

Biden stands firm, says party drama must end

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden, in a letter to congressional Democrats, stood firm against calls for him to drop his candidacy and called for an “end” to the intraparty drama that has torn apart Democrats since his dismal public debate performance.

Biden’s efforts to shore up a deeply anxious Democratic Party came Monday as lawmakers are returning to Washington and confronting a choice: decide whether to work to revive his campaign or edge out the party leader, a make-or-break time for his reelection and their own political futures.

Biden wrote in the two-page letter that “the question of how to move forward has been well-aided for more than a week now. And it’s time for it to end.” He stressed that the party has “one job,” which is to defeat presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump in November.

“We have 42 days to the

Democratic Convention and 119 days to the general election,” Biden said in the letter, distributed by his reelection campaign. “Any weakening of resolve or lack of clarity about the task ahead only helps Trump and hurts us. It’s time to come together, move forward as a unified party, and defeat Donald Trump.”

He followed up the letter with a phone interview with MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” show, on which he insisted that “average Democrats” want him to stay in the race and said he was “frustrated” by the calls from party officials for him to step aside.

“They’re big names, but I don’t care what those big names think,” Biden said.

He threw the gauntlet at his critics, saying if they’re serious they ought to “announce for president, challenge me at the convention” or rally behind him against Trump.

Anxiety is running high as top-ranking Democratic law-

makers are joining calls for Biden to step aside despite his defiance. At the same time, some of the president’s most staunch supporters are redoubling the fight for Biden’s presidency, insisting there’s no one better to beat Trump in what many see as among the most important elections of a lifetime.

As lawmakers weigh whether Biden should stay or go, there appear to be no easy answers.

It’s a tenuous and highly volatile juncture for the president’s party. Democrats who have worked alongside Biden for years — if not decades — and cherished his life’s work on policy priorities are now entertaining uncomfortable questions about his political future. And it’s unfolding as Biden hosts world leaders for the NATO summit this week in Washington.

Time is not on their side, almost a month from the Democratic National Convention and just a week before Republicans gather in Milwaukee to renom-

inate Trump as their presidential pick. Many Democrats are arguing the attention needs to be focused instead on the former president’s felony conviction in the hush money case and pending federal charges in his effort to overturn the 2020 election.

It’s what Biden himself might call an inflection point. As he has defiantly said he will only step aside if the Lord almighty comes and tells him to, Democrats in the House and Senate are deciding how hard they want to fight the president to change course, or if they want to change course at all.

In an effort to “get on the same page,” House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries is convening lawmakers for private meetings before he shows his own preference, according to a person familiar with the situation and granted anonymity to discuss it. He plans to gather Democrats on Monday whose bids for reelection are most vulnerable.

Houthi threat remains as carrier group nears Mideast

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

American forces and their partners in the Middle East destroyed four aerial drones launched by Houthi militants in Yemen over the weekend, ahead of the arrival of the latest Navy carrier strike group in the region.

Two of the drones were destroyed in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, U.S. Central Command said in a statement Sunday. The other two drones were shot down by unspecified partner forces over the Gulf of Aden, according to the statement.

Since June 30, the United States has also destroyed seven Houthi surface drones in the Red Sea and four of the Iran-backed

militant group’s radar sites in Yemen. The U.S. is leading a coalition to defend commercial shipping in the Red Sea from Houthi attacks.

Last month, the Pentagon announced the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group would be on duty in the Red Sea following the departure of the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and its escorts June 22.

Roosevelt was last in the Indo-Pacific region participating in an exercise with Japan and South Korea. The three-day exercise ended June 29, and Roosevelt was expected to depart for the Middle East shortly afterward, according to the Pentagon.

The Roosevelt group includes the destroyers USS Halsey, USS Russell and USS Daniel K. Inouye. It was unclear Monday when the strike group was expected to arrive in the region.

Meanwhile, Eisenhower is transiting the Atlantic Ocean along with the destroyer USS Gravelly and cruiser USS Philippine Sea.

The ships are returning to the U.S. after a nearly nine-month deployment that saw the carrier group protecting ships in the Red Sea, Bab-el-Mandeb and the Gulf of Aden.

Eisenhower’s departure leaves the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group on duty in the Mediterranean Sea.

Heat cited in death of motorcyclist in Calif.

Associated Press

DEATH VALLEY, Calif. — After causing deaths and shattering records in the West over the weekend, a long-running heat wave was to again grip the U.S. on Monday, with hot temperatures also predicted for large parts of the East Coast and the South.

The dangerous temperatures caused the death of a motorcyclist in Death Valley.

The U.S. heat wave came as the global temperature in June was record warm for the 13th straight month and it marked the 12th straight month that the world was 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, the European climate service Copernicus said.

An excessive heat warning, the National Weather Service's highest alert, was in effect Mon-

day for portions of states including California, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Washington and Idaho, while parts of the East Coast as well as states including Florida, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi were under heat advisories.

Dozens of locations in the West and Pacific Northwest tied or broke previous heat records over the weekend.

A high temperature of 128 F was recorded Saturday and Sunday at Death Valley National Park in eastern California, where a visitor died Saturday from heat exposure and another person was hospitalized, officials said.

