIs for the Twins.

Reds 8, Yankees 4: Frankie Montas made a triumphant return to Yankee Stadium, Nick Martini, Jonathan India and Spencer Steer homered and Cincinnati completed a three-game sweep of reeling New York.

Steer opened a 5-0 lead in the fifth inning with a three-run, opposite-field homer to right off Marcus Stroman (7-4). Jake Fraley boosted the advantage to 8-2 with a bases-loaded triple in the seventh against Jake Cousins as Cincinnati (42-45) became the first NL team to sweep a regular-season interleague series in the Bronx.

Padres 3, Rangers 1: Jurickson Profar hit his 12th home run and the All-Star left fielder also threw out a runner at the plate as San Diego beat host Texas.

Profar had two hits and scored both times against three-time Cy Young Award winner Max Scherzer (1-2), who made only his third start of the season since offseason back surgery and a rehab disrupted by thumb soreness and a nerve issue.

Red Sox 6, Marlins 5 (12): Automatic runner Romy Gonzalez scored a go-ahead run on David Hamilton's RBI groundout in the 12th inning, Tyler O'Neill added an RBI double and visiting Boston beat Miami for a sweep of the three-game series.

Gonzalez advanced to third on Ceddanne Rafaela's single against Matt Andriese (0-1) and then raced home on Hamilton's grounder to third. O'Neill fol-

lowed with a shot to the warning track in center field that scored Rafaela.

Cubs 10, Phillies 2: Ian Happ hit three-run homers from both sides of the plate for a career-high six RBIs, and struggling Chicago pounded major league-leading Philadelphia to avoid a three-game sweep.

The Cubs trailed 2-0 when Happ connected from the right side against starter Cristopher Sánchez during a five-run fourth inning. Happ struck again batting left-handed in the fifth against Seranthony Domínguez, making it 8-2 and giving him 14 career multi-homer games.

Mariners 7, Orioles 3: Julio Rodríguez homered for the first time since June 15 and doubled, J.P. Crawford lined a tiebreaking three-run double, and host Seattle beat Baltimore to avoid a three-game sweep.

Seattle's slumping offense broke out in a big way and it was the Mariners' best player leading the charge. Rodríguez hit an 0-2 pitch from Baltimore ace Corbin Burnes an estimated 428 feet to center field in the fifth inning to pull Seattle to 2-1.

Athletics 5, Angels 0: Lawrence Butler homered, JP Sears won for the first time in more than a month, and host Oakland blanked Los Angeles for a second straight game by the same 5-0 score to complete three-game series sweep.

Miguel Andujar and Brent Rooker hit back-to-back RBI singles in the third and Tyler Soderstrom added a sacrifice fly in the decisive inning on a hot Independence Day in the Bay Area, with an announced holiday crowd of 11,956.

Giants 4, Braves 2: Logan Webb recovered from a poor first inning to continue his history of strong performances at Truist Park, and San Francisco beat Charlie Morton and Atlanta.

Matt Chapman hit a go-ahead homer in the Giants' three-run

fourth and added a run-scoring double in the sixth. San Francisco took two of three games from the Braves for its third consecutive series win.

Rockies 4, Brewers 3: Jake Cave hit his first home run of the season to snap a sixth-inning tie, and host Colorado beat Milwaukee to gain a split of the four-game series.

Charlie Blackmon had two hits, including a two-run double for the Rockies.

Cave homered off Tobias Myers (5-3), driving a 1-0 offering over the fence in straightaway center. It was his first home run since the Rockies acquired him near the end of spring training in a trade with Philadelphia.

Rays 10, Royals 8: Jonny DeLuca and Brandon Lowe homered, eight Rays players drove in runs, and visiting Tampa Bay pounced on some erratic Kansas City pitching to squeak out a victory over the Royals.

Zach Eflin (5-5), riding a 10-inning scoreless streak coming into the game, allowed six runs — five earned — and seven hits with a walk over five innings. That was still good enough to pick up his first win in his past five road starts.

