

US troop casualties in war surpass 600

Stars and Stripes

The number of U.S. service members wounded in the war with Iran has surpassed 600, according to the latest figures posted to the Pentagon's casualty tracking database.

The updated casualty figures come as U.S. forces have gone three consecutive days without reporting any strikes on Iran following nearly two weeks of sustained fighting over the Strait of Hormuz.

Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said last week that nearly 100 service members had been wounded in the retaliatory attacks since July 7.

That number is now 207, with the majority of injuries coming from the Army, according to the Defense Casualty Analysis System.

The Pentagon also appears to be separating Iran war-related casualties into two categories, Operation Epic Fury and "overseas operations," which began July 7. Combined, the two operations account for 624 wounded service members.

Eighteen U.S. service members have been killed in the war, four of whom died in the weeks since armed combat resumed following the collapse of a tentative ceasefire.

The new operation began the same day President Donald Trump informed Congress that the nation was once again at war with Iran, a move the administration says restarted the 60-day clock that allows the president to use the military without congressional approval.

U.S. Central Command on Friday halted its attacks on Iran after 13 consecutive days of strikes targeting Iranian air defenses, coastal surveillance sites and drone and missile storage facilities.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz said Sunday that the strikes were on hold to allow for diplomatic discussions to progress.

"What the president is doing right now, as we've seen all along, is giving some talks some space," he told NBC's Meet the Press.

But he didn't rule out escalation in the future.

"The U.S. military is locked and loaded," he said. "In fact, more assets have gone into the region."

The fighting was paused in part over worries about dwindling munitions stockpiles, various news outlets reported.

U.S. forces have relied heavily on the expensive Patriot and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense systems to intercept thousands of Iranian missiles and drones over the last five months.

That has raised concerns about how many interceptors would be available in a future conflict against Russia or China.

Waltz said Trump inherited a depleted stockpile from the Biden administration, which used the weapons to support Ukraine and combat the Yemen-based Houthi militant group.

The Trump administration carried out strikes against the Houthis for nearly two months last year in a response to threats

against commercial shipping.

But the Pentagon has everything it needs to conduct the campaign against Iran, Waltz said.

"The people that are leaking this nonsense deserve to be in jail," he said of reports about munition shortages.

The war began on Feb. 28 with joint U.S.-Israeli strikes that killed many of Iran's top leaders and has since evolved into a fight over the Strait of Hormuz.

The U.S. Navy earlier this month reinstated its naval blockade on Iranian ports after Tehran fired on oil tankers that it said were attempting to transit the waterway without Iranian permission.

The virtual chokehold on the strait has hurt economies around the world and led to a global spike in fuel prices. As of Monday, the price of a barrel of Brent crude, the global benchmark for oil prices, was hovering around \$85, a slight increase from June but well below the May peak of \$118.

Navy expands requirement for annual influenza shots

By ALISON BATH

Stars and Stripes

The Navy is once again requiring some active-duty, reserve and civilian personnel to be vaccinated annually against the flu, a move that could affect thousands.

The requirement not only includes enlisted sailors in boot camp but also extends to those in Officer Candidate School, the Naval Academy, the academy preparatory school and other training programs, according to a message to the force published

Friday.

The policy further applies to staff and personnel involved in those programs and covers additional Navy sailors and civilian employees, including those working in health care, child care and youth service programs, according to the message.

Deployed service members must also be vaccinated before entering any theater or country that has an active influenza vaccination requirement, the Navy said.

"The influenza vaccine is highly encouraged to prevent outbreaks that can degrade unit readiness, disrupt training schedules, and deployment execution, which adversely impacts mission," the Navy said in the message.

Medical department representatives should monitor for "influenza-like illness and report and respond to local or command-wide outbreaks and hospitalizations," it said.

Last month, 275 trainees were sickened during an influ-

enza outbreak at Air Force basic training in Texas. The outbreak came weeks after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth rescinded a long-standing flu vaccine mandate for all active-duty personnel, reservists and Defense Department civilians.

The Pentagon later granted the Army, Air Force and Navy, the National Security Agency and the Defense Health Agency exceptions to that policy, allowing them to once again require flu vaccinations for certain personnel.

Mideast tensions ease as strikes paused

Bloomberg News

The U.S. and Iran held off on attacks for a third straight night, helping lift global stock and bond markets and push down oil prices.

President Donald Trump, who last week threatened to intensify strikes against the Islamic Republic, is instead giving diplomacy “some space,” Mike Waltz, Washington’s ambassador to the United Nations, said on Sunday.

Talks are “ongoing” between the sides on a technical basis and at the leadership level, he added, without giving details. Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman, Esmail Baghaei, said Monday that while “it’s possible that mediators share messages from the U.S. side about current developments,” no negotiations are currently taking place.

The New York Times reported that Trump and his advisers decided to hold off on escalation plans in part because of diminishing stockpiles of air defenses such as Patriot interceptors. Waltz, speaking to NBC, said American forces had all the weaponry they needed.

Trump has consistently said “he prefers a diplomatic solution, but he continues to retain all options if Iran continues terrorist activities in the Strait of Hormuz or against allies,” a White House spokesman said in a statement.

