

## Debt deal OK'd by Senate, heads to Biden

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Fending off a U.S. default, the Senate gave final approval late Thursday to a debt ceiling and budget cuts package, grinding into the night to wrap up work on the bipartisan deal and send it to President Joe Biden's desk to become law before the fast-approaching deadline.

The compromise package negotiated between Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy leaves neither Republicans nor Democrats fully pleased

with the outcome. But the result, after weeks of hard-fought budget negotiations, shelve the volatile debt ceiling issue that risked upending the U.S. and global economy until 2025 after the next presidential election.

Approval in the Senate on a bipartisan vote, 63-36, somewhat reflected the overwhelming House tally the day before, relying on centrists in both parties to pull the Biden-McCarthy package to passage — though Democrats led the tally in both chambers.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said ahead of voting that the bill's passage means "America can breathe a sigh of relief."

Afterward he said, "We've saved the country from the scourge of default."

Biden said in a statement following passage that senators from both parties "demonstrated once more that America is a nation that pays its bills and meets its obligations — and always will be."

He said he would sign the bill

into law as soon as possible. "No one gets everything they want in a negotiation, but make no mistake: this bipartisan agreement is a big win for our economy and the American people," he said.

Fast action was vital if Washington hoped to meet next Monday's deadline, when Treasury has said the U.S. will start running short of cash to pay its bills, risking a devastating default. Raising the nation's debt limit, now \$31.4 trillion, would ensure Treasury could borrow to pay already incurred U.S. debts.

## Australian PM stresses need for diplomacy with China

*Associated Press*

SINGAPORE — As tensions grow between the United States and China in the Asia-Pacific, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told a gathering of top defense officials Friday that open channels of communication are critical for preserving peace, while also advocating effective deterrence.

Albanese, who has been expanding Australia's military power in response to China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea, the South Pacific and the East China Sea, said he has also been working to stabilize the country's diplomatic relations with China.

"We recognize there are fundamental differences in our two nations' systems of government, our values and our world views," he said in his address to the Shangri-La dialogue. "But we begin from the principle that whatever the issue, whether we agree or disagree, it is always better and it is always more effective if we deal direct."

Both U.S. Secretary of De-

fense Lloyd Austin and China's new defense minister, Gen. Li Shangfu, were in the audience as Albanese spoke.

Ahead of the conference, Li rejected a request from Austin to meet on the sidelines, but the two shook hands before sitting down at opposite sides of the same table just before Albanese's address.

Both the U.S. and China have been intensifying efforts to win influence in the region, and the dialogue, hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank, provides an opportunity for one-on-one discussions with their regional counterparts, diplomats and leaders. Austin opens the dialogue Saturday with a speech, and Li will follow Sunday.

Australia is a stalwart American ally in the region, and Albanese stressed that while China's "extraordinary economic transformation" has been a benefit to the entire region, China has also benefited from "a regional architecture that facilitates free trade, encourages the sharing of

knowledge, spurs innovation and builds people-to-people connections."

"American leadership has been an indispensable part of this," he said.

He also said there was a need for "guardrails" to ensure that no "one nation imagines itself too big for the rules," which he said is part of the reason he has found it necessary to boost Australia's defense capabilities.

Beijing has strongly criticized Australia's participation in the so-called AUKUS partnership, which links it with the United States and Britain to create an Australian fleet of eight nuclear-powered submarines.

"Australia's goal is not to prepare for war, but to prevent it through deterrence and reassurance and building resilience in the region, doing our part to fulfill the shared responsibility," Albanese said.

"All of us have to preserve peace and security and making it crystal clear that when it comes to any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by

force in Taiwan, the South China Sea, the East China Sea or elsewhere, the risk of conflict will always far outweigh any potential reward."

After a meeting earlier in the day with Albanese, Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Lawrence Wong said members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations don't want to have to choose between Washington or Beijing.

"No one wants to be in a position where we have to either contain China's rise or limit America's presence," he said. "Any move in either direction will have few takers in the region because no one in ASEAN wants to see a new Cold War."

This year's dialogue comes amid a wide range of issues, including the war in Ukraine and its regional implications, including China's support for Russia, the ongoing conflict in Myanmar, and growing tensions between China and the U.S. and its allies over Beijing's claim to the self-governing island of Taiwan.

# Drag shows on US military bases canceled by Pentagon

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden's administration has stopped U.S. military bases from hosting drag shows after criticism from some Republicans, amid a broader push in conservative-led states targeting LGBTQ+ celebrations.

Hosting drag shows is "inconsistent with regulations regarding the use of (Defense Department) resources," said Pentagon spokeswoman Sabrina Singh in a statement Thursday.

At least one show was canceled as a result. Organizers of an event at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada canceled a drag show timed to Pride Month, which began Thursday, according to a Facebook post quoted by Fox News.

In her statement, Singh did

not directly address LGBTQ+ rights but said the Defense Department was "proud to serve alongside any and every young American who takes the oath that puts their life on the line in defense of our country."

Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., who sharply criticized top Pentagon leaders earlier this year and questioned them about drag shows, tweeted that the cancellation was a "HUGE VICTORY!"

"Drag shows should not be taking place on military installations with taxpayer dollars PERIOD!" he added.

Drag shows feature entertainers who dress and act as a different gender. They are often part of Pride events and can include colorfully clad drag queens reading books to chil-

dren. Supporters say they celebrate people of different sexual orientations and promote acceptance.

Opponents accuse organizers of drag shows of trying to "sexualize" children. Drag shows sometimes draw protesters and a bevy of Republican-led legislatures have passed bills in recent months trying to ban or restrict them.

Nellis Air Force Base has previously hosted drag performers. About 180 people attended a similar show in 2021, according to Task and Purpose, a publication covering the military.

The Pentagon's move to cancel the show led the Human Rights Campaign, which advocates for LGBTQ+ civil rights, to directly criticize Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

## DOD paying for Starlink internet in Ukraine

*The Washington Post*

The Pentagon disclosed on Thursday that it has signed a contract to provide SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet service in Ukraine, nearly eight months after Elon Musk, the company's owner, threatened to terminate access unless the U.S. government paid for it.

The Defense Department acknowledged the decision but withheld virtually all details about the agreement, including how much it will cost U.S. taxpayers and when the contract was signed. U.S. defense officials had previously estimated that the annual cost for Starlink in Ukraine, which Musk mostly had been donating, will be hundreds of millions of dollars.

Though terms of the deal remain a mystery, it would appear to be a windfall for Musk, whose \$44 billion acquisition of Twitter last year has been a colossal bust thus far. A Fidelity mutual fund estimated in a report released this week that the social media company may have lost two-thirds of its value.

Officials with SpaceX did not respond to an email requesting comment about the contract, which was first reported by Bloomberg News. Musk did not respond to questions when contacted through Twitter.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, Starlink has become a lifeline for its government, armed forces and other essential operations such as hospitals. Musk provided thousands of Starlink terminals, but as the conflict has endured, he has expressed concern about the technology being used for military purposes.

## Biden says he got 'sandbagged' after tripping during Air Force graduation

*Associated Press*

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — President Joe Biden quipped that he got "sandbagged" Thursday after he tripped and fell — but was uninjured — while onstage at the U.S. Air Force Academy graduation.

Biden had been greeting the graduates in Colorado Springs, Colo., at the front of the stage with salutes and handshakes, and turned to jog back toward his seat when he fell. He was helped up by an Air Force officer as well as two members of his U.S. Secret Service detail.

Onlookers, including some members of the official delegation onstage, watched in con-

cern before Biden, who at age 80 is the oldest president in U.S. history, returned to his seat to view the end of the ceremony.

"I got sandbagged," the president told reporters with a smile when he arrived back at the White House on Thursday evening before pretending to jog into the residence. Two small black sandbags had been onstage supporting the teleprompter used by Biden and other speakers at the graduation.

"He's fine," White House communications director Ben LaBolt tweeted after the incident. "There was a sandbag on stage while he was shaking hands."

Biden has been dogged by questions about his age and his fitness to serve, and his missteps have become fodder for political rivals as he campaigns for a second term in 2024. He has stumbled before going up the stairs and onto Air Force One and he once got caught up in his bike pedals while stopping to talk to reporters near his home in Rehoboth Beach, Del.

Biden's personal doctor said after the president's most recent physical exam in February that Biden "remains a healthy, vigorous 80-year-old male, who is fit to successfully execute the duties of the Presidency."

# Blinken: No cease-fire without withdrawal

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday that a cease-fire in the war in Ukraine cannot be declared unless it is part of a “just and lasting” peace deal that includes Russia’s military withdrawal.

Blinken said that “a cease-fire that simply freezes current lines in place” and allows Russian President Vladimir Putin “to consolidate control over the territory he has seized, and rest, rearm, and reattack — that is not a just and lasting peace.”

Russia must also pay a share of Ukraine’s reconstruction and be held accountable for launching its full-scale invasion of its neighbor in February 2022, Blinken said in a speech during a visit to Finland, which recently joined NATO and shares a long border with Russia.

Allowing Moscow to keep the one-fifth of Ukraine territory it has occupied would send the wrong message to Russia and to “other would-be aggressors around the world,” according to Blinken.

Russia, however, wants any talks to address Ukraine’s request to join NATO. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pushed for the country’s membership in the Western military alliance that the Kremlin sees as a threat.

“Naturally, this (issue) will be one of the

main irritants and potential problems for many, many years to come,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday.

Blinken said Washington is ready to support peace efforts by other countries, including recent overtures from China and Brazil. But any peace agreement must uphold the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.

The United States is a leading Western ally and supplier of arms to Kyiv to help it push back against the Kremlin’s forces.

China, which says it is neutral and wants to serve as a mediator but has supported Moscow politically, on Friday urged countries to stop sending weapons to Ukraine.