The two visitors were part of a group of six motorcyclists riding through the Badwater Basin area amid scorching weather, the park said in a statement.

The person who died was not identified. The other motorcy-

clist was transported to a Las Vegas hospital for "severe heat illness," the statement said. Due to the high temperatures, emergency medical helicopters were unable to respond, as the aircraft cannot generally fly safely over 120 F, officials said.

The other four members of the party were treated at the scene.

"While this is a very exciting time to experience potential world record setting temperatures in Death Valley, we encourage visitors to choose their activities carefully, avoiding prolonged periods of time outside of an air-conditioned vehicle or building when temperatures are this high," park Superintendent Mike Reynolds said.

Officials warned that heat illness and injury are cumulative and can build over the course of a day or days.

"Besides not being able to cool

down while riding due to high ambient air temperatures, experiencing Death Valley by motorcycle when it is this hot is further challenged by the necessary heavy safety gear worn to reduce injuries during an accident," the park statement said.

Across the desert in Nevada, Las Vegas on Sunday set a record high of 120 F.

Triple-digit temperatures were common across Oregon, where several records were topped, including in Salem, where on Sunday it hit 103 F, topping the 99 F mark set in 1960.

"Drink plenty of fluids, stay in an air-conditioned room, stay out of the sun, and check up on relatives and neighbors," read a weather service advisory for the Baltimore area. "Young children and pets should never be left unattended in vehicles under any circumstances."

Beryl hits Texas as a Cat 1, knocks out power to millions

Associated Press

MATAGORDA, Texas — Tropical Storm Beryl unleashed heavy rains and powerful winds across Texas on Monday, knocking out power to more than 2 million homes and businesses and flooding streets with fast-rising waters as first responders raced to rescue stranded residents.

Beryl had already cut a deadly path through parts of Mexico and the Caribbean before making a turn and later sweeping ashore as a Category 1 hurricane in Texas early Monday. At least two people were killed. The National Hurricane Center said damaging winds and flash flooding will continue as Beryl continues pushing inland.

More than 2 million homes and businesses in the Houston area were without power, CenterPoint Energy officials said. Texas Lt.

Gov. Dan Patrick, who is acting governor while Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is out of the country, said crews cannot get out to fix power lines until the wind dies down.

"We haven't really slept," said Rosenberg resident Eva Costancio as she gazed at a large tree that had fallen across power lines in her neighborhood. She said she had been without electricity for about four hours and worried that food in her refrigerator would be spoiled.

High waters quickly began to close streets.

Houston was under a flash-flood warning for most of the morning as heavy rain continued to soak the city. Flood warnings also were in effect across a wide stretch of the Texas coast, where a powerful storm surge pushed water ashore, and further inland as heavy rain continued to fall.

GOP lines up with Trump on how they will oppose abortion

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — The Republican National Committee's platform committee has adopted a policy document that reflects former President Donald Trump's position opposing a federal abortion ban and ceding limits to states, omitting the explicit basis for a national ban for the first time in 40 years.

The committee, according to two people briefed on the language, agreed on the text, "We believe that the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees that no person can be denied life or liberty without due process and that the states are, therefore, free to pass laws protecting those rights."

Two anti-abortion activist leaders spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal

party deliberations.

The move comes as Trump imposes his priorities on the committee as he seeks to steer clear of strict abortion language, even while taking credit for setting up the 2022 reversal of *Roe v. Wade* by the Supreme Court. Trump appointed three of the six justices who voted in the majority to overturn the 1973 abortion rights precedent.

Marjorie Dannenfelser, SBA Pro-Life America president, praised the committee for reaffirming "its commitment to protect unborn life through the 14th Amendment."

Dannenfelser stopped short of endorsing the document's reflection of Trump's view that the matter rests entirely with states. "Under this amendment, it is Congress that enacts and enforces its provisions."

Boeing agrees to plea deal over 737 Max fraud charges

Associated Press

Boeing will plead guilty to a criminal fraud charge stemming from two crashes of 737 Max jetliners that killed 346 people after the government determined the company violated an agreement that had protected it from prosecution for more than three years, the Justice Department said Sunday night.

Federal prosecutors gave Boeing the choice last week of entering a guilty plea and paying a fine as part of its sentence or facing a trial on the felony criminal charge of conspiracy to defraud the United States.

Prosecutors accused the American aerospace giant of deceiving regulators who approved the airplane and pilot-training requirements for it.

The plea deal, which still must receive the approval of a federal judge to take effect, calls

for Boeing to pay an additional \$243.6 million fine. That was the same amount it paid under the 2021 settlement the Justice Department said the company breached. An independent monitor would be named to oversee Boeing's safety and quality procedures for three years. The deal also requires Boeing to invest at least \$455 million in its compliance and safety programs.

The plea deal covers only wrongdoing by Boeing before the crashes, which killed all 346 passengers and crew members aboard two new Max jets. It does not give Boeing immunity for other incidents, including a panel that blew off a Max jetliner during an Alaska Airlines flight in January, a Justice Department official said.

In a court filing Sunday night, the Justice Department said it

expected to file the written plea agreement with the court by July 19.