Iran’s army said it halted its retaliation against U.S. bases and troops in the region as a result of Trump’s decision to hold off on strikes. The Islamic Republic had been attacking Kuwait, Bahrain and Jordan on a near-daily basis in the two

weeks before the U.S.’ pause on Friday.

Brent crude fell more than 6% in early trading on Monday to under \$91 a barrel, after climbing 10% last week on the worsening fighting. U.S. Treasury yields also dipped, while S&P 500 futures rose 1%.

Axios reported Sunday that Admiral Brad Cooper, the top U.S. commander overseeing the Middle East, recommended stopping strikes because they had reached the limit of their effectiveness, citing sources in the region.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is scheduled to meet Trump in Washington on Tuesday. He said he plans to press the U.S. leader on keeping a “constant watch” on Iran’s nuclear program, one of many issues now in limbo following the

breakdown of an interim peace deal agreed last month.

Tensions between the warring sides remain high and Iran has said there’s no change to the status of the Strait of Hormuz, meaning it’s likely to continue targeting commercial ships that don’t receive its permission before transiting.

Traffic through the vital waterway — through which one fifth of the world’s oil and liquefied natural gas supplies flowed before the conflict — remains negligible.

On Monday, Iranian state TV said Tehran forced six ships going through the southern corridor near the Omani coast to turn around. One of the ships suffered an “incident,” according to the reporting, which cited an Iranian official with knowledge of the matter.

Romania shoots down suspected Russian drone

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

A Romanian F-16 fighter jet shot down a suspected Russian-made drone Sunday during the third consecutive day of unmanned aircraft incursions into the country.

The latest incursion appears to have involved a drone of Russian origin, NATO military spokesman Col. Martin O’Donnell said Monday.

Since Russia’s 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Romania has seen numerous drones stray into its airspace.

In a statement Sunday, Romanian President Nicusor Dan said investigators confirmed that the initial drone incursion on Friday was carried out by a Shahed-type drone used by the Russian military in its war against Ukraine. The second in-

cursion on Saturday is still being investigated.

“It is inadmissible and intolerable for the Russian Federation to continue violating Romania’s airspace, which is, at the same time, NATO airspace and European Union airspace,” Dan said. “Such actions are unacceptable, and we treat them with the utmost seriousness, alongside our allies.”

NATO countries, especially those on the alliance’s eastern flank, have expanded their defenses in response to the airspace violations.

For example, Romania and Poland have been outfitted with the U.S.-made Merops counter-drone system, which has been used by Ukrainian troops to shoot down Russian-made Shahed drones and other threats.

Marines use drone to deliver blood during Australia drill

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

U.S. Marines used a drone to deliver simulated blood during a multinational exercise in Australia this month, testing a medical resupply capability designed to sustain troops across dispersed battlefields.

Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 5 flew TRAUS — the Tactical Resupply Unmanned Aircraft System — during Predator’s Run at Queensland’s Townsville Field Training Area.

The exercise is part of Marine Rotation Force-Darwin’s six-month deployment to the Northern Territory and focuses on preparing U.S., Australian and Philippine troops to operate together in contested environments.

TRAUS carried a small, refrigerated container holding

simulated blood about a mile and a half from an Australian aid station to a U.S. Marine aid station on Thursday, rotational force spokesman Capt. Kevin Hicks said.

Two Marines can operate TRAUS, which can carry up to 150 pounds of cargo for about 9 miles, according to a 2023 Marine Corps news release.

“TRAUS is designed to provide rapid and assured, highly automated aerial distribution to small units operating in contested environments,” Master Sgt. Chris Genualdi, an airborne and air delivery specialist with Combat Development, said.

The battery-powered, eight-rotor drone flies preprogrammed routes using waypoint navigation at speeds up to 60 mph and typically operates about 400 feet above the ground.

At least 3 dead in Seattle mass shooting

The Seattle Times

A mass shooting left three people dead and four wounded Sunday evening at a crowded food festival at Seattle Center.

Police arrested one suspect and were searching for another Monday, The Associated Press reported. Investigators believe the two suspects were shooting at each other, Assistant Seattle Police Chief Tyrone Davis told a news conference Sunday.

A barrage of gunshots could be heard around 6 p.m. at Seattle Center, which was hosting thousands of people for the Bite of Seattle food festival this weekend.

Witnesses described a chaotic scene, with bursts of gunfire and masses of people running

and taking cover, all over the 74-acre park complex.

A Seattle Times reporter who was on the south side of Climate Pledge Arena heard several loud pops and then what sounded like very rapid gunfire.

Estan Wakonabo, 25, said he was at Bite of Seattle with his girlfriend when he heard gunshots. The event was so packed that they could barely move between the crowded lines for food. He said people began to trample each other as he and his girlfriend stayed put.

"It was just pure chaos," he said.

He said he came back to the scene later to take photos, and saw several gunshot victims on the ground, including a body

covered with a yellow sheet.

Two people died at the scene and a third died at a hospital. They were described as two men, ages 19 and 44, and a 56-year-old woman, AP reported.