In Ukraine, air defenses shot down more than 30 Russian cruise missiles and drones Friday in Moscow’s sixth air attack in six days on Kyiv, local officials said.

The Ukrainian capital was simultaneously attacked from different directions by Iranian-made Shahed drones and cruise missiles from the Caspian region, senior Kyiv official Serhii Popko wrote on Telegram.

A 68-year-old man and an 11-year-old child were wounded in the attack, with private houses, outbuildings and cars sustaining damage from falling debris, according to Ukraine’s Prosecutor General’s Office.

A recent spate of attacks on the capital has put strain on residents and tested the

strength of Ukraine’s air defenses while Kyiv officials plot what they say is an upcoming counteroffensive to push back the Kremlin’s forces 15 months after their full-scale invasion. Kyiv was the target of drone and missile attacks on 17 days last month, including daylight attacks.

Moscow’s strategy could backfire, however, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

The air campaign aims to “degrade Ukrainian counteroffensive capabilities, but ... the Russian prioritization of Kyiv is likely further limiting the campaign’s ability to meaningfully constrain potential Ukrainian counteroffensive actions,” it said in an assessment late Thursday.

Ukrainian air defenses intercepted all 15 cruise missiles and 21 attack drones, Ukraine’s chief of staff, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, said.

Ukraine’s presidential office said Friday that at least four civilians were killed and 42 wounded over the previous 24 hours.

Meanwhile, border regions of Russia once again came under fire from Ukraine. Recent cross-border raids have also rattled those regions of Russia and put the Kremlin on guard.

That could be a Ukrainian strategy to disperse Russian forces before a counteroffensive begins.

## US: Tanks, F-16s won’t be part of counteroffensive

*Associated Press*

PARIS — Training for Ukrainian forces on advanced U.S. Abrams tanks has begun, and while those systems will not be ready in time for the imminent counteroffensive, those weapons will be critical in the longer-term to Ukraine ultimately pushing Russia out of its occupied territories, Joint Chiefs chairman Gen. Mark Milley said.

Tank training began as the U.S. and allies began to work out agreements to train Ukrainians on F-16 fighter jets — another long-wished-for advanced capability. Ultimately, while the tanks are needed to expel Russian forces from Ukrainian territory, the F-16s would be part of a longer-term security plan to deter future attacks, Milley said Thursday.

“Everyone recognizes Ukraine needs a modernized Air Force,” Milley said. “It’s going to take a considerable amount of time.”

Milley said detailed planning on class sizes, the types of flying tactics and locations

for training was underway now between the U.S. and allies such as the Netherlands and the U.K. that have already pledged to provide F-16s. The U.S. has not said yet whether or not it will provide jets, but President Joe Biden has said the U.S. will support F-16 training.

As those details get worked out, Abrams tank training moved ahead. About 200 Ukrainian soldiers began an approximately 12-week training course in Germany on the U.S. tanks over the weekend to teach them how to maneuver, fire and conduct combined arms operations with the advanced armored system. Another 200 troops are getting trained on tank fueling and fuel truck maintenance.

The U.S. training schedule is timed to get the troops up to speed on the systems before 31 of the 70-ton Abrams tanks the U.S. has promised to Ukraine are scheduled to arrive by this fall. Those Abrams tanks will make up part of a force of about 300 tanks total

pledged by Western allies including Challenger tanks from the U.K., Leopard 2 tanks from Spain and Germany and light tanks from France.

The U.S. and western allies balked for months at providing tanks, citing the significant maintenance and fueling challenges the systems require. Abrams tanks can burn through fuel at a rate of at least two gallons per mile, whether the tank is moving or idling, which means a constant supply convoy of fuel trucks must stay within reach so it can keep moving forward.

As with the recent decision on providing F-16 fighter jet training for Ukraine, U.S. approval to send its own Abrams systems was a necessary part of the allies’ negotiations on tanks for Ukraine, so no western nation would be providing the systems alone, possibly incurring direct retaliation from Russia. In January, the Biden administration reversed course and agreed that Ukraine would get the tanks.



# White House ready for nuclear talks

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The White House is ready to have talks with Russia without preconditions about a future nuclear arms control framework even as it is enacting countermeasures in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to suspend the last nuclear arms control treaty between the two countries.

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan was expected to make clear the Biden administration's desire for talks on building a new framework during an address to the Arms Control Association on Friday, according to two senior administration officials who previewed the address on the condition of anonymity.

Putin announced in February he was suspending Russia's cooperation with the New START Treaty's provisions for nuclear warhead and missile inspections amid deep tensions

between Washington and Moscow over Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine. Russia, however, said it would respect the treaty's caps on nuclear weapons.

The officials said that Sullivan would underscore that the U.S. remains committed to adhering to the treaty if Russia does but will also "signal that we are open to dialogue" about building a new framework for managing nuclear risks once the treaty expires in February 2026.

