

DOD memo aims to promote warfighters

By LYDIA GORDON
Stars and Stripes

The Pentagon plans to begin assessing service members' ability to wage joint warfare as part of promotion and advancement considerations for officers and senior noncommissioned officers, according to a recent memorandum.

The memo issued by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on May 20 was confirmed as authentic by Task & Purpose after it circulated online among military communities.

It directs the military services to develop a new evaluation metric focused on identifying and measuring what Hegseth's memo calls "joint warfighting ability."

"The character and competence of our officers and noncommissioned officers will be the decisive factor in all future conflicts," Hegseth wrote in

the memo.

"We therefore must ensure our system for identifying, developing, and promoting leaders is ruthlessly meritocratic and focused squarely on what matters most: joint warfighting ability," he added.

The release did not state when the implementation would take place, but directed Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Anthony Tata to lead the effort.

The directive aligns with Hegseth's broader push to emphasize warfighting readiness — the ability to fight and meet mission demands — throughout the military.

Since taking office, he has repeatedly called for a focus on merit, physical fitness and combat effectiveness, arguing those traits should guide how the military develops and pro-

motes leaders.

"Real toxic leadership is endangering subordinates with low standards. Real toxic leadership is promoting people based on immutable characteristics or quotas instead of based on merit," Hegseth said in a 2025 speech.

Hegseth has faced criticism from lawmakers and the media for what has been described as unusual involvement in the services' promotions of senior officers, including blocking some promotions and reportedly urging leaders to promote others who did not meet eligibility requirements.

The Pentagon did not immediately respond to requests for comment about what the new metric will entail.

The memo does not specify how the Defense Department will define or measure "joint warfighting ability," includ-

ing how the concept would apply to service members in career fields that rarely participate in joint operations.

"As a maintainer on jet engines, I don't understand how this is supposed to work," one user wrote in a popular Air Force Reddit discussion about the memo.

"My (job) has nothing to do with joint operations, and the engine I maintain is only used by the USAF, not any of the other branches. Does that make me less lethal?" the user added.

Joint military experience is not a new concept for advancement evaluation.

The Defense Department already maintains a Joint Qualification System that recognizes officers for joint assignments, education and training completed throughout their careers.

Progress in Iran talks stalls after Hezbollah rejects truce

Bloomberg News

There was no sign of progress in ceasefire talks between the U.S. and Iran after the worst burst of violence in weeks and as the Tehran-backed Hezbollah militia rejected on Thursday a U.S.-brokered truce in Lebanon.

President Donald Trump said ceasefire talks are in the "final" stages. Earlier, Iran's foreign minister said the negotiations had stalled. On Wednesday, Iran fired missiles and drones at Kuwait and Bahrain, killing one person and injuring dozens at Kuwait's main airport, after the U.S. struck an oil tanker headed to the Islamic Republic.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah mili-

tants said they refused to abide by the conditions of a ceasefire announced by the U.S. State Department only hours before. At least four people were killed in Israeli strikes, The Associated Press reported. And Israel's military said Hezbollah launched several rockets toward its soldiers, with no injuries reported.

Despite the continued fighting, oil prices slipped after three days of gains amid investor optimism in the wake of the U.S. announcement of the Lebanon truce deal. Israel's continued military strikes there have become a major obstacle as Trump seeks to extricate the U.S. from the Iran war that he

started.

Trump has repeatedly claimed a deal is close even as Iran refuses give in to his demands on its nuclear program and his terms of reopening the Strait of Hormuz. Before the war, the waterway carried a fifth of world oil supplies, but they've been largely cut off since the U.S. and Israel struck Iran on Feb. 28. Industry officials have warned prices could spike again as inventories are drawn down.

On Thursday, Trump said in a social media post he's "right in the middle of my final negotiations to end the War with the Islamic Republic of Iran." He didn't elaborate on the talks, us-

ing the post to blast a vote by the Republican-led House of Representatives to halt the war.

While it won't end the U.S. military campaign against Iran, the move is a reflection of the increasing unpopularity of the conflict in the U.S. and worries from Trump's own party about the conflict's impact on the mid-term elections.

On Thursday, Hezbollah chief Naim Qasem dismissed the U.S.-brokered deal between Israel and the Lebanese government as "absurd." The group, which is not a party to the negotiations, will not accept linking its presence in Lebanon with stopping the war and Israel's withdrawal, he said in a letter.

House votes to require Iran war authorization

By SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The House adopted a resolution Wednesday directing President Donald Trump to seek congressional authorization before continuing military operations in Iran as more Republicans came out in opposition to the conflict.

It was the fourth time the chamber voted on a resolution to end the three-month war and the first time it succeeded, in a 215-208 vote.

The measure was on track to be adopted last month, after a similar measure passed in the Senate, until Republican leaders abruptly pulled the vote from the floor over concerns that the resolution would pass and deliver a rebuke to Trump.

Four Republicans — Tom Barrett of Michigan, Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, Warren Davidson of Ohio and Thomas Massie of Kentucky — joined every Democrat in supporting the measure on Wednesday.

Democrat Jared Golden of Maine, who previously opposed such measures, switched positions to vote for it.