The four wounded, including a 2-year-old boy, were hospitalized and in stable condition early Monday, police said. The rest of the wounded were adults. Davis couldn't say if any of the victims were involved in the confrontation.

Kayla Carris, 22, was sitting outside the Seattle Center Armory at the Bite of Seattle when people began to scream and run to get inside the armory.

"Everyone was just throwing stuff and running," Carris said. "Like everyone."

Paul Skinner, 47, had just returned from grabbing drinks for his staff at his Filipino food booth, when he heard a series of pops.

"I just heard what sounded like what were some pretty loud fireworks at first," he said. "Then, the energy changed. Mobs of people started flooding back down. I just told our staff to get down."

A video posted to social media appeared to show the moment gunshots first rang out.

"Shooting! Shooting!" a man says.

"Get down, get down, get down," another yells, as crowds start to run.

It was unclear if police had anybody in custody as of 7 p.m.

'Explosive diarrhea' outbreak causes dietary changes

syracuse.com

Many Americans are changing their eating habits due to cyclospora outbreaks, according to a new report.

A CBS News poll found that 4 in 10 people say they are now buying or eating less produce to avoid the "explosive diarrhea" parasite that causes cyclosporiasis. More than 11,000 cases reported earlier this month across multiple states were linked to iceberg lettuce, while other smaller outbreaks have been tied to parsley and cilantro.

According to the poll, women are more likely than men to be

changing their diet due to concerns about the cyclospora. Older adults are also making changes more than younger adults, respondents said.

Only 13% of Americans expressed "a lot" of confidence in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's ability to deal with the outbreak. Republicans were more likely to trust the FDA, the poll found, as 59% of Democrats said they had "not much" or no confidence.

The FDA said Friday that the largest outbreak of cyclospora infections has been sourced to lettuce from central Mexico and

recalled by Taylor Farms de Mexico. A total of 1,947 people reported exposure to the lettuce at Taco Bell in nine states, including Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

The FDA sparked confusion in a July 19 update that said it had a "false positive" test for Taylor Fresh Foods, which voluntarily pulled salads and other products in more than 25 states. On Friday, the FDA said it still had "overwhelming epidemiological data supporting the current voluntary recall by Taylor

Farms" and continued to encourage people to avoid all products listed in Taylor Farms' recall.

"We also expect to continue to see the number of confirmed cases rise, despite the recall, due to the fact that it can take as long as six weeks for CDC and state officials to determine if a sick person is part of this outbreak," the FDA said.

Cyclosporiasis is a gastrointestinal disease caused by the microscopic parasite Cyclospora. People become infected after consuming water or food that contains the parasite.

Fox: ICE plans operation targeting Haitian immigrants

Bloomberg News

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency plans to ramp up operations to arrest Haitian immigrants whose Temporary Protected Status is expected to end soon, Fox News reports, citing federal sources.

The TPS program allows im-

migrants from countries in natural or man-made crises to remain in the U.S. until conditions stabilize. The Supreme Court ruled in June that President Donald Trump could revoke that status independently. Haitians have been living in the U.S. under TPS since 2010, when an earthquake killed an estimated

300,000 people.

Federal agents are planning to target Springfield, Ohio, which has a large population of Haitian immigrants, Fox reported.

The city became a flashpoint during the 2024 presidential campaign when Vice President JD Vance spread an unfounded

conspiracy theory that Haitians were stealing people's pets and eating them. ICE leadership has been notified of the operational plans, the sources told Fox News.

ICE did not respond to a request for comment when contacted outside of normal business hours.

Zelenskyy warns of N. Korean troop increase

By JULIE MASSON
Stars and Stripes

North Korea is preparing to send another 30,000 troops to Russia in support of its war against Ukraine, according to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

That figure is more than twice the number of North Koreans believed to now be serving alongside Russian forces, based on media reports.

Zelenskyy wrote on X that Russia wants more North Korean troops and has been preparing the Voronezh region — 289 miles south of Moscow — to receive additional manpower since June.

Pyongyang is also planning to transfer more ballistic missile launchers to its ally, he said.

"This is a threat not only to Ukraine," Zelenskyy warned.

"Russia is helping North Korea learn how to wage war, improve its weapons and gain real combat experience in using them."

As such, the two countries' actions are "a threat to everyone in Asia who is within range of North Korean missiles," he added.

In a subsequent post, Zelenskyy wrote that 221,000 people have joined the Russian armed forces in the past seven months. Russia suffered nearly 225,500 casualties during that period, he said.

Ukraine's comprehensive intelligence reports on Russia's fall plans show Putin is "preparing the conditions for expanding mobilization," he wrote.

Zelenskyy's comments follow North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui's visit to Moscow

this month.

Choe met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on July 19, when the two agreed to further strengthen their alliance under the allies' comprehensive strategic partnership treaty, North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency said Tuesday.

Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a mutual defense pact in June 2024, committing both countries to provide immediate military assistance if either is attacked.

The exact number of North Korean troops that Kim has sent to Russia so far remains unclear.

Pyongyang dispatched about 1,500 special forces troops to Vladivostok between Oct. 8 and Oct. 13, 2024, with additional deployments to follow, according to a news release from

South Korea's National Intelligence Service on Oct. 18, 2024.