The officials said that the Biden administration is willing to stick to the warhead caps until the treaty expires. Figuring out details about a post-2026 framework will be complicated by U.S.-Russia tension and the growing nuclear strength of China.

China now has about 410 nuclear warheads, according to an annual survey from the Federation of American Scientists.

The Pentagon in November estimated China's warhead count could grow to 1,000 by the end of the decade and to 1,500 by around 2035.

The size of China's arsenal and whether Beijing is willing to engage in substantive dialogue will impact the United States' future force posture and Washington's ability to come to any agreement with the Russians, the officials said.

U.S.-Chinese relations have been strained by the U.S. shooting down a Chinese spy balloon earlier this year after it crossed the continental U.S.; tensions about the status of the self-ruled island of Taiwan, which China claims as its own; U.S. export controls aimed at limiting China's advanced semiconductor equipment; and other friction.

The White House push on Moscow on nuclear arms control comes the day after the administration announced new countermeasures over Russia

suspending participation in the treaty.

The State Department announced Thursday it would no longer notify Russia of any updates on the status or location of "treaty-accountable items" like missiles and launchers, would revoke U.S. visas issued to Russian treaty inspectors and aircrew members and would cease providing telemetric information on test launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The United States and Russia earlier this year stopped sharing biannual nuclear weapons data required by the treaty.

The treaty, which then-Presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev signed in 2010, limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers and provides for on-site inspections to verify compliance.

## Money stored in payment apps could be vulnerable

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Customers of Venmo, PayPal and CashApp should not store their money with those apps for the long term because the funds might not be safe during a crisis, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau warned Thursday.

The alert comes several weeks after the failure of Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank and First Republic Bank, which all experienced bank runs after fearful customers with uninsured deposits pulled their money en masse.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insures bank accounts up to \$250,000. But money stored in Venmo or CashApp or Apple Cash is not being held in a traditional bank

account. So, if there is an event similar to a bank run with those payment apps, those funds may not be protected.

Some of the funds may be eligible for pass-through insurance coverage if customers do certain activities with the apps, the CFPB said, but generally by default the apps are not covered by deposit insurance. For example, if a customer opened a PayPal Savings account, it would have deposit insurance through PayPal's partner bank, Synchrony Bank. But the general PayPal account is not covered by insurance. For Apple Cash, which can be insured through Green Dot Bank, it requires a user to verify their identity to get deposit insurance.

## Ex-Playboy model accuses Cosby of drugging, assaulting her in 1969

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — A former Playboy model who alleges Bill Cosby drugged and sexually assaulted her and another woman at his home in 1969 sued him Thursday under a new California law that suspends the statute of limitations on sex abuse claims.

In her lawsuit, Victoria Valentino, 80, says she was an actress and singer 54 years ago, when she met Cosby, now 85. The comedian and actor later approached her at a Los Angeles café, where he spotted her crying over the recent drowning death of her 6-year-old son.

The Associated Press does not identify people who say they have been sexually assaulted unless they come for-

ward publicly.

Cosby offered to pay for a spa treatment for Valentino and a friend, and then sent a chauffeured car to pick the women up for dinner. That evening at a steakhouse, Cosby gave them each a pill, she said in the court filing.

"Here! Take this!" the lawsuit alleges Cosby said to them. "It will make you feel better. It will make you ALL feel better."

Cosby then drove the women to his house, where Valentino passed out on a couch, and later woke up and witnessed him sexually assaulting her unnamed friend, according to the lawsuit. The court documents allege Cosby then "engaged in forced sexual intercourse" with Valentino while she was incapacitated from the drug.

# Rain intensifies in Japan from Tropical Storm Mawar

Associated Press

NAHA, Japan — Heavy rains intensified by Tropical Storm Mawar fell on Japan's main archipelago Friday, halting trains and transit and threatening floods and mudslides in central and western regions, while residents were urged to use caution.

Warnings were issued in parts of western and central Japan, with up to 10 inches of rain forecast through Saturday evening. Residents in vulnerable areas, including those in Mie, Wakayama, Aichi and Shizuoka prefectures in central Japan, were warned of the potential for flooding and mudslides and advised to go to evacuation centers if possible.

Television footage showed swollen rivers in residential areas in Wakayama city, including one where brown water rose as high as the bottom of a bridge over it.

In Tokyo, the few pedestrians on the rainy streets clutched umbrellas as winds blew tree branches around. Afternoon classes were also canceled at some schools. Ferry operations in the Tokyo Bay were canceled for the rest of Friday.

Heavy rain and mudslide warnings were also issued in the nearby city of Yokohama, where a number of evacuation centers were

opened.

Shinkansen super-express trains were suspended between Tokyo and Shin Osaka in western Japan due to heavy rain, according to the Central Japan Railway Co. Flights and ferries in southern Japan also were canceled due to continuing strong winds. More than 17,500 homes in seven of the nine prefectures serviced by the Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings lost power.