Diamondbacks 9, Dodgers 3: Christian Walker extended his tear at Dodger Stadium, homering in his first two at-bats for his 18th and 19th home runs in 42 career games at the ballpark, for visiting Arizona.

Joc Pederson drew boos from the sellout crowd of 52,320 when he went deep against his old team in the first, just before Walker blasted a 435-foot shot to center field off rookie Landon Knack (1-2) with two outs.

Walker had two strikes in the third when he hammered a two-run shot to left with two outs, extending Arizona's lead to 4-0. The 33-year-old slugger has homered in five consecutive games at the stadium and gone deep nine times this season against Los Angeles pitchers.

Pain-free Djokovic advances at Wimbledon

Associated Press

LONDON — The good news, Novak Djokovic said, was that his surgically repaired right knee was pain-free at Wimbledon on Thursday.

The bad news, he knows, is that his movement, such a big part of his success, was not yet back to normal during a 6-3, 6-4, 5-7, 7-5 victory in the second round over Jacob Fearnley, a 22-year-old from Scotland who played college tennis in the United States — and that'll need to improve if Djokovic is going to contend for the title, the only reason he is back competing so soon after tearing his meniscus.

"The more matches I have, the better the chance I'll have to feel more comfortable moving around and gain that speed, agility, change of direction — that freedom that I'm looking for, really. I had it in certain moments today, certain moments in the first match, but then it's still not there," said Djokovic, who has won seven of his 24 Grand Slam trophies at the All England Club. "In a way, it's expected and normal when you come back from surgery. The body's trying to understand what's going on."

When Fearnley, a wild-card entry ranked just 277th and participating in his first major tournament, grabbed the third set, a roar arose at Centre Court.

"I noticed they were probably more towards me in the crowd," Fearnley said. "That was pretty obvious."

Similar sounds came when he went ahead 5-4 in the fourth, particularly from a cheering section that included four teammates from his days at TCU in Fort Worth, Texas.

"It was really emotional," said Tomas Jirousek, who played with Fearnley on the Horned Frogs tennis team and was wearing a school sweat-shirt.

Might this really turn into a tight contest? Might Djokovic, who hasn't reached a final of any tournament this season, really be forced to a fifth set? Of course not. Djokovic is too savvy, too superb at the biggest moments, and grabbed 12 of the last 17 points to reel off the final three games.

Still, the 37-year-old from Serbia, who has been wearing a gray sleeve on his knee, plans to watch some video of this match, the way he usually does, to get a

sense of where he can get better for his next match, which will be against Alexei Popyrin.

"I do watch specific moments where I thought I've done well or moments where I haven't done so well, and just try to analyze that myself. Then, of course, with my team members," Djokovic said. "Draw some conclusions, take it to the practice court and work on it."

Fearnley, meanwhile, smiled while discussing the way his follower count on Instagram doubled to about 5,000. But he also vowed that whatever surge in popularity this performance brings, against a much greater opponent than he's used to, is not "going to really affect me."

It was a big day for the locals, all in all, with several attention-grabbing matchups involving British players at the All England Club and a national election going on in the U.K.

"A great day for British tennis," Fearnley said, "and there's no better place to do it than at home, at Wimbledon."

That included Andy Murray, a two-time singles champion at Wimbledon, teaming with his brother, Jamie, during a loss in men's doubles that began a fare-

well tour of sorts.

Murray, 37, has said he plans to head into retirement after playing at the All England Club — in men's and mixed doubles, but not singles, on account of recent back surgery — and the Paris Olympics.

In one all-British matchup won by the unseeded player, Harriet Dart came back to eliminate No. 32 Katie Boulter 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (10-8). In another, Cam Norrie defeated No. 28 Jack Draper 7-6 (3), 6-4, 7-6 (6).

No. 5 Jessica Pegula became the highest-seeded woman to lose so far, dismissed by Wang Xinyu 6-4, 6-7 (7), 6-1, and No. 7 Hubert Hurkacz exited the men's bracket when he needed to stop playing after injuring his right knee while diving to hit a shot late in the fourth set against Arthur Fils.