Six days after the release was published, Ukraine's Defence Intelligence agency said the number of North Korean troops deployed to Russia had reached 12,000, including 500 officers.

Somewhere between 14,000 and 14,100 North Koreans are stationed in Russia, with 9,500 troops deployed as active combatants, NK News reported May 4, citing Kyiv's military intelligence.

More than 2,250 North Korean troops have been killed in the war, with more than 4,800 wounded, according to an April 29 report by Ukrainian news agency Interfax-Ukraine, citing Brig. Gen. Dmytro Usov, secretary of Ukraine's Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War.

Canadian intern at NATO command arrested in Belgian espionage probe

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

Officials at NATO's command center say they are cooperating fully with an investigation after the recent arrest of a Canadian intern on suspicion of espionage.

The woman worked at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, or SHAPE, which advises NATO on military matters and is located about an hour southwest of Brussels.

Belgian prosecutors said the intern is a "Canadian national of Chinese origin." She was arrested Friday, a day after her home and workplace were searched.

She is suspected of spying on behalf of a third country and of being a member of a criminal organization, prosecutors said in a statement Saturday.

She is expected to appear in court Tuesday, when a decision will be made on whether she will remain in pretrial detention, prosecutors said Monday.

Military operations, missions and other duties for the 32-member transatlantic alliance are coordinated from SHAPE headquarters. NATO's Cyber Security Center, charged with defending NATO networks from cyber attacks, is also based at SHAPE.

The investigation was launched after security officials at SHAPE tipped off Belgium's military intelligence, prosecutors said.

The woman's name and the country she is accused of spying for have not been publicly disclosed.

Neither officials nor prosecutors have said where she was assigned or what her duties were.

US sees most cases of measles since 1991

Los Angeles Times

Measles cases have hit a record in the United States not seen since 1991, nearly a decade before the viral disease was declared eliminated.

The grim milestone comes amid a generational setback in controlling the highly contagious disease, which prior to the vaccine era caused millions of infections a year and annually left 400 to 500 people dead, 1,000 with swelling of the brain and led to 48,000 hospitalizations.

Last year, the U.S. recorded three measles deaths — the first deaths since 2015, and the first among children since 2003. The deaths last year were two unvaccinated school-age children in Texas and an unvaccinated adult in New Mexico.

So far this year, there have been 2,318 measles cases reported nationwide, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention. That's higher than in any other calendar year since a significant nationwide measles epidemic between 1989 and 1991 led to 55,365 cases over the three years.

Health experts expect that the U.S. will lose its status of having "eliminated" measles from the nation, a status that was achieved in 2000, which refers to the absence of ongoing disease spread for more than a year.

Of the measles cases reported nationally this year, 93% have occurred among people who were unvaccinated or had an unknown vaccination status, the CDC said. Of those infected, 49% were age 5 to 19 and 20% were under age 5.

The surge in measles comes as the nation's top health agency is led by a vaccine skeptic, Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

State could be among early primaries in 2028

VA RICHMOND — The commonwealth's Democratic presidential primary is set for Feb. 29, 2028, per a vote Friday by the Democratic National Committee's rules and bylaws committee. That would make Virginia the sixth state to vote in the primary cycle — a change from traditionally casting ballots on Super Tuesday in mid-March.

The DNC is scheduled to meet as a full body in August, at which point the rules and bylaws committee will present the proposed schedule for a vote.

Virginia Democrats applauded the decision, noting that an earlier primary gives the state a more powerful role in determining the nominee. Candidates often devote more attention and resources to states with early primaries.

'Diddy' placed in solitary after fight in prison

NJ FORT DIX — Disgraced music mogul Sean "Diddy" Combs was placed in solitary confinement after getting into a fight with another inmate at the Federal Correctional Institution in Fort Dix, N.J., according to a report.

The brawl broke out earlier this week, after an FCI inmate allegedly "dissed" Combs, triggering a brief war of words that almost immediately turned physical, TMZ reported.

A source said the pair quickly started shoving each other, getting a few jabs in apiece, before security stopped the fight and separated the prisoners.

The source noted that Combs "held his own" during the scuf-

fle, which was serious enough to land him in solitary. It is unclear if he was still there as of Friday.

The Bad Boys Records founder is currently serving a 50-month sentence after he was found guilty last year of two counts of transportation to engage in prostitution.

COVID-19 levels run high in Bay Area

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Public health officials and infectious disease experts are urging Bay Area residents to take added precautions against COVID-19 as wastewater testing shows high concentrations of the virus in parts of the region.

Measurements at wastewater treatment plants in Santa Clara County and San Francisco have shown high concentrations of the virus over the past three weeks, while concentrations have reached medium levels on the Peninsula and in the North Bay.

Wastewater testing serves as a proxy for the virus's spread because it does not depend on people seeking tests or reporting their results.

Virus levels remain far below those recorded during California's surge last summer. Still, officials and experts said the latest increase warrants precautions.

Tuberville: Mamdani should be in Gitmo

SC COLUMBIA — Republican Sen. Tommy Tuberville is calling Mayor Zohran Mamdani a "thug" who should be jailed at Guantanamo Bay because he "hates this country."