Lawyers for some of the relatives of those who died in the two crashes have said they will ask the judge to reject the agreement.

Federal prosecutors alleged Boeing committed conspiracy to defraud the government by misleading regulators about a flight-control system that was implicated in the crashes, which took place in Indonesia in October 2018 and in Ethiopia less five months later.

As part of the January 2021 settlement, the Justice Department said it would not prosecute Boeing on the charge if the company complied with certain conditions for three years. Prosecutors last month alleged Boeing had breached the terms of that agreement.

Airlines see increase in passenger complaints

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Air travel got more miserable last year, if the number of consumer complaints filed with the U.S. government is any measure.

The Transportation Department said Friday that it received nearly 97,000 complaints in 2023, up from about 86,000 the year before.

The department said there were so many complaints that it took until July to sort through the filings and compile the figures.

That's the highest number of consumer complaints about airlines since 2020, when airlines were slow to give customers refunds after the coronavirus pandemic shut down air travel.

The increase in complaints came even as airlines canceled far fewer U.S. flights — 116,700, or 1.2% of the total, last year, compared with about 210,500, or 2.3%, in 2022, according to FlightAware data.

Delays remained stubbornly high last year, however, at around 21% of all flights.

So far this year, cancellations remain relatively low — about 1.3% of all flights — but delays are still running around 21%.

More than two-thirds of all complaints last year dealt with U.S. airlines, but a quarter covered foreign airlines. Most of the rest were about travel agents and tour operators.

Complaints of discrimination, while small in number, also rose sharply. Most were about race or national origin.

The Transportation Department said the increase in complaints was partly the result of more consumers knowing about their rights and the ability to file a complaint.

Volunteers emerge after spending year in NASA's simulation of Mars habitat

Associated Press

The crew of a NASA mission to Mars emerged from their craft after a yearlong voyage that never left Earth.

The four volunteer crew members spent more than 12 months inside NASA's first simulated Mars environment at Johnson Space Center in Houston, coming out of the artificial alien environment Saturday around 5 p.m.

Kelly Haston, Anca Selariu, Ross Brockwell and Nathan Jones entered the 3D-printed habitat on June 25, 2023, as the maiden crew of the space agency's Crew Health and Performance Exploration Analog project.

Haston, the mission com-

mander, began with a simple, "Hello."

"It's actually just so wonderful to be able to say 'hello' to you all," she said.

Jones, a physician and the mission medical officer, said their 378 days in confinement "went by quickly."

The quartet lived and worked inside the space of 1,700 square feet to simulate a mission to the red planet, the fourth from the sun and a frequent focus of discussion among scientists and sci-fi fans concerning a possible voyage taking humans beyond our moon.

The first CHAPEA crew focused on establishing possible conditions for future Mars operations through simulated spa-

cewalks, dubbed "Marswalks," as well as growing and harvesting vegetables to supplement their provisions and maintaining the habitat and their equipment.

They also worked through challenges a real Mars crew would be expected to experience, including limited resources, isolation and delays in communication of up to 22 minutes with their home planet on the other side of the habitat's walls, NASA said.

Two additional CHAPEA missions are planned and crews will continue conducting simulated spacewalks and gathering data on factors related to physical and behavioral health and performance, NASA said.

Children's hospital in Kyiv hit by Russia

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — A major Russian missile attack across Ukraine on Monday killed at least 31 people and injured 154, officials said, with one striking a large children's hospital in the capital of Kyiv, where emergency crews searched the rubble for victims.

The daytime barrage targeted five Ukrainian cities with more than 40 missiles of different types, hitting apartment buildings and public infrastructure, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a social media post. Ukraine's air force said it intercepted 30 missiles.

Strikes in Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy's birthplace in central Ukraine, killed 10 people and injured 47 in what the head of city administration, Oleksandr Vilkul, said was a massive missile

attack. Seven people were killed in Kyiv, authorities said.

"It is very important that the world should not be silent about it now and that everyone should see what Russia is and what it is doing," Zelenskyy said on social media.

Western leaders who have backed Ukraine will hold a three-day NATO summit in Washington beginning Tuesday. They will look at how they can reassure Kyiv of the alliance's unwavering support and offer Ukrainians hope that their country can come through Europe's biggest conflict since World War II.

At the Okhmatdyt children's hospital in Kyiv, rescuers searched for victims under the rubble of a partially collapsed, two-story wing of the facility. Mayor Vitali Klitschko said at

least 16 people, seven of them children, were injured.

On the hospital's main 10-story building, windows and doors were blown out and walls were blackened. Blood spattered the floor in one room. The intensive care unit, operating theaters and oncology departments all were damaged, officials said.

Rescuers searched for children and medical workers in the rubble. Volunteers formed a line, passing bricks and other debris to each other.

Smoke still rose from the building, and volunteers and emergency crews worked in protective masks.

The attack forced the evacuation of the hospital and its temporary closure. Some mothers carried their children away on their backs, while others waited in the courtyard with their chil-

dren as calls to doctors' phones rang unanswered.

