

US troops to remain in Mideast after deal

By LARA KORTE
Stars and Stripes

U.S. troops who were deployed to the Middle East don't appear to be leaving anytime soon despite President Donald Trump's declaration this week of a tentative end to the war with Iran.

The deal, set to be formalized in Geneva on Friday, reportedly includes Iranian commitments to allow the free passage of commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and a U.S. pledge to lift a naval blockade imposed in April.

Those measures won't happen immediately, though. After the signing, the U.S. and Iran reportedly plan to enter a 60-day period to negotiate limits on Iran's nuclear program and the lifting of American sanctions.

U.S. officials have made it clear that military forces will remain in the region during that time, even if they have not specified how many troops or assets would stay.

"Our military posture will be whatever it needs to be to en-

sure they're compelled over these 60 days through the memorandum of understanding, that they live up to what they said they will do," Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said in an interview with CBS.

The war, known as Operation Epic Fury, prompted one of the largest U.S. military buildups in the Middle East in years. At one point, three U.S. aircraft carriers were operating in the region simultaneously — the first such deployment in more than two decades — as the U.S. military presence reportedly grew to more than 50,000 troops.

During the conflict, U.S. forces conducted airstrikes against Iranian military and nuclear targets, helped guide commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz amid Iranian attacks and enforced the naval blockade against Iranian ports.

U.S. Central Command said U.S. forces disabled nine non-compliant vessels and redirected 135 ships during that time.

In a statement on the social media platform Truth Social on

Sunday, Trump said he authorized the "immediate removal" of the U.S. blockade, a move he said would coincide with the "toll free opening" of the Strait of Hormuz.

According to an advisory from the Joint Maritime Information Center, a multinational maritime security coordination body, the U.S. blockade on Iranian ports will remain in place until the end of the week. The center on Monday warned mariners not to attempt to cross until explicit direction is given.

CENTCOM did not immediately confirm the maritime advisory.

If the U.S.-Iran agreement holds, it could pave the way for a more intensive mine-clearing effort in the Strait of Hormuz — a mission that some reports indicate could take several months.

On the sidelines of the G7 meetings in Evian-les-Bains, France, on Monday, Trump said U.S. forces were doing "a little hunting for a couple of mines they've already found."

CENTCOM has previously said it would employ tools including underwater drones to hunt for Iranian mines.

Before the war, U.S. intelligence officials estimated that Iran possessed around 5,000 naval mines, though it's unclear to what extent Iran has actually been able to place mines in the strait.

European countries have already begun moving naval assets into the region for potential mine-clearing and vessel escort missions aimed at restoring commercial shipping through the strait, which before the war carried nearly a fifth of global oil supplies.

French President Emmanuel Macron told broadcaster TF1 on Monday that the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle could be deployed "in two to three days," along with mine-clearing capabilities.

European officials have stressed that their involvement in any Hormuz mission would take place only after hostilities have ended.

Eight killed in B-52 crash at Edwards Air Force Base

By GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

An Air Force B-52 Stratofortress carrying eight people on a radar test mission crashed and exploded shortly after takeoff at Edwards Air Force Base in California on Monday morning.

"Edwards Air Force Base experienced a horrible tragedy, and we lost eight great Americans," deputy base commander Col. James Hayes said at a press conference Monday evening. "This crash is deemed to be unsurvivable, and right now our thoughts

and prayers are with the families of those that lost their loved ones."

Hayes said the flight crew was a mix of uniformed Air Force personnel, government civilian employees and contractors who were working on radar upgrades for the 60-plus year-old B-52s. None of the identities of those killed will be released until 24 hours after next of kin are notified.

Boeing, which built the B-52 Stratofortress and remains heavily involved in its modernization program, said late Monday that

two of its employees were killed in the crash.

"We extend our deepest condolences to the loved ones of the eight crew members who lost their lives in the B-52 crash at Edwards Air Force Base, California," the company said in a statement. "It is with great sadness that we confirm two Boeing employees were among those on board. We are in contact with their families and are offering support."

Hayes said the B-52 was on initial takeoff for a local test flight in

support of modernizing the bomber's radar.

"It took off and immediately after crashed and burst into flames," Hayes said. "Our team of first responders snapped into action and immediately cordoned off the area and took the appropriate action to start putting out the flames."

The cause of the accident is under investigation, Hayes said. An initial investigation has been launched and will involve teams of experts from throughout the Air Force.

US, Iran prepare for deal, both claim victory

Bloomberg News

The U.S. and Iran are preparing to formally sign their interim peace deal in Switzerland on Friday, with both sides claiming victory and oil traders and shippers unsure over how quickly the Strait of Hormuz will be reopened.

The text of the so-called memorandum of understanding — a 14-point document that should lead to a two-month ceasefire extension and the start of complicated negotiations over Iran's nuclear program — has yet to be published.