The staunch supporter of President Donald Trump predicted the popular mayor would cross some unspecified line that would lead authorities to arrest him and send him to the U.S. military base that mostly functions as a camp for the indefinite detention without charge of foreign terror suspects.

"Sooner or later he will do something more stupid than what he's done to where we'll finally say, 'Enough's enough,' go putting handcuffs on him and get him the hell out of here and send him to Gitmo," Tuberville, R-Alabama, told far right-wing media figure Benny Johnson.

"The guy hates this country, he wants to change it," Tuberville added. "We're not going to allow a thug like this to change it and take us into another direction."

Tuberville, a one-term lawmaker and former Auburn University football coach, is running for governor of Alabama.

Governor blasts ex-aide's trip to Disney

MA BOSTON — Gov. Maura Healey is slamming her disgraced ex-aide LaMar Cook and the defiant defense of his SNAP benefits — which partially funded his recent trip to Walt Disney World — and for saying he "earned" the \$31,000 contract buyout mistakenly paid out by her office.

"Lamar Cook should never have been hired. His actions continue to be outrageous and despicable. It's why we've gone after him to make sure that any money he was paid out comes back to the state.

And, he needs to be held fully accountable by the full extent of

the law. But it's outrageous and disgusts me," Healey said of Cook saying he "earned" the lucrative contract buyout and won't pay it back.

Following a pre-trial hearing Wednesday related to a laundry list of drug and gun charges he is facing, Cook said he "earned" the payout from his unused vacation time, something the Executive

Office of Administration and Finance says he was not entitled to due to being fired with cause.

"It's my vacation time. I earned it over a decade of service to the Commonwealth," said a defiant Cook.

The state has not been able to claw the money back as Cook has already spent it and has expressed his intent to not pay it back.

Man who caused Park fire convicted of arson

CA CHICO — It was a blistering day in Butte County when a man revved his wheels in dry grass until a spark ignited, then pushed the flaming vehicle down a 60-foot hill.

Whipped by strong winds amid 100-plus degree temperatures, that spark grew into California's fourth-largest wildfire on record, ultimately scorching 429,000 acres and destroying 427 homes.

On Friday — two years to the day since the devastating Park fire ignited — a judge found Ronnie Stout guilty of purposefully starting the blaze.

The 44-year-old Chico man faces 25 years to life and is scheduled to be sentenced Oct. 9, according to the Butte County district attorney's office.

— Tribune News Service

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and Military News

Sixers officially announce LeBron's arrival

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Philadelphia 76ers sent the message that LeBron James was indeed — officially and perhaps amazingly — on the roster with a straightforward photo:

James' blue No. 23 jersey hangs in a locker with a crown as a nod to his King nickname on the shelf.

Philadelphia and James announced Monday that their two-year deal on the veteran's minimum for \$8 million total was official and the four-time NBA MVP was indeed a Sixer.

"There is no doubt LeBron is one of the greatest players to ever play the game of basketball and there are no words to measure the impact he'll have on this organization," team president Mike Gansey said.

The NBA's career scoring leader, James revealed his choice on social media Friday, saying it will be his "last decision" and that it came after he strongly considered retirement.

"I believe I can help make the Philadelphia 76ers a championship team and I am so ex-

cited to energize a new fan base and start this incredible journey one last time," James said.

James posted videos on his Instagram story Monday morning with the caption: "It's that time again. 4:12 AM. Let's get it." He posted workout videos from the gym throughout the weekend.

A four-time NBA champion, James wrote he was "done" when his 23rd NBA season ended and that it was his last with the Los Angeles Lakers.

He instead reversed course and signed with a Philadelphia franchise that's loaded with All-Star starters in Joel Embiid, Tyrese Maxey and Jaylen Brown yet has failed to win an NBA championship since 1983 or even advance out of the second round of the Eastern Conference playoffs since 2001.

James, who turns 42 in December, appears up for the challenge of turning the Sixers into champions much as he did when he ended a 56-year championship drought for Cleveland by leading the Cavaliers to the title in 2016.

"I cannot wait to see LeBron alongside Jaylen Brown, JJ

Edgecombe, Joel Embiid, Tyrese Maxey and our talented roster as we work to deliver a championship for Philly," team owner Josh Harris said.

Philadelphia went 45-37 last season and was swept in the second round by the eventual NBA champion New York Knicks.

James' resume is beyond compare in NBA history. He is a 22-time All-Star, a 21-time All-NBA selection, a four-time Most Valuable Player, a four-time NBA Finals MVP, a three-time All-Star Game MVP and a member of the NBA's 75th anniversary team.

He is also coming off a season in which he averaged 20.9 points, 6.1 rebounds and 7.2 assists per game.

James started his career in Cleveland in 2003 and spent seven seasons with the Cavaliers before heading to Miami for four seasons — where he won his first two NBA titles. He then returned to Cleveland for four more seasons, including that title run in 2016, and left in 2018 for Los Angeles and won a championship in 2020.

James is the first player in

NBA history to be named an NBA Finals MVP with three different franchises.