A few hours after the initial strike, another air raid siren sent many of them hurrying to the hospital's shelter. Led by a flashlight through the shelter's dark corridors, mothers carried their bandaged children in their arms and medical workers carried them on gurneys.

Volunteers handed out candy to try to calm the children.

Marina Ploskonos said her 4-year-old son had spinal surgery Friday.

"My child is terrified," she said. "This shouldn't be happening, it's a children's hospital," she said, bursting into tears.

Ukraine's Security Service said it found wreckage from a Russian Kh-101 cruise missile at the site and had opened proceedings on war crime charges.

Israel deepens military operation in Gaza City

Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — Israeli forces deepened an operation in the Gaza Strip's largest city in what the military said was meant to weed out militants, sending thousands of Palestinians fleeing on Monday from an area already ravaged in the early weeks of the nine-month-long war.

The incursion into the eastern part of Gaza City expands Israel's engagement in the northern part of the beleaguered territory, an area Israel said it had seized control of months ago yet which has seen pockets of militant resurgence that have scaled back Israeli military gains and drawn forces back into such operations. Israel had ordered evacuations in the area before the raid was launched, the military said.

Heavy fighting in the area in the initial weeks of the war all but emptied out Gaza City and

its environs, and the Israeli military has prevented most people from returning to their homes there. But several hundred thousand Palestinians remain in the area, living in the shells of their homes or shelters. The fresh fighting meant new displacement for many residents there.

"We fled in the darkness amid heavy strikes," said Sayeda Abdel-Baki, a mother of three children who was sheltering at her relatives' home in the Daraj neighborhood of Gaza City. "This is my fifth displacement."

Residents reported artillery and tank fire in the area, as well as airstrikes. The Gaza Health Ministry, which has limited access to northern Gaza, did not immediately report casualties. The Hamas-run Civil Defense also did not disclose casualty numbers immediately, saying the area was inaccessible because of the fierce clashes.

Macron keeps PM in place after chaotic election result

Associated Press

PARIS — French President Emmanuel Macron refused the resignation of the country's prime minister, asking him on Monday to remain temporarily as the head of the government after chaotic election results left the government in limbo.

French voters split the legislature on the left, center and far right, leaving no faction even close to the majority needed to form a government. The results from Sunday's vote raised the risk of paralysis for the European Union's second-largest economy.

Macron gambled that his decision to call snap elections would give France a "moment of clarification," but the outcome showed the opposite, less than three weeks before the start of the Paris Olympics, when the country will be under an international spotlight.

France's main share index

opened with a dip, but quickly recovered, possibly because markets had feared an outright victory for the far right or the leftist coalition.

Prime Minister Gabriel Attal had said he would remain in office if needed but offered his resignation Monday morning. Macron, who named him just seven months ago, immediately asked him to stay on "to ensure the stability of the country." Macron's top political allies joined the meeting with Attal at the presidential palace, which ended after about 90 minutes.

Attal on Sunday made clear that he disagreed with Macron's decision to call the surprise elections.

The results of two rounds of voting left no obvious path to form a government for either the leftist coalition that came in first, Macron's centrist alliance, or the far right.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man died after pulled from house explosion

WI LAFAYETTE — A Wisconsin man who was pulled out of his home after it exploded has died, authorities said.

The Walworth County sheriff's office identified the victim as Leland Holden in a post on its Facebook page.

Holden, 68, was found by first responders in the basement of the home in Lafayette, a rural community about 45 miles southwest of Milwaukee. He was flown by medical helicopter to a local hospital trauma center where he later died, the sheriff's office said.

It took first responders more than 30 minutes to reach Holden, who was trapped under rubble, Elkhorn Area Fire Chief Trent Eichmann said.

"It looked like when the house exploded, most of it laid down into one side of the basement and that's where the gentleman was found," Eichmann said.

The cause of the explosion is under investigation.

Delta flight diverts after spoiled food served

NY NEW YORK — A Delta flight from Detroit to Amsterdam was diverted to New York's Kennedy Airport after passengers were served spoiled food, airline officials said.

The red-eye flight took off from Detroit around 11 p.m. and landed in New York at 4 a.m. "after reports that a portion of the Main Cabin in-flight meal service were spoiled," a Delta spokesperson said in a statement.

A spokesperson for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which runs the airport, said 14 of the plane's 277 passengers as well as 10 crew members were treated by medical personnel when the flight landed.

It was not clear how many people ate the spoiled food. Delta said it would investigate the incident.

Officials say fireworks to blame for wildfire

NJ TABERNACLE — Authorities say fireworks sparked a fast-moving forest fire that has consumed thousands of acres in southern New Jersey.

The New Jersey Forest Fire Service said Sunday that "a fireworks device" set alight in the Wharton State Forest late on the Fourth of July started the fire. The blaze was spotted from a fire tower shortly after 9 a.m. Friday burning near Apple Pie Hill and the Batona Campground, which was evacuated as a precaution.

Authorities said Sunday that the blaze had burned an estimated 4,000 acres but that it was believed to be 75% contained. Officials said earlier that crews were using a backfire operation to fight the fire, burning areas ahead of the main fire in a bid to stop the flames from spreading. Several roads and trails had been closed.