The vote came hours after Secretary of State Marco Rubio doubled down on the administration's claims that the war had concluded and the U.S. was now conducting "completely defensive" strikes against Iran.

"It's a fact: we're no longer conducting sustained strikes inside of Iran to degrade their military because Epic Fury is over," he said in testimony to the House

Foreign Affairs Committee.

He called the operation, which began on Feb. 28, "hostilities" instead of a war and said the U.S. had achieved its military objectives. Bouts of fighting have continued, however, despite a ceasefire that took effect in April.

Iran launched a barrage of ballistic missiles and drones at American bases in Kuwait and Bahrain this week after the U.S. struck an oil tanker that it said was attempting to breach an American naval blockade on Iranian ports.

Rep. Sara Jacobs, D-Calif., cited the exchange of fire as she pressed Rubio on whether Operation Epic Fury had truly ended.

"The American people are not stupid, Mr. Secretary. We all know that this war is not over,"

she said. "It's now day 97 of the war that the president said he wanted to end quickly."

Democrats and some Republicans have rejected claims by the Trump administration that hostilities had stopped with the ceasefire and there was therefore no need to abide by provisions of the 1973 War Powers Resolution.

The law requires a president to terminate the use of forces within 60 days, with a potential 30-day extension for the safe withdrawal of troops, unless Congress explicitly authorizes the military action or declares war.

Rubio said last month that the Trump administration is only complying with elements of the law to maintain good relations with Congress.

Navy ship repair facility hit with leadership purge

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy has relieved the top three leaders of its largest overseas ship repair facility, marking the second leadership shakeup at the command in less than two years.

Capt. Wendel Penetrante, commander of U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility and Japanese Regional Maintenance Center; Capt. Edwin Catubig, the executive officer; and Master Chief Petty Officer Thomas Howell were removed from their positions Wednesday by Rear Adm. Dan Lannamann, head of Navy Regional Maintenance Center, according to a news release that day.

The Navy cited a "loss of confidence in their ability to command," the standard phrase the service uses when removing senior leaders.

"There is no impact to the com-

mand's mission as a result of these reliefs," the release said.

The removals come 20 months after the previous commander and executive officer, Capt. Zaldy Valenzuela and Cmdr. Art Palalay, were also relieved for a loss of confidence in October 2024.

Lannamann, then a Navy captain, temporarily assumed command after those removals until Penetrante took over in February 2025.

The facility is considered a critical component of U.S. naval operations in the Indo-Pacific. The command provides intermediate- and depot-level maintenance for Navy surface ships assigned to the 7th Fleet and supports operations throughout Japan and Southeast Asia.

The organization employs approximately 120 military personnel, 325 civilian and 2,500 Japanese workers, according to the Navy.

Marines bid adieu to Harriers in 'Sundown Ceremony' in NC

Stars and Stripes

The 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing bid farewell to the AV-8B Harrier II in a "Sundown Ceremony" Wednesday at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in North Carolina.

The Harrier jump jet was in service for over 40 years.

The farewell ceremony featured a five-jet formation flyover, which landed in front of a crowd of service members, veterans and aviation fans. The week's events kicked off with an evening "Sundown Social" Monday, followed by a "Sunrise Run," an open house and picnic Tuesday.

The U.S. Marine Corps posted a memorandum announcing the "Harrier Sundown Celebration" in March, as the Harrier will reach the end of its service life at the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

British Harriers made their reputation during the 1982 Falklands War, flying against Argen-

tine forces that had occupied the British territory of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic.

The Marines procured the aircraft as the AV-8A Harrier. The design was extensively modified, and its engines were upgraded, in a joint effort by McDonnell Douglas and British Aerospace. The Marines introduced the AV-8B Harrier II in 1985. Boeing took over the aircraft program when it acquired McDonnell Douglas in 1997.

The vertical takeoff and landing ability made the Harrier well-suited to operations from the rough runways and Marine amphibious assault ships from which Marines operated during Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait and Iraq and other Mideast conflicts after the 9/11 attacks. The Harrier is being replaced in Marine squadrons by the Lockheed Martin F-35B Lightning II, a fifth-generation stealth fighter and ground-attack aircraft.

Calif.'s governor race starts to narrow as tally continues

Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — As election officials continued tallying ballots Wednesday, Republican Steve Hilton and Democrat Xavier Becerra continued to lead in the unsettled race to replace termed-out Gov. Gavin Newsom, with billionaire Democrat Tom Steyer hoping for a surge in late-arriving votes to push him into one of the top-two spots to advance to the November general election.

Hilton, a British immigrant and former Fox News commentator, told reporters outside the state Capitol in Sacramento on Wednesday morning that he was “very encouraged” by the latest results, though he stopped short of declaring victory.

Becerra and Steyer did not hold public events as of Wednesday afternoon.

Election data analyst Paul

Mitchell said it would be nearly mathematically impossible for Steyer to close the gap.

“As we start to get more data, the runway is going to get shorter and shorter,” he said.

He said Steyer, to finish in the top two in the primary, would have to get about 30% of the remaining uncounted votes while Becerra would need to be limited to 15%. The self-funded billionaire has “a very high hill to overcome, and the challenge gets steeper and steeper as we get more data from the counties,” Mitchell said.