James is set for a reunion with Gansey, who was hired in late May after the 76ers fired Daryl Morey.

Gansey joined Cleveland in 2011 and had worked as its general manager since 2022. His and James' ties were first forged as Ohio basketball stars more than two decades ago. Gansey at Olmsted Falls High School was runner-up in 2001 for Ohio's Mr. Basketball award to James — who won it three times before bypassing college and going straight to the NBA.

"I have had the pleasure of knowing LeBron since high school and have seen the high-level impact he's produced at every stop of his basketball journey," Gansey said. "He is a consummate professional, the ultimate competitor and a tireless worker. But he is also an incredible person with natural leadership traits, a family man and someone who possesses unwavering commitment to community and those around him."

QB Brissett gets new deal, expected to be Cardinals' starter

Associated Press

GLENDAL, Ariz. — Now that Jacoby Brissett has his new contract with the Arizona Cardinals, the veteran quarterback is ready to go to work with first-year coach Mike LaFleur and help the team bounce back from last season's 3-14 record.

But first, he's looking forward to some quality rest.

"I'm pretty sure I'll probably sleep more than three hours tonight," Brissett said with a grin.

Brissett and Arizona agreed to a reworked one-year deal Sunday worth a reported \$15.5 million and LaFleur confirmed that the veteran is the team's likely starter for Week 1.

The 33-year-old Brissett was unhappy with his previous contract, which included just \$1.5 million of guaranteed money for the upcoming season. He reported for training camp last week, but was limited during practices while he and the Cardinals worked on the deal.

Brissett said it got "dark a couple times" during negotiations, but he had enough confidence in himself to persevere. This will be his 11th NFL season.

"It felt good to be back out there," Brissett said. "Standing around wasn't particularly fun."

Brissett was the team's starter for the final 12 games last

year after Kyler Murray suffered a season-ending foot injury. He did well individually with a career-high 3,366 yards passing, 23 touchdowns and eight interceptions, but Arizona had a 1-11 record in those games.

LaFleur confirmed that Brissett's deal was done before Sunday's practice and said that the quarterback would begin working with the starters soon.

The team's other main options under center are veteran Gardner Minshew and rookie Carson Beck.

"It hasn't been a distraction by any means — I think we've got some very mature and professional players," LaFleur

said. "But it's just one more thing that we don't have to talk about."

Brissett is a popular presence in the Cardinals' locker room and some players — most notably eight-time Pro Bowl safety Budda Baker — were publicly supportive of a new deal for the quarterback.

"I think that's the ultimate reward of this game, the respect of your teammates," Brissett said. "That's what I pride myself on. That's the only thing I really value. Contracts come and go but your teammates and the people you work with, the ones who want to go bat for you, that's what matters most."

Hall of Fame inductees honor home, family

Associated Press

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — Puerto Rico and Curaçao may be small islands, but the support they showed was massive as elite center fielders Carlos Beltrán and Andruw Jones were inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on Sunday.

Both joined slugging second baseman Jeff Kent as the newest members before an estimated crowd of 12,000 fans at the Clark Sports Center in Cooperstown, with 57 other Hall of Famers on stage — creating the largest gathering of current Hall of Famers.

Jones' speech was almost like a love letter to his home country of Curaçao.

"There's no easy way to get here from the small island of Curaçao, more than 2,000 miles away," Jones said. "But today Cooperstown and Curaçao are forever joined together."

The longtime Atlanta Braves outfielder, a 10-time Gold Glove winner and five-time All-Star, is the first player from Curaçao to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. But he said he doesn't plan on being the last. He pointed to players

who have followed him, including Ozzie Albies and Kenley Jansen, as part of the Curaçao legacy started by Hensley "Bam Bam" Meulens.

Among the highlights, Jones' tribute to his late father, Henry Jones, stood out. He said his father used to hit him flyballs from foul pole to foul pole to teach him how to track the ball, and how to build strong wrists by rolling a sledgehammer.

"Everything he taught me had a purpose," Jones said. "Henry Jones was a legend in Curaçao, a great player in his own right. And I'm not standing here in Cooperstown without his constant coaching. Dad, we did it."

Chants of "Puerto Rico" broke out before Beltrán even uttered a word. And whenever he mentioned his home island, the crowd cheered for him and waved flags.

"Everywhere I played baseball, I always tried to represent my island," Beltrán said. "I tried to do the best I could for the organizations that I played, but also I wanted to represent Puerto Rico."

The 20-year veteran and 1999 AL Rookie of the Year ran

through each organization he played for, thanking them for the different lessons each provided. The New York Mets received the most praise.

When discussing the teams he played for, Beltrán gave specific examples from some of his stops, including watching teammates Craig Biggio and Jeff Bagwell "play with pain" in Houston. But he did not mention winning the World Series with the Astros in 2017. That title carries controversy because of an illegal sign-stealing scheme and Beltrán's involvement in it. Beltrán did not directly address the scandal, but did comment on those who may or may not have voted for him for whatever reasons.