Mawar remained well offshore in the Pacific Ocean, but its winds were strong enough as it passed Okinawa to cause injuries. An older woman who fell had a serious head injury in Nishihara city, while the injuries to seven other people were slight.

The tropical storm had sustained winds blowing up to 51 mph Friday afternoon and was blowing east-northeast at 15 mph, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. It was near Amami-Oshima Island, about 930 miles southwest of Tokyo.

The warm and damp air from the tropical storm was intensifying seasonal rains, and a linear band of heavy rain was hovering over the islands, the meteorological agency said.

Mawar largely skirted Taiwan and the Philippines earlier this week.

# US employers added a strong 339K jobs in May

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The nation's employers stepped up their hiring in May, adding a robust 339,000 jobs, well above expectations and evidence of enduring strength in an economy that the Federal Reserve is desperately trying to cool.

Friday's report from the government reflected the job market's resilience after more than a year of rapid interest rate increases by the Fed. Many industries, from construction to restaurants to health care, are still adding jobs to keep up with consumer demand and restore their workforces to pre-pandemic levels.

Yet there were some mixed messages in the jobs figures, which also showed that the unemployment rate rose to 3.7%, from a five-decade low of 3.4% in April. The government compiles the unemployment data with a different survey than the one used to calculate job gains. The two surveys can sometimes conflict.

The length of the average work week also declined, and wage growth cooled, resulting in a jobs report that economists said painted an unusually complicated picture of the employment market. Still, the overall picture was an encouraging one.

# Protesters hold 'day without immigrants' in Florida

Associated Press

IMMOKALEE, Fla. — Across Florida on Thursday, workers didn't show up at construction sites and tomato fields and scores of restaurants, shops and other small businesses never opened their doors to protest a new state law that imposes restrictions on undocumented immigrants.

Organizers dubbed the protest "a day without immigrants."

In the Orlando area, dozens of protesters, including some driving trucks with small construction cranes, demonstrated at a busy intersection outside the office of a state lawmaker who had championed the law.

In Immokalee, an area in southwest Florida known for its tomato fields, hundreds of protesters, many with families, marched two miles around the town, chanting and carrying signs.

In Fort Lauderdale, opponents of the law chanted and waved flags outside Isis Cordova's Latin cuisine restaurant, which was closed in protest.

"I managed to get legal status in this country, and I said one day when I have documents I'm going to raise my voice. I'm also going to speak up for those people who don't have a voice," Cordova said. "Because I know what it's like to be in these shoes on the

other side, with that fear and living in the shadows."

The legislation Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law last month bolsters his migrant relocation program and limits social services for immigrants lacking permanent legal status. It also expands requirements for businesses with more than 25 staffers to use E-Verify, a federal system that determines if employees can legally work in the U.S. Another provision requires hospitals that accept Medicaid to include a citizenship question on intake forms, which critics have said is intended to dissuade immigrants living in the U.S. illegally from seeking medical care.

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# Jokic, Nuggets roll past Heat 104-93

Associated Press

DENVER — Nikola Jokic and the Denver Nuggets were facing some questions going into their first NBA Finals, and their answers came in resounding fashion.

No, a week and a half off didn't hurt them.

And no, the NBA's biggest stage isn't too big, either.

Jokic got a triple-double in his finals debut, Jamal Murray scored 26 points and the Nuggets had little trouble with the cold-shooting Miami Heat on the way to a 104-93 win in Game 1 on Thursday night.

"I think that's what the beauty of this team is," Murray said. "We have so many different weapons and so many different looks. You've got to guard everybody. ... Free-flowing, and it's a lot of fun."

The Heat had been 3-0 in openers so far in these playoffs, all on the road, but Denver is still unbeaten at home. Game 1 winners in the finals go on to win the title nearly 70% of the time.

Advantage, Nuggets.

"That was one of my last messages to the group before our game," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said. "I reminded our group, if they didn't know, that Miami went into Milwaukee and won Game 1. They went into the Garden in New York City and won Game 1. They won Game 1 up in Boston. So, we did not want them coming in here taking control of the series on our court."

Jokic was the one in control. The two-time NBA MVP finished with 27 points, 14 assists and 10 rebounds for the Nuggets, who waited 47 years to make the finals and didn't disappoint.

"The most important thing is to win a game," Jokic said after his ninth triple-double of this year's playoffs — his sixth in his last seven games. "I'm trying to win a game in any possible way."

Aaron Gordon added 16 points and Michael Porter Jr. scored 14 for Denver, which

trailed for all of 34 seconds and eventually led by as many as 24.

Bam Adebayo finished with 26 points and 13 rebounds for Miami, which shot 41% for the game — 33% from 3-point range. Gabe Vincent scored 19, Haywood Highsmith had 18 and Jimmy Butler added 13 for the Heat.

Miami was 2 for 2 from the foul line — a night like none other in NBA playoff history.

It tied the fewest free throws ever made in a playoff game, broke the record for fewest attempts from the line in a playoff game — the previous record was three — and set NBA Finals records for fewest free throws made and attempted. The Los Angeles Lakers had the previous marks there, going 3 for 5 from the line against Philadelphia on May 26, 1983.