Once mired near the bottom of a crowded pack of Democrats in opinion polls, Becerra, a former Biden administration Cabinet member, rocketed ahead of his rival candidates after former Rep. Eric Swalwell dropped out of the race in April amid allegations of sexual assault and misconduct.

The scandal triggered an upswing of voter interest in California’s once sluggish governor’s race and in Becerra, who seized the moment.

Steyer, who spent more than \$216 million of his wealth on the race, has not conceded defeat.

His campaign manager, Heather Hargreaves, wrote in a letter to supporters Wednesday that “we’re going to give democracy time to work. County election officials were still counting ballots and didn’t expect to know how many people voted in total until” Thursday, when officials are required to report the estimated number of ballots left to process.

The billionaire former hedge fund owner campaigned against the corporate and special interests that have a powerful presence in Sacramento and often spend heavily in elections, including this year against Steyer.

LA: Combs’ sex assault cases under examination

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles County prosecutors are reviewing two sex assault cases against Sean “Diddy” Combs that stem from allegations made by a Florida music producer last year, law enforcement officials and the alleged victim said Wednesday.

Investigators from the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department presented the cases to prosecutors in January, according to a statement from the district attorney’s office.

A spokesman for the district attorney’s office declined to say when the alleged incidents occurred or explain why it has taken nearly nine months to make a charging decision.

Combs — who rose to fame as a hip-hop mogul in the 1990s as the face of Bad Boy Records — has gone through a yearslong public downfall following myriad allegations of domestic violence and sex abuse.

In July, a New York jury convicted him of transporting prostitutes across state lines for drug-fueled bacchanals referred to as “freak-offs.”

He was sentenced to four years in federal prison and remains incarcerated at a minimum-security prison in New Jersey.

Jonathan Hay — a Florida-based music producer who was working with Combs on a project to remix songs written by deceased rap legend Notorious B.I.G., also known as Christopher Wallace — said Wednesday that he is the alleged victim in the cases under review by the district attorney.

Hay first reported the assaults to police in Largo, Fla., he has said.

Pentagon hires convicted Jan. 6 rioter to sensitive military post

The State

A convicted Jan. 6 rioter from South Carolina has been hired by the Trump administration to work in a Pentagon office “that manages highly classified military operations,” according to a report in *The Washington Post*.

The report about convicted Jan. 6 defendant Elias Irizarry now working in the Pentagon was based on four unnamed sources. It is full of details about Irizarry’s arrest and conviction already reported in more than 20 stories about him and his co-defendants over the years by *The State* newspaper.

Irizarry works in the Defense Department’s Special Operations and Low Intensity Con-

flict office and some staff are questioning how anyone convicted in the attack on the Capitol “could be trusted for such a sensitive role in the U.S. government,” the *Post* reported.

Irizarry, now 24 and who had just turned 19 at the time of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol, was a Citadel student midway through his freshman year when he traveled to Washington with two friends to attend President Donald Trump’s “Stop the Steal” rally and participated in breaking into the Capitol, according to court records.

After Irizarry’s arrest in March 2021 by the FBI, Citadel officials allowed him to stay in school, where he remained until

he pleaded guilty in October 2023 to entering and remaining in a restricted building (the Capitol). Other charges against him including disorderly conduct in a Capitol building were dropped as part of a plea deal.

U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan sentenced Irizarry on March 15, 2023, to 14 days confinement.

The *Post* reported that the office that Irizarry is assigned to covers irregular warfare and counterterrorism. The office’s team “comprises about 40 people, and its portfolio includes operations such as embassy security, personnel recovery and hostage rescue,” The *Post* reported.

Tlaib accused of 'advocating for terrorists'

The Detroit News

WASHINGTON — A U.S. House debate over Rep. Rashida Tlaib's resolution to withdraw U.S. troops from Lebanon devolved into personal attacks Wednesday night, with an Ohio Republican lawmaker accusing the Michigan Democrat of "advocating for terrorists on a daily basis" and advocating for "butchers" — a reference to the militant group Hezbollah.

Tlaib, who is the only Palestinian American member of Congress, shot back at GOP Rep. Max Miller of Ohio, angrily demanding that the words be taken down or stricken from the House record.

"That is a direct attack on my character," Tlaib said. "I please request, you must strike the words down."

The lawmaker presiding over the chamber, Rep. Jay Obernolte of California, requested that Miller be seated, setting off a process by which the parliamentarian weighed whether the remarks were a violation of House rules of decorum.

Obernolte, after consultation with the parliamentarian and a significant delay, ruled that Miller's words contained an allegation that "impugn the patriotism and loyalty of the member of the House, which is not in

order ..."

Miller in punishment was prohibited from speaking on the floor for the rest of the day.

Rep. Brian Mast, R-Fla., read a statement from Miller from the floor: "Yes, I said it. I own it. I stand by it."

The dustup started when Miller said that if Tlaib and her supporters on the Lebanon resolution really cared about Lebanon they would "cheer on" the elimination of "bloodthirsty" terrorists like Hezbollah that operate as proxies for the Iranian regime, rather than advancing "meaningless resolutions to denigrate American foreign policy."

"I can appreciate the passion for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I do not appreciate their lack of education and understanding of what is really going on there," Miller said.