Cybersecurity breach may delay court proceedings

NM SANTA FE — What officials are calling a cybersecurity breach at New Mexico's statewide public defenders office could lead to delays in some court proceed-

ings across the state, the department reported.

The New Mexico Law Offices of the Public Defender said the breach began two weeks ago. A timeline for restoration wasn't immediately clear.

The statewide public defenders office, which provides legal representation to low-income people facing criminal charges, is the largest law firm in the state with 13 offices, more than 400 employees and contracts with about 100 private attorneys.

The department said the cybersecurity issue was preventing its employees from accessing some internal records while also delaying communications with clients, attorneys and the courts.

"Email has been a primary way to send discovery, motions, communication and negotiations with prosecutors," department spokesperson Maggie Shepard said. "All of that is now basically stopped."

Shepard said the extent of the breach wasn't yet known, although she said it did not immediately appear that the private information of clients and contracted lawyers had been compromised.

Man convicted in 2018 murder of college student

CA SANTA ANA — A California man was convicted of murder with a hate crime enhancement for the 2018 stabbing death of a gay University of Pennsylvania student.

Samuel Woodward, 26, was found guilty of first-degree murder plus the enhancement in the killing of Blaze Bernstein, a gay, Jewish college sophomore who was home visiting his

family in Southern California on winter break when he went missing. Authorities found his body a week later in a shallow grave at a nearby park.

The question during the monthslong trial was not whether Woodward killed Bernstein but why, and the circumstances under which it happened.

During closing arguments, prosecutor Jennifer Walker emphasized Woodward's affiliation with a violent, anti-gay, antisemitic group known as Atomwaffen Division. With the hate crime enhancement, Woodward could face a sentence of life without parole.

Officials warn of nesting shorebirds, set closures

CT HARTFORD — Environmental officials in Connecticut are warning beachgoers to steer clear of places where coastal birds gather and nest for the season.

The state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection also said in a news release that it has temporarily closed the Dr. William A. Niering Preserve within Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford, Charles Island in Milford and Duck Island in Westbrook.

The agency said it made the decisions in order to prevent disturbances to several state-listed nesting birds, including piping plovers, least terns, snowy and great egrets, glossy ibis, and little blue herons.

Connecticut law prohibits people from entering state-designated seabird and shorebird protection areas and requires pets, cyclists, and vehicles to remain at least 25 feet away, the department noted.

— From wire reports

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Pirates rookie Skenes named All-Star

Associated Press

Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Paul Skenes was picked for the All-Star Game on Sunday just eight weeks after his debut, and the major league-leading Philadelphia Phillies had a big league-high seven selections.

Skenes, who turned 22 in May, was selected by the Pirates as the top pick in last year's amateur draft, two days before the All-Star Game in Seattle. He made his first big league start May 11 and is 5-0 with a 2.12 ERA in 10 starts and 78 strikeouts in 59½ innings. He has thrown 74 pitches of 100 mph or more.

Skenes' final outing before the All-Star break is likely to be midweek, so he could be a possibility to start for the National League.

"That'd be cool. No expectations," he said. "I don't know who gets to decide that kind of thing, but that'd definitely be cool."

Chicago Cubs pitcher Shota

Imanaga joined Skenes and San Diego outfielder Jackson Merrill as the only rookie All-Stars for the July 16 game at Arlington, Texas.

Philadelphia pitchers Zack Wheeler, Ranger Suárez, Jeff Hoffman and Matt Strahm were picked to join three starting Phillies position players: first baseman Bryce Harper, shortstop Trea Turner and third baseman Alec Bohm.

Philadelphia has seven All-Stars for the first time, though Harper's availability depends on when he returns from a hamstring strain that has sidelined him since June 27. Wheeler is lined up to pitch for the Phillies next weekend and the team told Major League Baseball he won't be available for the All-Star Game.

The Los Angeles Dodgers have six All-Stars after pitcher Tyler Glasnow, catcher Will Smith, first baseman Freddie Freeman, outfielder Teoscar Hernández and injured short-

stop Mookie Betts joined starting DH Shohei Ohtani on the NL roster.

Cleveland topped the AL with five after first baseman Josh Naylor, closer Emmanuel Clase and designated hitter David Fry joined a pair of starters: third baseman José Ramírez and outfielder Steven Kwan. San Diego also had five.

Atlanta pitcher Chris Sale earned his eighth All-Star selection, the first for the 36-year-old left-hander since seven straight from 2012-18. The gap is the longest for an All-Star since Albert Pujols earned his 11th trip for his final season in 2022, his first since 2015.

"It is definitely satisfying. I appreciate it for sure," said Sale, acquired by the Braves from Boston in December. "They took a chance and I'm happy to be able to do this for them."

Texas closer Kirby Yates at 37 is the oldest All-Star and will be joined by second baseman

Marcus Semien of the host World Series champion Rangers.

Kansas City catcher Salvador Perez was picked for the ninth time, matching Houston second baseman Jose Altuve for the most among the 67 players on this year's rosters.

Merrill at 21 is the youngest All-Star and among 32 first-time picks.

Skenes is scheduled to have one more start for Pittsburgh, and his 11 games put him on track to have the fewest for a player in an All-Star Game.