"We've got to attack the rim a lot more, myself included," Butler said.

Added Adebayo, tongue firmly in cheek: "We made history."

Game 2 is in Denver on Sun-

day night.

Miami opened the fourth quarter on an 11-0 run, cutting an 84-63 deficit to start the final period down to 84-74. The Heat actually got within nine on a 3-pointer by Highsmith with 2:34 left, but no closer and there wasn't any doubt, either.

"It's a long series," Vincent said. "First to four wins. Adjustments will be made. And we will learn from this loss."

Malone gave his team a pop quiz in shootaround Thursday morning, peppering them with questions about the game plan and what had to be done in the most important game to date in franchise history.

They had all the answers then. Had them all at game time, too. They were the team with minimal NBA Finals experience, only two players having been to the title round before, and yet they looked right at home before the home crowd in Game 1.

"We were ready," Denver guard Bruce Brown said.

## NBA to announce decision on Ja Morant after Finals

Associated Press

DENVER — The latest sanctions, if any, that the NBA plans to levy against Memphis guard Ja Morant for his second instance of displaying a gun on social media will be announced shortly after the finals, Commissioner Adam Silver said Thursday.

Silver did not say what the penalties were, not even saying if Morant would be available at the start of next season. Morant was suspended for eight games by the NBA in March for an incident where he broadcast himself on Instagram displaying a gun in a suburban Denver club, and was suspended by the Grizzlies

last month after another video showed Morant displaying what appeared to be a gun yet again.

Silver said the league has discovered more information during its current investigation, but the decision was made to not have the next round of Morant news overshadow the NBA Finals.

"We probably could have brought it to a head now, but we made the decision — and I believe the players' association agrees with us — that it would be unfair to these players and these teams, in the middle of this series, to announce the results of that investigation," Silver said.

## Referee Eric Lewis is not selected to work Finals

Associated Press

DENVER — Eric Lewis was not selected as one of the 12 referees who will work the NBA Finals between the Denver Nuggets and Miami Heat, while the league continues to look into whether he used a Twitter account to defend himself and other officials from online critiques.

Lewis had been chosen to work the finals in each of the past four seasons. This year's finals referees were announced by the league Thursday morning, about 12 hours before the start of the title series.

After some now-deleted tweets were revealed by a pair of Twitter users last week, the

league opened an investigation into whether Lewis violated NBA rules by speaking about officiating in an unauthorized manner. It has not been determined if Lewis was using the account, which utilizes the name "blaircuttiff." The account was deactivated briefly last week but was active again Wednesday evening.

"Regarding Eric Lewis and the social media posts, we are continuing to review the matter and he will not be working the finals," NBA spokesman Mike Bass said Thursday.

The league has not revealed a timetable for the completion of its probe into whether Lewis used the Twitter account.



# Padres power to 10-1 win over Marlins

Associated Press

MIAMI — Joe Musgrove carried a no-hitter into the sixth inning, Fernando Tatis Jr. had three doubles and four RBIs and the San Diego Padres beat the Miami Marlins 10-1 on Thursday.

Recently acquired Gary Sánchez homered for the second consecutive day, part of San Diego's 11-hit effort after being limited to two hits by three Miami pitchers Wednesday. The Padres finished 5-4 in their nine-game trip. Sánchez has hit safely in the three games since joining his new club.

The 30-year-old Musgrove (3-2) held Miami hitless until Luis Arraez's infield single. The right-hander, who pitched the Padres' only no-hitter in April 2021, allowed a third-inning run, three hits, walked three and struck out three over six innings.

Jesús Luzardo (4-4) gave up five runs, four hits, struck out eight and walked one in 5½ innings.

**Mets 4, Phillies 2:** Mark Canha hit a go-ahead, two-run homer, Max Scherzer overcame a shaky first inning to win his third straight decision and host New York completed a three-game sweep of Philadelphia.

Trailing 2-0, Jeff McNeil hit an RBI single in the third and Canha homered in the fourth against former Met Taijuan Walker (4-3).

The Mets improved to 30-27.

Philadelphia (25-31) dropped a season-worst six games under .500. The Phillies are on their fourth losing streak of four or more games.

Scherzer (5-2) fell behind 2-0 in the first after Trea Turner singled with one out and Bryce Harper walked. A double steal led to a run when catcher Francisco Álvarez's throw skipped into left field for an error, and Nick Castellanos, who had three of the Phillies' six hits, followed with a sacrifice fly.

Scherzer gave up two runs — one earned — and five hits in seven innings, striking out nine and walking one.

**Diamondbacks 6, Rockies 5:** Corbin Carroll had a two-out, two-run single in the ninth inning and host Arizona moved into a tie with the idle Los Angeles Dodgers for a share of the NL West lead.