"Hezbollah is a terrorist organization. ... Its members are butchers that you like to hang out with to a certain extent," he added in reference to Tlaib.

After Tlaib protested, Miller said, "I'm sorry. Are we getting a little emotional?"

"I certainly believe you advocate for them," Miller continued. "Yes, you advocate for terrorists on a daily basis. You advocate for a terrorist regime every single day."

Sex offender is killed by FBI after taking hostages

Los Angeles Times

A dramatic hostage scenario played out in Central California overnight Tuesday, when a convicted sex offender barricaded himself in a building, threatened to blow himself up and was ultimately killed by the FBI, authorities said.

In what sounds like something out of a movie, police and FBI officials said that 41-year-old Anthony Scott Searles-Harris walked into a Chase Bank building in downtown Bakersfield Tuesday afternoon with explosives "attached to his person," tied up several hostages on the second floor and locked himself and everyone else in-

side.

Searles-Harris was convicted of committing sex acts with underage girls, and was sentenced to prison and released in 2018, according to online records. In addition, The Associated Press reported that Searles-Harris had served about a year in the Army before being dishonorably discharged in 2007 for going AWOL.

In a video uploaded to YouTube in October titled, "Labeled a Monster," Searles-Harris accused law enforcement of planting evidence in his case. He also said that the media was complicit in his conviction by publicizing the "false allega-

tions" against him.

The hostage crisis began Tuesday around 1 p.m., when police officers responded to reports of a man with an explosive device who entered the Chase Bank building on 17th Street, according to Jeremy Blakemore, assistant chief of the Bakersfield Police Department.

Searles-Harris allegedly barricaded himself inside the second floor of the building and took 10 hostages, telling law enforcement that he had attached explosives to himself and the hostages, according to Blakemore. Five of the hostages had also been tied up.

The hostages were confirmed

to be employees of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools on the second floor of the building, officials said. Other employees fled the building while law enforcement evacuated the surrounding area to minimize safety concerns.

Police don't believe that the employees were intentionally targeted.

Around 4:20 a.m. Wednesday, an elite FBI Hostage Rescue Team moved in and fatally shot Searles-Harris, authorities said.

Authorities said they were still conducting tests on the devices Searles-Harris planted to determine if they were dangerous.

Firefighters battling blaze along US-Mexico border

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — Six hundred firefighters, aided by helicopters and air tankers, were battling a stubborn brush fire along the U.S.-Mexico border Wednesday that so far has charred more than 2,600 acres of vegetation on both sides of the border.

The blaze, which sparked Monday afternoon in Mexico before crossing into the U.S., south of Dulzura, was reported to be 5% contained as of Wednesday morning, according to Cal Fire officials. Aerial mapping of the burn area estimated total acreage at 2,617 acres early Wednesday. Officials said

1,625 acres were in the U.S. and 992 acres were in Mexico.

One night-flying helicopter worked up until midnight making water drops on the fire, and officials ordered two air tankers and four helicopters to make water and fire retardant drops Wednesday, said Cal Fire Capt. Oscar Sotelo. He said the fire

was burning east and was expected to grow after the marine layer burned off.

Although no structures were immediately threatened, the fire is about a mile from Tecate Peak, where radio communications equipment is housed, and a mile from a high-voltage power line that feeds San Diego.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

All law enforcement now part of 'Do Not Call' list

MD BALTIMORE — The Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office will expand its Baltimore Police "Do Not Call" list to all city law enforcement agencies, such as the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office, in the upcoming calendar year.

The State's Attorney's Office hopes to begin the work by January as part of the office's deep dive into city employees, according to spokesman James Bentley.

Sometimes referred to as Brady/Giglio or officer integrity lists, the list came about following the 2021 Anton's Law, which amended the Maryland Public Information Act to allow prosecutors to release DNC list information publicly.

Employees can land on the roster for several reasons, including formal charges related to lack of truthfulness, or pending criminal charges or a criminal conviction that calls their honesty into question. The state's attorney instructs staff not to seek court testimony from these individuals.

Currently, 110 current or former Baltimore Police officers comprise the DNC list.

Official says mayor must turn on police cameras

WA SEATTLE — Mayor Katie Wilson does not have legal authority to pause Seattle's rollout of police surveillance cameras, Council member Bob Kettle argued to her Monday.

Wilson's office argued that the decision of when, whether and how to use cameras was

well within the mayor's purview. Still, the exchange represents an escalation in the standoff between the two branches of city government over the hotly contested devices.

The council signed off on an expansion of the police department's existing surveillance network last year, with the support of then-Mayor Bruce Harrell. But Wilson, who's under pressure from privacy and civil rights advocates to slow or even reverse the camera installation, has moved cautiously, to the frustration of Kettle and other members of the council.

Wilson said earlier this year she was pausing the addition of new cameras while the city partnered with a team at New York University to study their possible effects.

She agreed to not turn off the cameras already in use. She also gave the green light to install new cameras near the stadium district in advance of the Seattle matches of the FIFA Men's World Cup, but said they would only be turned on in the event of a "credible threat."