"To the Baseball Writers' Association of America, I want to say thank you for making me a Hall of Famer. ... And for those that didn't (vote for me) — that saw things different — I want to say also thank you. I appreciate your perspective," he said. "If baseball has really taught me something, I want to say is that I hope in life, we continue to measure ourselves by the same standard we have used

to measure others."

Beltrán earned 84.2% of the vote from the BBWAA to make the Hall on his fourth try. Jones garnered 78.4% in his ninth year of eligibility, eclipsing the 75% needed for induction. Kent was elected by a much smaller panel last December, the Contemporary Baseball Era Committee, after dropping off the BBWAA ballot when his eligibility ran out in 2023.

The 2000 NL MVP with the San Francisco Giants played for six teams over his 17-year career and set the all-time home run mark for second basemen. Before even speaking, Kent needed tissues to wipe the tears from his eyes after looking at his parents in the crowd, he said in a post-ceremony news conference.

In his speech, Kent told a story of how his baseball career turned when his father offered him a deal: if he earned a college scholarship, he would buy him a pickup truck. Kent quit racing motorcycles and shifted his focus to school and baseball, and eventually earned a scholarship to the University of California, Berkeley.

Heim's daring pass after final restart seals historic win

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Corey Heim started Sunday by talking about being more aggressive on his restarts.

Then he showed everyone — including his team co-owner Denny Hamlin — what he'd learned.

The 24-year-old part-time NASCAR Cup Series driver first made a daring outside move to pass Hamlin then slow him down on the final restart with 35 laps to go, then held off the hard-charging cars of Christopher Bell and Joey Logano to capture his first Brickyard 400 title.

Heim beat Bell by 0.287 seconds and Logano, last week's race winner, by 0.972 seconds to become the first Cup driver to

win twice in his first 15 career starts since 1965. A.J. Foyt, one of four four-time Indianapolis 500 champions, was the last to do it and, like Foyt, Heim didn't even need a full-time ride to finish the job.

"Just had to be aggressive, man, it's for the win," he said after his second win of the season. "I would have to see it back to see if I really did anything wrong. You know, he has every right to be frustrated with me, but don't get me wrong, I just had to be on top of it. Got to go quick for the 22 (Logano) to be in position, so thanks to him. Man, it's crazy."

Hamlin seemed more frustrated with Bell's mistimed push, which allowed Heim to get

past him, and that was all Heim needed to take charge. Hamlin wound up falling from first to fifth, a descent he never recovered from as his winless streak at Indianapolis hit 18.

It's the only crown jewel race of NASCAR's four Hamlin hasn't won.

"I mean everyone's trying to fight to win the race, and you know you're clear by an inch, you're going to take that inch," Hamlin said. "It's really the 20 and (Bell) and the 19 (Chase Briscoe) not orchestrating good pushes there and we came detached for a long time. I thought the 20 was on board with giving us a push, it was just way too early before the restart zone."

With Hamlin fading, Bell and

Logano spent the final 34 laps trying to catch Heim's increasingly loose car. Each driver consistently closed the gap by running consistently quicker lap times, but neither could get close enough to try to pass Heim.

And with no more caution flags to bunch up the leaders, the stage was set for Heim.

Hamlin was able to extend his points lead over Heim's teammate, Tyler Reddick, who was 10th. Ty Gibbs, who is fourth in points, clinched a playoff spot with a stage win and a 12th-place finish. And Todd Gilliland of Front Row Motorsports defied the odds by collecting the \$1 million prize in the final round of NASCAR's second In-Season Challenge.

Braves hold off Orioles for 11-inning victory

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Matt Olson caught Gunnar Henderson's line drive and stepped on first for an improbable double play in the bottom of the 10th, and Austin Riley's RBI double an inning later lifted the Atlanta Braves to a 3-2 victory over the Baltimore Orioles on Sunday.

Every game in this series was decided by a run, with Atlanta winning Friday and Sunday in extra innings and Baltimore managing a walk-off victory Saturday. The finale went to extra innings thanks largely to an error by Braves second baseman Ozzie Albies in the ninth, but the Orioles loaded the bases in the 10th with the score 2-all and couldn't win it.

Atlanta had opted to face Henderson by intentionally walking Pete Alonso to load the bases with nobody out. Henderson then hammered a line drive right at first base, where Olson could catch it and step on the bag almost in one motion as Alonso frantically tried to dive back.

Replays showed the play was extremely close, but the double play stood. Then Taylor Ward — who left the winning run at third in the ninth inning in Friday's loss — popped out.

Royals 5, Tigers 4: Michael Massey hit a go-ahead, two-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning and visiting Kansas City held on to beat Detroit.

The Royals led 3-0 through four innings, fell behind after giving up four runs in the fifth and went back ahead on Massey's blast to right.

Dillon Dingler hit a go-ahead, two-run single in a four-run fifth inning for the Tigers, but they failed to maintain the lead and lost a second straight game to the last-place team in the AL Central.

Reds 5, Cardinals 3 (10): Sal Stewart drove in the go-ahead run with a pinch-hit single in the 10th inning, and visiting Cincinnati beat St. Louis.

Stewart's line drive to right

field against Matt Svanson (2-3) scored automatic runner Tyler Stephenson and pushed the Reds to their third straight road series win for the first time since 2023.