San Diego outfielder Fernando Tatis Jr., elected by fans to start, will miss the game because of a stress reaction in his right thigh bone. Betts, voted in by players for his eighth straight All-Star appearance, has been out since breaking his left hand on June 16.

Cincinnati's 22-year-old speedster, Elly De La Cruz, got Betts' spot after finishing second to him on the player ballot.

Gauff fails to advance to Wimbledon quarters again

Associated Press

LONDON — Things were not going well for Coco Gauff against Emma Navarro at Centre Court, not well at all, and she kept looking at her guest box for help from her coaches. One, Brad Gilbert, would stand up and gesture, and they would talk back and forth, but a fix did not arrive.

Gauff has yet to make it past the fourth round at Wimbledon, and she exited at that stage again Sunday, eliminated by Navarro 6-4, 6-3 in an all-American matchup.

"We had a game plan going in, and I felt that it wasn't working. I don't always ask for advice from the box, but today was one of those rare moments where I felt I didn't have solutions," said Gauff, the reigning U.S. Open champion and seeded No. 2 at the All England Club. "I don't want to say I didn't have any, because I think I'm capable of coming up with some. Today, mentally, there was a lot going on. I felt like I wanted more direction."

Hers was the latest in a series of departures by top women from the Wimbledon

bracket this year: No. 1 Iga Swiatek lost Saturday, No. 3 Aryna Sabalenka withdrew with an injured shoulder before playing a match and No. 6 Marketa Vondrousova, last year's champion, was defeated in the first round.

Only two of the 10 highest-seeded women remain: 2022 champion Elena Rybakina, who is No. 4, and recent French Open runner-up Jasmine Paolini, who is No. 7 and meets Navarro next.

Rybakina advanced Monday when Anna Kalinskaya retired in the second set because of an injury. Rybakina was leading 6-3, 3-0 when the 17th-seeded Kalinskaya stopped playing. Kalinskaya had taken a medical timeout in the first set, with attention paid to her neck and right forearm.

Rybakina has now won 18 of 20 matches in her career at the All England Club to join Ann Jones and Steffi Graf as the only players in the Open Era to have a 90% win rate in women's singles at Wimbledon.

Rybakina will play No. 21 Elina Svitolina in the quarterfinals. Svitolina of Ukraine beat Wang Xinyu 6-2, 6-1 on a "very difficult day"

for her home country. A major Russian missile attack across Ukraine killed dozens and injured more than 150 people, officials said.

Paolini advanced Sunday when Madison Keys stopped playing because she was hurt.

The 19th-seeded Navarro, who writes herself notes in her phone to prepare for matches, reached a major quarterfinal for the first time. She showed exactly the type of tennis she's capable of playing in the second round when she got past four-time major champion Naomi Osaka.

"I'm believing that this is possible as it's happening. I'm starting to think, 'Why not me? Why not? Why can't I make a quarterfinal run? Why can't I go deep in Grand Slams?'" said Navarro, 23, who grew up in South Carolina and won the 2021 NCAA championship in her first year at the University of Virginia.

In addition to Gauff's trophy from New York last September, the 20-year-old from Florida has been the runner-up at the French Open and reached the semifinals at the Australian Open.

Braves shut out Phillies for series win

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Reynaldo López threw six strong innings and the Atlanta Braves hit four homers in a 6-0 victory over the Philadelphia Phillies on Sunday.

López (7-2) lowered his league-leading ERA to 1.71, allowing just two hits and walking three with six strikeouts.

“He was really good against a really good lineup,” Braves manager Brian Snitker said.

Adam Duvall, Jarred Kelenic and Matt Olson all homered in a five-run second inning off Phillies rookie Michael Mercado, and Eli White added a solo homer in the sixth inning.

“(The early lead) allows me the opportunity to not be so fine,” López said through an interpreter. “Once I got that five-run lead, I told myself I would be attacking the zone and be aggressive.”

Mercado (1-1), making just his second career start, didn’t get out of the second inning, lasting just 1½ innings and allowing five runs, five hits and three walks.

The Braves have taken two of three in the first two series of the season between the NL East rivals. The teams have seven regular-season games to play. The Phillies have eliminated the Braves in the playoffs the past two postseasons.

“It definitely feels good,” López said. “Even though I wasn’t part of the team last year, I watched the postseason. It feels good to win the two series so far. I feel like that is the expectation. If we have a rematch, we need to take that series as well.”

Marlins 7, White Sox 4: Jake Burger hit a game-winning three-run homer and host Miami scored four times in the ninth to beat Chicago.

Down to their last strike, the Marlins tied it on Josh Bell’s RBI double off White Sox closer Michael Kopech (2-8). Chicago left fielder Tommy Pham tracked down Bell’s drive but mistimed his leap at the wall

that scored Vidal Brujan from third.

Jesús Sánchez was intentionally walked before Burger connected with a 431-foot blast for Miami’s ninth walk-off win of the season.

Rangers 13, Rays 2: Wyatt Langford and Jonah Heim matched career highs with four hits, Corey Seager had a three-run homer and host Texas batted around twice in a rout of Tampa Bay that finished a three-game sweep.