Man attempts to board plane with explosive

CA SACRAMENTO — Wearing a scarf around his face and blue latex gloves on his hands, a 49-year-old man already had a suspicious look about him as he approached TSA agents at Sacramento International Airport on Saturday night.

But it was the contents of his carry-on bag that proved truly unnerving.

Inside his backpack, agents found a knife, other bladed weapons, zip ties, a butane torch lighter and a homemade explo-

sive device, according to the Department of Justice.

They also found five cell-phones, all with painter's tape covering the front camera. Prosecutors said one of the phones had a 15-minute timer ready to start, while another displayed an ominous message from an unknown number — "we will be awaiting your call."

The traveler, Kimani Osayande Jones, was attempting to board an American Airlines flight to Charlotte, N.C., around 9 p.m. when the items were discovered, according to the complaint filed against him in California's Eastern District Court.

He told officers he did not know the items were in his bag and would be fine discarding them. He then invoked his Miranda rights and refused to be interviewed. He was placed under arrest.

On Tuesday, he was charged with unlawfully possessing explosive material in an airport.

Mayor taps department vet as interim chief

MN MINNEAPOLIS — Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey has tapped a department veteran as interim chief of police a week after Brian O'Hara resigned from the position amid findings that he interfered in an ongoing sexual misconduct investigation.

First Precinct Inspector Bill Peterson takes over from acting Chief Katie Blackwell, who's been running the department for the past several days. Peterson will serve as interim chief while the city conducts a national search for a permanent chief.

A 30-year veteran of the Min-

neapolis Police Department, Peterson has led policing downtown and in numerous bordering neighborhoods since 2019.

Principal quits after 'Why Islam' event backlash

TX FORT WORTH — The principal at Wylie East High School resigned following backlash from a "Why Islam" event that occurred at the school in February.

Tiffany Doolan, who had worked for the Wylie Independent School District for 19 years, notified the district of her resignation on May 26. In a statement, the district said Doolan had been a victim of targeted online attacks and public hostility.

In February, an outside group called "Why Islam" set up a table at WEHS during lunch. The group was on campus to meet with the Muslim Student Association for World Hijab Day. However, school officials said they did not approve the tabling during lunch.

The event went viral after the president of the WEHS Republican Club posted a video to social media, in which he said the group was handing out information about Islam to students.

The school district said in a statement that it does not promote religion, politics, or ideology and that assertions that the district intentionally promoted a religion are false.

Photos of Doolan wearing a hijab for World Hijab Day in previous years were resurfaced and also received criticism on social media after the event. The district said the photos circulating were weaponized and taken out of context.

— From wire reports

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Brunson, Knicks top Spurs with 11-0 run

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — The New York Knicks' winning streak lives on, and they struck first in the NBA Finals.

Jalen Brunson scored 30 points, Karl-Anthony Towns finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds, and the Knicks erased a 14-point second-half deficit to beat the San Antonio Spurs 105-95 in Game 1 of the finals on Wednesday night.

OG Anunoby had 17 points for New York — which has won 12 consecutive playoff games, the seventh team to have such a streak in NBA history, and is the third to do it in a single season. Brunson scored 13 points in the fourth, only six fewer than San Antonio managed as a team in that quarter, and sealed it with a spinning jumper while falling to

the court with 38 seconds left.

"He's a gamer, man," Knicks coach Mike Brown said. "In the biggest moments, he shows up. That's what MVPs are supposed to do."

And the Knicks, who finished on an 11-0 run, made a little more history. They became the first team to beat San Antonio in a Game 1 of the title series — the Spurs were 6-0 in those — and this is also the first time the Spurs have trailed a finals before the finish.

Victor Wembanyama had 26 points and 12 rebounds for the Spurs, but he shot 6 for 21 from the field in his finals debut. Stephon Castle scored 17, while Julian Champagnie and Dylan Harper each had 16 for San Antonio.

"I was bad tonight," Wemba-

nyama said. "It's not more complicated than that."

Game 2 is Friday in San Antonio.

The Knicks led 14-7 early, the Spurs answered with a 20-13 run to go up by 10, the Knicks rallied and the second quarter saw six lead changes before San Antonio took a 55-48 lead into the break.

San Antonio pushed the lead to 14 midway through the third quarter before the Knicks stormed back, finishing the period on a 22-9 run and sending the game into the fourth tied at 76.

New York's lead was eight midway through the final period. Wembanyama made a pair of free throws with 2:16 left to put San Antonio up 95-94, but Brunson made a corner 3 on the

next possession to put the Knicks on top for good.

"I think we let that one go," Wembanyama said.

San Antonio's run of never trailing the finals had some close calls over the years. The Spurs were tied twice with New Jersey in 2003 finals, tied with Detroit twice in 2005, tied with Miami three times in 2013 — they lost that series in seven games, so they only trailed when it was over — and then were tied with the Heat once more in 2014.

It's only 1-0. But the Knicks are only three wins away from their first title in 53 years, and they just took home-court advantage away from San Antonio.

"We have a long way to go," Brunson said.

Sánchez's record shutout streak ends at 50 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Christopher Sánchez finally allowed a run after 663 pitches, 190 batters faced and 50 $\frac{2}{3}$ scoreless innings — a feat that placed the Philadelphia ace among Hall of Fame company.