Gabriel Moreno walked with one out against Pierce Johnson (0-2), and Ketel Marte doubled with two outs, moving Moreno to third. With first base open and Christian Walker on deck, the Rockies decided to pitch to Carroll, and he came through with a liner for his first career walk-off hit.

Kevin Ginkel (2-0) pitched a 1-2-3 ninth to help Arizona win its fifth straight and improve to 34-23 to match the Dodgers for the best record in the National League.

Ezequiel Tovar homered lead-

ing off the seventh for Colorado.

**Red Sox 8, Reds 2:** Rafael Devers doubled to break an eighth-inning tie and host Boston overcame Chris Sale's early exit because of shoulder soreness to beat Cincinnati.

Sale came out with two out in the fourth inning after walking Nick Senzel, with Boston trailing 1-0. He struck out five in 3⅓ innings.

Kiki Hernandez hit a solo homer and Connor Wong added a two-run shot for the Red Sox, who avoided the three-game sweep.

Chris Martin (1-1) earned the win. Kevin Herget (1-2) took the loss.

**Twins 7, Guardians 6:** Royce Lewis hit a tying two-run homer in the eighth inning and Willi Castro had a game-ending sacrifice fly with the bases loaded in the ninth as Minnesota rallied past visiting Cleveland.

Eli Morgan (2-1) walked Christian Vázquez to start the ninth. Jorge Polanco followed with a double. After an intentional walk, with the infield drawn in, Castro poked a perfectly placed fly ball to right field that was plenty deep enough to score Vázquez.

Gabriel Arias and Will Brennan each had two hits for Cleveland.

Emilio Pagán pitched 2⅓ scoreless innings in relief, and Griffin Jax (3-6) worked a perfect ninth for the victory for the

Twins, who got a home run from Michael Taylor to lead off a four-hit fifth against rookie Tanner Bibee.

**Blue Jays 3, Brewers 1:** Kevin Gausman pitched 6⅓ shutout innings to win back-to-back starts for the first time this season, Bo Bichette and Matt Chapman homered and host Toronto dealt Milwaukee its fifth loss in seven games.

Gausman (4-3) struck out 11, giving him 100 on the season and reclaiming the AL lead from Angels right-hander Shohei Ohtani (90). Gausman allowed five hits and walked two. Jordan Romano earned his 13th save in 16 chances.

Bichette and Chapman both connected off Brewers right-hander Freddy Peralta (5-5) in a three-run first inning.

Peralta allowed three runs and six hits in six innings, his second straight losing decision.

**Astros 5, Angels 2:** Alex Bregman and José Abreu had two RBIs each and Kyle Tucker added three hits to lead Houston over visiting Los Angeles in a game during which Angels manager Phil Nevin was ejected.

The victory was the 2,126th of manager Dusty Baker's career, moving him past Joe McCarthy into sole possession of eighth place on baseball's all-time list.

Houston's Ronel Blanco (1-0) allowed seven hits and two runs in 5⅓ innings for the win in his first major league start.

## SEC to play 8-game conference schedule in 2024

Associated Press

DESTIN, Fla. — The Southeastern Conference will play eight league games in 2024 when it expands to 16 teams with the additions of Oklahoma and Texas, but beyond that the schedule model is still to be determined.

Commissioner Greg Sankey said Thursday, the second-to-last day of the SEC's spring

meetings, that the conference's university presidents unanimously voted to implement a short-term solution to a scheduling conundrum that has been debated within the league for more than a year.

SEC leaders have been trying to decide between a nine-game conference schedule that would include three annual rivalry games and an eight-game mod-

el with one annual rivalry game.

"Our long-term options are fully open," Sankey said.

He also said, confidently, a long-term scheduling model would be hashed before the conference returns to the Florida Panhandle this time next year.

"Nobody wants to go through this every year," Sankey said.

Football matchups for the

2024 season will be released on June 14 on the SEC Network, without exact dates. Sankey said traditional rivalries such as Alabama-Auburn and Mississippi-Mississippi State would be honored.

"Are you asking me: Are we not going to play the Iron bowl and Egg Bowl? I won't be the commissioner if that happens," Sankey said.

# Riley shoots 67 at difficult Memorial

Associated Press

DUBLIN, Ohio — Davis Riley opened with a 67 at the Memorial to finish atop the leaderboard after the opening round for the second straight year. And that's where the similarities end.

Riley birdied three of his last four holes Thursday afternoon when the turf was firm and the wind was swirling and the bad breaks led to big numbers, as Rory McIlroy found out.

Riley was in a six-way share of the lead last year. On Thursday, he led by one over Matt Wallace. Jordan Spieth was in the group at 69, ending his hopes for a bogey-free day by hitting into two bunkers on the 18th hole and saving bogey from the second one.

It was hot. It was hard. And at times it was tough to watch.

Chad Ramey hit four shots that went into the water on the ninth hole, which featured a front pin and a stream in front of the green. He made a 13, the highest score ever recorded on

any of the holes at Muirfield Village.