Texas matched its season high with 19 hits, sending nine batters to the plate in both the fourth and fifth innings.

Langford had an RBI double in the first inning, singled to start a six-run fourth and three-run fifth, then singled again in the eighth.

Tigers 5, Reds 1: Tarik Skubal struck out a career-high 13 in seven innings, Zach McKinstry hit a two-run homer and visiting Detroit beat Cincinnati for its first series sweep since late May.

Skubal (10-3) was sharp, mixing a fastball in the upper-90s with a changeup to keep Reds hitters on their heels. He allowed just three hits and walked no one. Cincinnati’s only run came on a seventh-inning groundout.

Guardians 5, Giants 4: Bo Naylor had a pinch-hit, three-run homer in the sixth inning to give host Cleveland a win over San Francisco and another home series win for the AL Central leaders.

Stepping in for Austin Hedges, Naylor connected with two outs off Sean Hjelle (3-3) as the Guardians improved to 30-11 at Progressive Field—the majors’ best home mark—and 11-0-1 in series at home.

Cardinals 8, Nationals 3: Willson Contreras hit his second homer of the series and visiting St. Louis defeated Washington.

The Cardinals have won five of their last seven and have the

best record in the National League since May 12 at 32-18 (.640).

Twins 3, Astros 2: Christian Vázquez led off the ninth inning with a home run to give host Minnesota a victory over Houston.

Vázquez, who had two hits and drove in all three Twins runs, hit a sinker from Josh Hader (3-5) high and deep to left field for his fourth homer of the season.

Mets 3, Pirates 2: Francisco Lindor hit a two-run single with two outs in the ninth inning against Aroldis Chapman for his third hit of the game, rallying visiting New York to a win over Pittsburgh.

Nick Gonzales hit a two-run single in the eighth off Edwin Díaz (3-1) to give Pittsburgh a 2-1 lead, but the Mets rebounded and again reached .500 at 44-44.

Cubs 5, Angels 0: Hayden Wesneski threw 6⅓ innings, Michael Busch hit a two-run home run and host Chicago shut out Los Angeles.

Wesneski (3-5) allowed a single to the second batter he faced, then retired the next 18 Angels to help the Cubs win a series for the first time in five tries. He allowed a hit, walk and two strikeouts.

Royals 10, Rockies 1: Maikel Garcia, MJ Melendez and Bobby Witt Jr. homered, Brady Singer won for the first time on the road this season and visiting Kansas City beat Colorado to end a three-game losing streak.

Garcia’s three-run homer capped a four-run second inning off right-hander Tanner Gordon (0-1), who was making his major league debut. Garcia homered for first time since May 17, a span of 183 at-bats.

Orioles 6, Athletics 3: Heston Kjerstad hit a three-run homer, Grayson Rodriguez (11-3) had eight strikeouts in six innings and visiting Baltimore beat Oakland.

Kjerstad’s center field shot

put the Orioles ahead 4-0 in the first. Anthony Santander hit his 23rd homer of the season earlier in the inning to start the two-out rally off A’s starter Mitch Spence (5-5). Kjerstad also reached in the third on an error by A’s center fielder JJ Bleday, who dropped a fly ball for an error. Santander scored the Orioles’ fifth run on the play.

Brewers 9, Dodgers 2: Christian Yelich and Blake Perkins both homered, had three hits and drove in three runs as visiting Milwaukee beat Los Angeles to snap a seven-game losing streak at Dodger Stadium.

Eric Haase had a two-run homer in the fifth inning for the Brewers, who avoided a sweep in the weekend matchup of National League division leaders and are one of three teams in the majors not to have a losing streak of at least four games this season.

Blue Jays 5, Mariners 4 (10): Daulton Varsho drove in the go-ahead with an RBI single in the top of the 10th inning, as visiting Toronto beat Seattle.

Varsho’s hit off Mariners reliever Collin Snider (0-1) with two outs drove in automatic runner Vladimir Guerrero Jr. from second base and sent the Blue Jays to a series victory over the Mariners, who have now dropped six consecutive series.

Red Sox 3, Yankees 0: Rafael Devers homered off rookie Luis Gil in the seventh inning and connected again in the ninth, leading visiting Boston over New York and sending the Yankees to their 15th loss in 20 games.

Boston has won six of seven and 16 of 22, improving to 14-1 on Sundays.

Diamondbacks 9, Padres 1: Eugenio Suárez hit a tiebreaking two-run homer with two outs in the seventh inning and a bases-clearing double in the ninth in visiting Arizona’s victory over San Diego.

Bowman wins on Chicago street course

Associated Press

CHICAGO — At long last, Alex Bowman got a win. And a spot in the NASCAR Cup Series playoffs.

So yeah, he was ready to party.

“We’re going to drink so much damn bourbon tonight, it’s going to be a bad deal,” a jubilant Bowman said. “I’m probably going to wake up naked on the bathroom floor again. That’s just part of this deal sometimes.”

Bowman held off Tyler Reddick on a rainy street course in downtown Chicago on Sunday, stopping an 80-race winless drought.