After a run scored against the left-hander for the first time since late April, more than 40,000 fans at Citizens Bank Park stood and gave him an ovation that lasted more than a minute. Yes, those Phillies fans were cheering after a run was scored against the home team.

Sánchez held his stern demeanor for as long as he could, wanting to throw the next pitch. Finally, he cracked a smile. He raised his cap, wiped his forehead and Philly fans and his teammates kept applauding Sánchez, celebrating a rare milestone in baseball history.

"It was a big moment, a huge moment for me," Sánchez said through an interpreter. "I think that I just had to do something for the fans and react to the love

that they brought it."

Sánchez pushed his consecutive shutout innings streak to just short of 51 innings Wednesday night before allowing a two-out RBI single to San Diego's Jackson Merrill in the seventh and earned the win after J.T. Realmuto and Kyle Schwarber homered in the seventh inning, leading the Phillies to a 3-2 victory over the Padres.

"It's something I never imagined in my life that I would do," Sánchez said.

Sánchez's streak ranked as the third-best overall dating to the start of the Live Ball Era in 1920 behind the Los Angeles Dodgers' Orel Hershiser, with a record 59 straight scoreless innings in 1988, and Don Drysdale with 58 in 1968. He struck out San Diego's Fernando Tatis Jr. and set the Padres down in order in the first to pass Carl Hubbell at 45 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings and become the career leader among left-handers.

Sánchez breezed through six scoreless innings before Ty France doubled with two out in

the seventh. Lefty-swinging Merrill then punched a single to left that accounted for the only run allowed by Sánchez in more than a month.

"I know my vocabulary is probably not good enough for him right now," Philadelphia interim manager Don Mattingly said. "You could feel it every inning, they knew exactly what was going on."

Sánchez also passed Sal Maglie, Zack Greinke, and Bob Gibson on the shutout streak list since 1920. He surpassed Gibson's 47 consecutive shutout innings in the same 1968 season as Drysdale, dubbed the year of the pitcher.

Sánchez hadn't been in any serious jeopardy of allowing a run since permitting two runs in the first inning of a 3-2 Phillies win over San Francisco on April 30.

He worked seven shutout innings in his last start against San Diego to eclipse the Philadelphia franchise record of 41 innings, set in 1911 by Grover Cleveland Alexander.

"You don't get to see things like this very often," Mattingly said. "It's one of those things that's not happened very often. It's hard to categorize it. I don't know if I've seen anything that's really been better than this."

Sánchez, who had had thrown at least seven shutout innings in five straight starts, struck out eight. He improved to 7-2 and lowered his ERA to an MLB-best 1.46.

Sánchez was named NL pitcher of the month for May earlier Wednesday. He went 4-0 and struck out 45 — with only three walks — over 39 innings in the month.

"It's pretty cool what he's doing," Phillies first baseman Bryce Harper said. "Lot of punch-outs, as well, so that helps us on defense."

Sánchez also set a Citizens Bank Park scoreless streak record at 34 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings, topping Cliff Lee (29 innings) and Roy Halladay (33) and he became the second pitcher this season to reach 100 strikeouts.

Webb carries no-no to 7th, Giants edge Brewers

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Logan Webb carried a no-hitter into the seventh inning, Victor Bericoto hit his first career homer and the San Francisco Giants edged the Milwaukee Brewers 1-0 on Wednesday night.

Webb (3-4) struck out four and allowed one hit and one walk over seven innings. Milwaukee's only hit off Webb came when Brice Turang lined a one-out single to left in the seventh.

Keaton Winn got the final four outs to earn his second career save, and first since 2023. The Brewers left the potential tying run in scoring position in each of the final two innings.

Christian Yelich led off the ninth with a double to right and advanced to third when Andrew Vaughn grounded to first. Winn preserved San Francisco's win by striking out Turang and retiring William Contreras on a grounder to shortstop Willy Adames.

In the eighth, Milwaukee had runners on first and second with one out before Winn entered and got Gary Sánchez to ground into an inning-ending double play.

White Sox 8, Twins 0: Erick Fedde pitched five scoreless innings for his first win in 10 months as visiting Chicago beat Minnesota to stave off a series sweep.

Rookie Sam Antonacci went 4 for 4 with two doubles, a walk and a hit by pitch for the White Sox, who took a 4-0 lead in the first on Twins starter Taj Bradley and improved to 33-29 after losing the last two nights.

Fedde (1-5) retired the first 11 batters he faced and didn't allow a hit until consecutive two-out singles in the fifth inning while throwing 61 pitches. The journeyman right-hander, who has switched teams four times in three years, recorded his most recent victory Aug. 9, 2025, in a start for St. Louis.

Braves 7, Blue Jays 3: Maur-

icio Dubón hit a go-ahead, three-run home run in the third inning and host Atlanta beat Toronto to continue its mastery of left-hander Patrick Corbin.

A homer by Nathan Lukes off Grant Holmes (4-2) in the third inning gave Toronto a 2-1 lead. The Braves answered off Corbin (2-2) in the bottom of the inning. With two outs, Matt Olson singled and moved to third on Ozzie Albies' double. Dubón's homer into the Braves' bullpen behind the center-field wall gave Atlanta a 4-2 lead.