After Eugenio Suárez was intentionally walked to load the bases with two outs, Nathaniel Lowe extended the lead with a two-run single to left. The Cardinals got a run back on Alec Bursleson's RBI single, but Julian Garcia still closed the door for his first career save.

Angels 4, Giants 3: Mike Trout had his first four-hit game in more than five years, Jorge Soler and Jo Adell homered and visiting Los Angeles beat San Francisco to snap a three-game skid and avoid a series sweep.

Angels starter Jose Soriano (9-6) allowed an unearned run in five innings. The 27-year-old right-hander gave up three hits, walked three and had five strikeouts. Mitch Farris got the final two outs for his first career save.

Rays 1, Guardians 0: Drew Rasmussen allowed one hit through seven innings, Cedric Mullins drove in the only run of the game on a bunt single and host Tampa Bay finished off a three-game sweep of Cleveland.

Rasmussen (9-5) allowed a leadoff double to Steven Kwan to start the game before retiring 21 of the final 23 batters he faced, including the last 12. Rasmussen struck out nine and walked one.

Nationals 10, Diamondbacks 7: CJ Abrams and James Wood both homered twice and drove in three runs as host Washington beat Arizona to take two of three games in its weekend series.

Dylan Crews and Abrams each had three of the Nationals' 15 hits. Washington (54-52) moved within a game of Arizona for the final National League playoff spot in a crowded wild-card race.

Pirates 8, Cubs 7: Ryan O'Hearn hit a grand slam on his 33rd birthday, and host Pittsburgh held off Chicago to avoid being swept in the three-game series.

The Cubs nearly erased a six-run deficit. Seiya Suzuki hit a two-run home run with one out in the ninth inning to make it a one-run game, but Mason Montgomery held on for his second save.

Red Sox 6, Blue Jays 1: Jarren Duran drove in two runs with one of his three singles, Jahmai Jones had a pinch-hit two-run double and host Boston beat Toronto.

Coming off the injured list after missing three weeks with a strained left groin, Ranger Suárez went four scoreless innings, striking out six and allowing four hits. Greg Weissert (3-2) worked a scoreless inning for the win.

Mets 8, Dodgers 3: Tyrone Taylor put the Mets ahead with a three-run homer in the sixth inning, Marcus Semien added a three-run drive in the seventh and host New York beat Los Angeles to prevent a season sweep.

With the Dodgers leading 3-1, reliever Jack Dreyer walked rookie Carson Benge and pinch-hitter Luis Robert Jr. in the sixth. Taylor gave the Mets a 4-3 lead by hitting a 1-1 sinker from Evan Phillips (0-2) into the left-field seats.

Padres 5, Marlins 3: Manny Machado and Jackson Merrill homered in the eighth inning and visiting San Diego overcame an early three-run deficit to beat Miami, extending the Marlins' losing streak to a franchise-record 12.

Machado also doubled in a run, while Luis Rengifo doubled and singled and Ty France had two singles for the Padres.

Twins 11, Athletics 8: Ryan Jeffers went 3 for 5 with three RBIs, Connor Prielipp (3-5) threw 5½ innings of one-run ball in his return from the injured list and host Minnesota beat the Athletics in the rubber match of a three-game series.

Kody Clemens was 3 for 5 with two triples and an RBI, and Ryan Kreidler doubled three times and drove in a run for the Twins.

White Sox 12, Astros 3: Munetaka Murakami homered

twice and drove in a season-high six runs; Miguel Vargas, Chase Meidroth and Junior Perez also went deep as host Chicago beat Houston to avoid a series sweep.

With his parents in attendance and on his bobblehead giveaway day, Murakami hit a 385-foot, two-run homer in the bottom of the first that gave the White Sox their first lead of the game. It was his first homer since May 27th. He added a go-ahead, RBI groundout in the third inning and a two-run single in the seventh. He closed out his three-hit game with his 22nd homer of the season — a solo shot — to right-center in the eighth.

Brewers 11, Rockies 2: Jacob Misiorowski (11-4) struck out 12 of the first 13 batters he faced — including each of the first seven — and allowed only one hit over five innings and host Milwaukee trounced Colorado.

Andrew Vaughn homered for the NL Central-leading Brewers. The offense was a group effort, with every starter recording at least one hit for 14 total.

Mariners 6, Rangers 4: Dominic Canzone put visiting Seattle ahead with a three-run homer two pitches before Randy Arozarena also went deep in the seventh inning, and the Mariners rallied for a victory over Texas.

Defending division champion Seattle stopped a four-game losing streak and won for the first time in six tries at Globe Life Field this season. The Mariners moved back in front of Houston for second place, 1½ games behind the Rangers.

Phillies 11, Yankees 4: Bryson Stott homered, doubled and drove in five runs, NL All-Star starter Cristopher Sánchez (13-4) pitched six innings of three-run ball and host Philadelphia avoided a three-game sweep with a victory over New York.

Alec Bohm hit a three-run double for the Phillies, who snapped a four-game skid and finished 3-6 on their homestand against the Mets, Dodgers and Yankees.