It was his first victory since Las Vegas in March 2022 and No. 8 for his career. He is the 12th Cup Series driver to win this year, leaving four remaining spots in the playoffs with six races left in the regular season.

After his Vegas victory two years ago, Bowman, 31, was sidelined by a concussion. He injured his back in a short-track accident in April 2023.

“You start to second-guess if you’re ever going to get a chance to win a race again,” he said.

Not anymore.

The Cup Series’ second street race in Chicago was stopped for more than 100 minutes because of rain, and NASCAR set a cut-off time of 8:20 p.m. CDT because of the fading sunlight. When Bowman crossed the start-finish line after that time, the white flag came out, followed by the checkered.

Reddick made a late charge, but he got into a wall while trying to run down Bowman. Ty Gibbs was third, followed by Joey Hand and Michael McDowell.

“I got the opportunity to run him down,” Reddick said. “Just obviously couldn’t get the job done. A clean lap was all I had to do and couldn’t even do that.”

Bowman closed it out on wet weather tires in his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet after pole-sitter Kyle Larson and Shane van Gisbergen were knocked out.

During the cool-down lap, Bowman was bumped into the wall by Bubba Wallace. Bowman spun out Wallace early in the race.

“I have to apologize again to the 23 guys,” Bowman said. “Just messed up, trying to get my windshield wiper on, missed a corner and ruined their day. I hate that. I’m still embarrassed about it.”

Larson slammed into the tire barrier in Turn 6 on Lap 34, bringing out a caution. He was trying for his fourth win of the season in his 350th career Cup Series start.

“As soon as I hit the brakes, I knew I was in trouble,” said Larson, who has an 11-point lead over Chase Elliott in the driver standings.

Van Gisbergen was clipped by Chase Briscoe going into Turn 6 on Lap 25. Briscoe slid into a tire barrier, but van Gisbergen crashed into the temporary wall — causing heavy damage to the right side of his Kaulig Racing Chevrolet.

“I just sort of turned in. It

looked pretty good and then just got smacked by someone,” van Gisbergen said. “It’s gutting.”

Shortly after the wreck, the race was stopped to give NASCAR time to clear standing water from the makeshift track. The drivers returned to their cars about an hour later, but the delay continued when another cell passed over the course.

Gibbs was in front when the race resumed, followed by Christopher Bell and Larson.

“It’s really fun. I feel like it’s kind of like a dirt track, honestly,” Gibbs said about the wet conditions. “Pick and choose your lines, see what lane is drying up and is faster. You have to look around, which makes it fun as we don’t get to do that a lot.”

Van Gisbergen won the first stage Sunday shortly before he was knocked out.

Bowman’s victory capped NASCAR’s second year on the street course in Chicago. It is expected to return next season, but the future of the weekend is unclear beyond 2025.

O’Ward seizes lead late as Palou stalls on pit stop

Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ohio — Pato O’Ward bounced back on multiple levels with an IndyCar victory Sunday he was confident of achieving with a new hybrid engine he found to his liking.

The combination helped him reduce a big deficit to Alex Palou and ultimately pounce on the slimmest window of opportunity.

O’Ward seized the lead with 24 laps remaining as Palou stalled in the pits and held on to win the Indy 200 at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in the IndyCar series’ official debut of its hybrid engine.

The victory provided huge redemption for O’Ward, who was leading the final lap of the Indianapolis 500 in May before Jo-

sef Newgarden overtook him on the final half-mile for the victory. It was O’Ward’s second win this season but the first on-track after he was awarded the victory in the season-opening race at St. Petersburg, Fla., when Newgarden was disqualified for manipulating the push-to-pass system on his Chevy.

That made the win even more rewarding, especially after the heartbreaking loss at Indy.

“We really pushed today,” said O’Ward, whose initial pit stop for softer, red-sidewall alternate tires helped him gain speed before switching back to primary rubber on the next. “I was pushing so long and watching him pull out kind of trying to run away with it in the first stint, I said, ‘No way! no way!’

“As soon as we got the reds on, that was my chance to close the gap and ultimately beat him. ... We earned it. No one gave it to us. This feels really good.”

O’Ward started second in a Chevy to Palou’s Honda and spent most of the race whacking a time gap of more than five seconds at times to the dominant Palou, who edged his counterpart by 0.0024 seconds for the pole. His chance came when Palou pitted for tires and fuel on Lap 56 of 80 but stalled, a hiccup that allowed O’Ward to slip by as Palou re-entered the repaved road course.

“Just tried to engage first gear too early,” said Palou, who was coming off a Laguna Seca win from the pole two weeks ago. “My mechanics were super

good on tires and a few — like you cannot engage first gear when the fueler is in, so yeah, I just tried and it got denied and then when I could have put it (in gear), it was like half a second or one second. Totally my fault.”

Palou stalked O’Ward from there, but couldn’t get within range to pass. Green-flag conditions also helped, even after Romain Grosjean’s Chevy spun behind them and stalled with three laps left. Grosjean refired the new hybrid unit and continued, preventing a disruption and likely finish under caution with the previous engine.

O’Ward wobbled slightly near the end but took the victory by 0.4993 seconds, giving the driver his first on-track win since July 2022 at Iowa.