Corbin gave up four runs on six hits and two walks in five innings for his 12th straight loss to Atlanta. The last pitcher in the majors to lose 12 consecutive decisions to one team was Mark Buehrle, who lost 12 straight to the New York Yankees from 2004-14 with the Chicago White Sox, Miami and Toronto.

Guardians 5, Yankees 4: José Ramírez launched one of visiting Cleveland's three home runs off Gerrit Cole and finished with three hits for the second consecutive game as the Guardians beat New York.

Kyle Manzardo homered for the second straight night in the Bronx and doubled twice. Rhys Hoskins also went deep and drove in three runs for Cleveland, which improved to a major league-best 10-1 on the road since May 6.

Yankees slugger Aaron Judge missed his second game in a row because of a bone bruise in his upper right rib that's been causing pain in his right shoulder.

Athletics 5, Cubs 4 (10): Nick Kurtz singled in automatic runner Alik Williams in the 10th inning, and the visiting Athletics rallied for a second straight win, beating sliding Chicago.

Kurtz extended his hitting streak to five games with his hit in the 10th off Ethan Roberts (0-1), the Cubs' sixth reliever.

Chicago (32-30) squandered a two-run lead in the eighth inning and lost its third straight and for the 18th time in 23 games.

Tigers 7, Rays 2: Troy Melton allowed only two runs over a career-long eight innings, Dillon Dingler drove in four runs and visiting Detroit finished off a three-game sweep of Tampa Bay.

Melton, making his third start of the season after beginning the year on the 60-day disabled list with right elbow inflammation, held the Rays to four hits while striking out five in eight innings on 94 pitches. Melton (2-0) retired the final 17 batters he faced. Drew Anderson retired the side in the ninth.

Marlins 4, Nationals 1: Max Meyer allowed two hits in seven innings, and Joe Mack hit a tie-breaking two-run single in the eighth to lift visiting Miami over Washington and to a three-game sweep.

Meyer (6-0) is unbeaten in 13 starts this year, tying the franchise record to start a season set by Livan Hernandez in 1997. He allowed a run and two walks with seven strikeouts.

Mets 7, Mariners 1: Bo Bichette had four hits, Freddy Peralta threw six strong innings and visiting New York beat Seattle.

Peralta (4-4) allowed one run on six hits in six innings for the Mets while striking out six. He kept the Mariners 0 for 4 with runners in scoring position, including inducing a bases-loaded double play grounder from Randy Arozarena in the third inning.

Red Sox 8, Orioles 1: Wilner Abreu hit a two-run homer and drove in three runs, Payton Tolle (3-2) pitched six scoreless innings and host Boston beat Baltimore.

Mickey Gasper had a two-run triple in Boston's five-run fifth inning and Cedanne Rafaela had three hits for the Red Sox, who have scored five or more runs in six of their last nine games. They had recently endured a stretch where they went 11 straight games without scoring more than four runs.

Royals 5, Reds 2: Michael Massey hit a tiebreaking RBI

single in the ninth inning, Vinnie Pasquantino and Nick Loftin homered, and visiting Kansas City beat Cincinnati to win the three-game series.

Massey's line drive to right field off Tony Santillan (1-3) scored pinch-runner Tyler Tolbert and Loftin's first home run this season capped the scoring.

Cardinals 5, Rangers 3: Alec Burleson drove in three runs, Andre Pallante (6-4) threw 5½ innings of one-run ball and host St. Louis defeated Texas.

The Cardinals improved to 26-3 when leading after seven innings and got back to .500 at home, while the Rangers saw their five-game win streak end.

Astros 11, Pirates 9: Cam Smith hit a tiebreaking two-run triple to cap host Houston's six-run eighth inning, Isaac Paredes homered and the Astros overcame a five-run deficit to beat Pittsburgh.

Yordan Alvarez had four hits and two RBIs for Houston. Smith and Paredes had two hits and three RBIs apiece, and Jeremy Peña went 2 for 3 with a double.

Angels 11, Rockies 4: Wade Meckler and Nick Madrigal each had four of Los Angeles' 16 hits, Walbert Ureña pitched six solid innings and the host Angels beat Colorado.

Vaughn Grissom added a homer and three RBIs, and Oswald Peraza had two hits and two RBIs to help LA — which tied its season high with the 16 hits — avoid a three-game sweep.

Dodgers 7, Diamondbacks 0: Shohei Ohtani threw six scoreless innings, Kyle Tucker hit a two-run homer into the Chase Field pool and visiting Los Angeles routed Arizona.

Ohtani (6-2) allowed two hits and struck out six while lowering his major league-best ERA to 0.74. He's allowed one earned run in 24 innings during a four-game winning streak. He also hit three singles and reached base five times, scoring a run.

Andreeva defeats Kostyuk to make finals

Associated Press

PARIS — Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva reached her first Grand Slam final by beating Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-1, 6-3 at the French Open on Thursday.

The 19-year-old Andreeva converted her first match point when serving for the match. There was no post-match handshake between them and Kostyuk walked off quickly, turning only to wave and blow kisses to the crowd on Court Philippe-Chatrier, which saw some fans draped in Ukrainian flags.