Seeded winners included No. 1 Iga Swiatek — whose current unbeaten streak reached 21 — No. 4 Elena Rybakina, No. 10 Ons Jabeur, No. 11 Danielle Collins, No. 13 Jelena Ostapenko, No. 9 Alex de Minaur, No. 10 Grigor Dimitrov, No. 13 Taylor Fritz and No. 14 Ben Shelton, who won his second consecutive five-setter.

Springer posts 14th sub-60 round in PGA Tour history

Associated Press

SILVIS, Ill. — Hayden Springer posted the 14th sub-60 round in PGA Tour history on Thursday, joining a rapidly expanding list with an eagle-birdie finish in the John Deere Classic for a 12-under 59.

All that got him was a two-shot lead over Sami Valimaki on a rain-softened TPC Deere Run so vulnerable to scoring that only 13 players in the 156-man field were over par.

Springer shot 27 on the front nine and tried to block out thoughts of a 59 or better. Then he made five straight pars and figured the chance had passed

until he holed a 55-yard shot for eagle on the par-5 17th.

Needing a birdie for golf's magic number, his approach caught the slope and left him 12 feet short, and the putt was true all the way.

"Kind of at a loss for words in terms of being able to do that," Springer said. "I feel like that's one of the rare things in golf, so to have that opportunity and pull it off, it feels pretty special."

The PGA Tour record is a 58 by Jim Furyk at the Travelers Championship in 2016. Furyk also is among 13 players with a 59.

Any score that starts with a 5

remains special, although it is not quite as rare as it once was as players get better each year. Springer became the second player in three weeks to break 60. Cameron Young also had a 59 at the Travelers Championship.

On golf tours worldwide, it was the eighth sub-60 round. The lowest was a 57 by Cristobal del Solar of Chile in a Korn Ferry Tour event in Colombia.

Springer tied the record at the TPC Deere Run. Paul Goydos shot a 59 in the first round of the John Deere Classic in 2010. Goydos had only a one-shot lead that year — Steve Stricker shot

60 the same day and went on to win.

Valimaki, playing in the afternoon, noticed Springer's 59 as he played the front nine.

"I think it was my seventh hole," Valimaki said. "I was like, 'OK, I need to keep shooting lower and lower.' Didn't catch it, but still a good round."

Eric Cole had a 62, while the group at 63 included Florida State sophomore Luke Clanton, who tied for 10th last week in the Rocket Mortgage Classic. Lucas Glover, on the wrong side of the postseason bubble with five weeks to go before the FedEx Cup playoffs, shot 64.

Argentina tops Ecuador in shootout

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Lionel Messi stepped up to take Argentina's first penalty kick in a Copa America shootout against Ecuador, just like he did in the 2022 World Cup final victory over France.

Only this time, Messi hit the crossbar, jeopardizing a trip to the semifinals.

"I was pretty upset," he said, "but at the same time I was secure."

He had confidence in goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez, who saved Argentina's bid for a second straight Copa America title.

Martínez stopped shootout attempts by Ángel Mena and Alan Minda, and Argentina advanced to the Copa America semifinals with a 4-2 victory on penalty kicks following a 1-1 draw Thursday night.

"We know what Dibu is capable of, that he really thrives on those moments. He really enjoys them," Messi said about Martínez, using the goalkeeper's nickname.

Argentina conceded a tying goal to Ecuador in second-half injury time but rebounded and

won the quarterfinal when Nicolás Otamendi beat Alexander Domínguez with the winning kick.

"I wasn't ready to go home," Martínez said. "This team deserved to advance. They complicated us a lot. They played a great match, very physical. We knew they were one of the top rivals in Copa America."

Seeking its third straight major title, Argentina advanced to the semifinals for the fifth straight Copa America and will play Venezuela or Canada on Tuesday at East Rutherford, N.J. Argentina is looking to win a record 16th Copa America championship.