He posted an 88, still shy of the record high score of 92 that Roger Maltbie shot in 1979 in a second round that featured 30 mph wind and a wind chill index of 13 degrees.

Dry and hot is the weather tournament founder Jack Nicklaus always wanted but rarely gets, and there were plenty of comparisons to a U.S. Open except for the generous fairways.

Defending champion Billy Horschel has been in a slump, and Muirfield Village was no place to try to snap out of that. Horschel had four 6s on his card of 84.

"My confidence is the lowest it's been in my entire career. I think ever in my entire golf career," Horschel said. "So it's funny, as low as it feels, it feels like I'm not that far off at the same time. Which is insane to see when you see me shoot 84 today."

Wallace, who needs a victory this week to avoid U.S. Open

qualifying, posted his 68 in the morning before the wind and the temperatures picked up. Shane Lowry had five straight birdies in the morning in relatively calm conditions, but even he wasn't immune to a fast golf course that could be punishing without notice.

McIlroy was 3 under for his round playing the 18th when his drive went right — not unusual for the shape of that hole — and was tumbling toward the sand until it stopped. That was very unusual. The ball was nearly belt-high and he could barely take a stance. He did his best to chop it out, and it just cleared the bunker into thick grass.

From there, his 9-iron caught a flyer and sailed over the green to the shaggy hill. His flop shot came out clunky and over the green and its front pin. His chip was weak. He missed the putt. And his triple bogey wiped out an otherwise good day.

Spieth almost was in that predicament. At least he was in the sand, but he hit a poor 7-iron

that barely got out of the sand, just ahead of McIlroy's ball. That turned out to be a break, because when Spieth saw what happened to McIlroy's shot, he went down to a pitching wedge.

It was a flyer, but it at least took a short hop into the sand in front of the green. He came inches away from holing — as he did for birdie from the bunker on No. 10 — and got away with a bogey.

"It's nice to beat a tough golf course," Spieth said.

Mark Hubbard also was at 69 and tried to remind himself that it was a very good score after his bogey-bogey-bogey finish.

"I guess on paper it wasn't what I wanted, but I had 5-iron into 16, 7-wood into 17 and 4-iron into 18. Like, that's a little tough coming in there today," Hubbard said. "So I told my caddie that's the least mad I'm ever going to be bogeying the last three."

Jon Rahm and Adam Scott were at 70 playing in the morning.

## Andreeva wins easily at French Open; Gauff up next

Associated Press

PARIS — Mirra Andreeva is the latest teen sensation in tennis, a 16-year-old Russian who is the youngest player to win a match in the women's main draw at the French Open since 2005.

Do the math: That's before she was born.

The 143rd-ranked Andreeva made her way through qualifying rounds last week without dropping a set to earn her debut berth in the women's bracket at a Grand Slam tournament—and she still is making things look easy so far at Roland Garros. A 6-1, 6-2 victory over Diane Perry of France in 77 minutes on Thursday put her in the third round; that followed a 6-2, 6-1 victory over Alison Riske-Amri-

traj of the U.S. that lasted 56 minutes.

Next up will be a contest against 2022 French Open runner-up Coco Gauff, who beat Julia Grabher 6-2, 6-3. Gauff, a 19-year-old American, is seeded No. 6 and made her initial breakthrough by beating Venus Williams en route to the fourth round at Wimbledon at age 14.

Gauff is one of just 12 seeded women left in the field, the fewest to reach the third round at Roland Garros since the number of seeds expanded to 32 in 2002.

Andreeva and Gauff have practiced together, but that won't mean much Saturday.

"The practice and the match is different, so I might also play differently," Andreeva said. "I don't

know. Who knows?"

She's played terrifically clean tennis so far, including making a total of 15 unforced errors to 38 for Parry and winning 14 of 21 points that lasted at least nine strokes.

"Really solid for her age. She did everything better than me today," said the 79th-ranked Parry, who made it to the third round at two majors last season.

Before arriving in Paris, Andreeva showed what she can do by eliminating three players ranked in the Top 40 at the clay-court Madrid Open.

She was asked Thursday during a news conference filled with one-liners: What's the secret to success at such a young age?

"Maybe, as my coach says, to not be like a diva. To stay humble

all the time," said Andreeva, whose older sister, Erika, lost in the first round at Roland Garros this week.

The exits by seeded women continued with Bernarda Pera defeating No. 22 Donna Vekic 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, although No. 1 Iga Swiatek, No. 4 Elena Rybakina and No. 7 Ons Jabeur all advanced in straight sets.

The men's bracket saw the departure of No. 8 Jannik Sinner with a wild 6-7 (0), 7-6 (7), 1-6, 7-6 (4), 7-5 loss across nearly 5½ hours against 79th-ranked Daniel Altmaier, and No. 18 Alex de Minaur was eliminated by Tomas Martin Etcheverry 6-3, 7-6 (2), 6-3.

No. 4 Casper Ruud, No. 12 Frances Tiafoe and No. 15 Borna Coric all won.