"I am happy that I am in my first ever Grand Slam final. All of these feelings combined, it is amazing," Andreeva said. "I just told myself no matter what happens, I am going to fight and give my best. With this kind of

mindset, I ended up winning."

The atmosphere beforehand was somewhat tense as the players had separate photos taken as they each stood next to two children on their respective side of the net. Usually the players pose for the same photo, standing right next to each other by the net.

Kostyuk and countrywoman Oleksandra Oliynykova have spoken out during the tournament about the impact Russia's invasion of Ukraine is having on their country.

In the other semifinal Thursday, Maja Chwalinska, of Poland, beat Diana Shnaider, of Russia, 7-6 (4), 6-4. Chwalinska came through three qualifying rounds and had never previously been beyond the second round at a major.

Chwalinska's total prize money heading into Roland Garros was \$864,030, and reaching the last four here earns her about \$872,000.

Shnaider knocked off No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka to reach the semifinals.

Andreeva saved three break points at 0-40 in her opening service game, then raced into a 4-0 lead with a flurry of blistering forehand winners. There was a big cheer when Kostyuk held serve in the fifth game, but the Ukrainian then handed Andreeva the first set when her backhand hit the net.

Roof open, then closed

The semifinal began at shortly after 3 p.m. amid sunny conditions and an open roof, like Wednesday when beaten quar-

terfinalists Aryna Sabalenka and Anna Kalinskaya complained of swirling wind on Chatrier and said the roof should have been closed.

It was closed toward the end of the second set of Thursday's semi, offering Kostyuk better conditions for her clay-court game. She broke back to trail 4-3, prompting huge applause and loud chants of "Marta, Marta."

But she dropped her next service game and the comeback ended almost as briefly as it began, along with Kostyuk's 16-match winning streak on clay.

"Obviously, she (Kostyuk) has had an amazing season. Until this match, she has not lost a match on clay," Andreeva said. "She is an amazing player and a very tough opponent."

Semifinal features all Italians despite Sinner's early exit

Associated Press

PARIS — An Italian man will be in the French Open final, and it's not Jannik Sinner.

Not Lorenzo Musetti, either.

Flavio Cobolli will play fellow Italian Matteo Arnaldi on Friday in the first Grand Slam semifinal for both players.

Cobolli beat Felix Auger-Aliassime 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 and Arnaldi advanced when Matteo Berrettini, yet another Italian, retired because of an injury to his left hip with Arnaldi leading 7-5, 5-2 on Wednesday.

Berrettini had received treatment during a medical timeout earlier in the second set.

"We have to be happy for Italian tennis," Cobolli said.

While Sinner and Musetti were both in the last four a year ago, they were on opposite sides of the draw, meaning it will mark the first all-Italian men's semifinal in Grand Slam history.

It's been exactly 50 years since an Italian man won the French Open, and 1976 champion Adriano Panatta was asked before the

tournament to present the Coupe des Mousquetaires trophy this year.

Cobolli comes from the same tennis club in Rome as Panatta — the Tennis Club Parioli.

Arnaldi said he first played Cobolli in the Italian under-14 championship: "We are good friends."

Second-seeded Alexander Zverev and No. 26 Jakub Mensik will meet in the other semifinal.

While Italian tennis is booming, the 14th-ranked Cobolli, No. 104 Arnaldi and No. 105 Berrettini were not the Azzurri expected to get this far.

Top-ranked Sinner came to Paris on a 29-match winning streak and seemed destined to take the title after wasting three match points in the final against Carlos Alcaraz last year.

Musetti didn't make it back to Roland Garros this year due to an injury. But Cobolli, who at 24 is the same age as Sinner and Musetti, has dropped just two sets in five matches.

On a windy day inside Court Philippe-Chatrier, Auger-Ali-

assime whiffed on an overhead during the very first point of the match and also appeared disturbed when loud music was turned on accidentally over the stadium speakers during a key point later in the third set.

Still, the Canadian won the opening set — after which Cobolli left the court to regain his composure.

"I went to the toilet to think a bit, to change something," Cobolli said. "I just said to myself to fight, because I felt like this is the chance of my life and I have to give everything."

Cobolli was a talented soccer player and a member of Roma's youth club until he decided to focus full-time on tennis. He was invited to join Paris Saint-Germain players when they brought soccer's Champions League trophy onto the tennis court earlier in the week.

No matter the result of his semifinal, Cobolli will enter the top 10 of the rankings for the first time next week. He could even have a trophy of his own to bring home.

This, Cobolli said, is "the best week of my life."

Auger-Aliassime loses

Auger-Aliassime, who at No. 4 was the highest-seeded player remaining in the top half of the draw, said he was "destroyed" by the defeat.

"I'm in a place right now with my tennis career that it's tough," he said. "I feel like I'm not the player I want to be."

Doubles success, too

As the crowd started filing into Court Philippe-Chatrier for the Arnaldi-Berrettini match, the arena's announcer started talking in Italian: "Buongiorno e benvenuto a tutti a Roland Garros" — "Hello and welcome everyone to Roland Garros."

"Les Italiens," as they are referred to in French, are doing well not just in singles.

Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori played in the mixed doubles final Thursday and Vavassori and Simone Bolelli have advanced to the semifinals in men's doubles.