"Our goalkeeper came up clutch," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said through an interpreter.

Playing in front of a pro-Argentinian crowd of 69,456 at NRG Stadium, Lisandro Martínez gave the Albiceleste a 35th-minute lead following Messi's corner kick. Ecuador's Enner Valencia put a penalty kick off a post in the 62nd minute after a hand ball by Rodrigo De Paul, but Kevin Rodríguez tied it in the first

minute of second-half stoppage time.

With Argentina going first in the shootout, Messi failed on his Panenka attempt.

Martínez, the goalkeeper in Argentina's 2022 World Cup final win, stopped Mena by diving to his left and batting the ball with his trailing hand. He denied Minda by leaping right, then followed the save with a short dance.

Julián Álvarez and Alexis Mac Allister converted to put Argentina ahead 2-0, and John Yeboah made Ecuador's third attempt.

Gonzalo Montiel gave Argentina a 3-1 lead, Jordy Caicedo converted to keep Ecuador alive and Otamendi got the winner, tucking the ball inside the post just past the outstretched arm of Domínguez.

Despite the victory, Scaloni said he "did not enjoy the win."

"We have reached the semis, and given the great level of performance of every national team, I think it's a great achievement," he said.

Lisandro Martínez had put Argentina ahead in the 35th

minute with a header after Mac Allister headed on Messi's corner kick. Rodríguez scored when he headed in John Yeboah's cross.

"The quarterfinals had us playing against the most difficult opponent, and I thought we delivered well," Ecuador coach Félix Sánchez Bas said through an interpreter. "We showed this team can compete against any opponent."

Under Copa America regulations, the match went straight from the end of regulation to a shootout, without extra time.

Messi, who sustained the injury on June 25 against Chile, missed Argentina's group-stage finale. He got a loud ovation when he entered the field 45 minutes before kickoff.

"I think he finished the match well," Scaloni said. "We asked him how he was feeling for the last time four minutes before the end."

Messi remained without a goal in three Copa games this year, but Argentina still managed to advance.

"I finished well," he said. "I didn't feel any pain."

Hurricanes sign forward Jack Roslovic to 1-year deal

Associated Press

The Carolina Hurricanes continued to restock in free agency Thursday by signing forward Jack Roslovic to a one-year contract worth \$2.8 million.

Roslovic is the sixth NHL player the Hurricanes have added this week, with new general manager Eric Tulsky in charge as the successor to Don Waddell. The 27-year-old Roslovic finished last season with the New York Rangers and has 234 points in 481 regular-season and playoff games with them, Winnipeg and Columbus.

"Jack is a dynamic player who has been an offensive contributor for his entire career," Tulsky said. "Adding another right-handed playmaker capable of injecting speed and skill into the lineup will provide a boost to our forward group."

Carolina also signed forwards William Carrier, Tyson Jost and Eric Robinson and defensemen Sean Walker and Shayne Gostisbehere in an effort to make the playoffs for a seventh consecutive year under coach Rod Brind'Amour.

Next season will be a different kind of challenge after

all the talent lost in free agency on a team that reached the second round this spring. Jake Guentzel went to Tampa Bay, Teuvo Teravainen to Chicago, Brett Pesce and Stefan Noesen to New Jersey and Brady Skjei to Nashville.

Questions remain about the future of restricted free agent Martin Necas, whose father has said he wants to be traded to get a bigger role elsewhere. Necas, 25, was tied for third on the team in scoring last season.

Out West, the San Jose Sharks signed two RFA for-

wards they acquired in recent trades to two-year contracts. Carl Grundstrom, who joined from Los Angeles, got \$3.6 million and Ty Dellandrea, sent from Dallas after the Stars' trip to the Western Conference final, got \$2.6 million.

"Carl brings consistent competitiveness to our lineup," general manager Mike Grier said. "He showed that he is able to contribute not just in the offensive zone, but is also difficult to play against on the defensive end. We're excited to add him to the organization."