A senior U.S. official said it's possible that happens in the next two days, ahead of the signing ceremony in Geneva.

Vice President JD Vance is expected to head the American delegation, while Iran will likely be represented by Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf.

President Donald Trump is in France for a Group of Seven summit, where the Iran war — which has caused energy prices

to soar — is featuring prominently. G7 nations such as France, the U.K. and Italy are likely to play key roles in any demining of the strait that's needed to facilitate its reopening.

Speaking at the summit on Tuesday, Trump said the agreement is a “done deal,” while adding that the U.S. would not invest money in Iran or pay reparations for the war. Washington is dealing with “rational” people in the Islamic Republic, he said, reiterating that the country will not be able to develop nuclear weapons.

“They’re going have to prove themselves, I think, before any of us go in there,” Trump said when asked about economic opportunities for Iran.

On Monday, Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto and U.S. counterpart Pete Hegseth met in Washington, where they discussed a four-ship flotilla Rome is preparing to send to the Hormuz strait, according to one G7 official familiar with the matter. This includes two mine-

sweepers now in Djibouti, where they were dispatched to prepare for the mission, the official said.

Trump is set to hold bilateral meetings with United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad on Tuesday as part of the G7 summit. Those countries may play a part in helping create, along with the U.S., a \$300 billion development fund for Iran in the aftermath of the conflict.

The U.S. will look to other countries and the private sector to pledge investments in Iran, the American official said. The Islamic Republic, which has a population of 90 million people and some of the world's biggest oil and natural gas reserves, wanted the fund included in the MOU to help with reconstruction. Iran said the war, which began on Feb. 28 with a U.S.-Israeli bombardment of the country, cost it more than \$250 billion in economic damage.

Iranian officials have claimed

the MOU will lead to it getting access to tens of billions of dollars of frozen funds held in places such as Qatar. Trump and his administration have consistently said the Islamic Republic will get no funds unfrozen or sanctions lifted on the signing of the agreement. That, they've said, will happen in steps, contingent on Tehran fulfilling the terms of the deal.

Oil prices have fallen sharply since Trump said an agreement was imminent late last week. Brent crude dropped 2.1% to \$81.40 on Tuesday, falling for a fourth straight day.

Even so, many European governments, energy investors and shipping companies doubt Trump's claim that the Hormuz strait will be fully open on Friday. Beyond the probable need to clear the waterway there's also the question of whether Iran will allow ships free passage.

Tehran has signaled it will charge vessels navigation fees after the 60-day period for the fresh U.S.-Iran negotiations.

Congress must review Iran agreement, senators say

CQ-Roll Call

Congress needs to be able to review the agreement between the Trump administration and Tehran that is intended to end the Iran war, senators in both parties said Monday.

President Donald Trump announced Sunday that the United States and Iran had reached a memorandum of understanding to end the war, reopen the Strait of Hormuz and begin more comprehensive negotiations on Iran's nuclear program and sanctions relief.

The deal has been signed electronically, while a formal, in-person signing ceremony is scheduled for Friday in Geneva,

Trump said Monday.

On Tuesday, on the sidelines of the Group of Seven summit in the French Alps, Trump said he's open to sending the emerging agreement to Congress for review, The Associated Press reported.

While the United States and Iran have both been touting wins in the deal, no actual text has been released — making it impossible to parse who's telling the truth and leaving U.S. lawmakers clamoring for more details.

“Trump must release the details publicly, brief Congress immediately and end this war for good,” Senate Minority

Leader Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., said.

Meanwhile, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a staunch Iran hawk who has been skeptical of negotiations throughout the war, expressed concern that “Iran's view of the agreement seems different” from what the American negotiating team is claiming about the terms.

“Under our law, any nuclear deal with Iran will be sent to Congress for review and a vote. I look forward to reviewing the final product and I believe it is imperative that the architect of the deal, Vice President Vance and his negotiating partners, be part of the process in presenting

the final deal to Congress,” Graham wrote on social media Sunday, adding that “time will tell” whether the deal is acceptable.

Graham was referring to the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, or INARA, which Congress passed in 2015 to ensure that lawmakers had a say in the Obama administration's nuclear deal with Iran.

While the impetus for the law was the Obama administration deal, it applies to any nuclear agreement with Iran.

Under INARA, a deal must be transmitted to Congress within five days, and Congress then has 30 days to vote on a resolution of disapproval.

Newsom decries DOJ probes, defends wife

Los Angeles Times

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Monday accused the Justice Department of launching — at President Donald Trump's request — a baseless and politically-motivated investigation into him and his wife, first partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom.

"After calling for my arrest last year, Donald Trump directed his Department of Justice to investigate me," Newsom said. "And just in the last week, I've learned his campaign has reached my own home: to get me, he's coming after my wife, Jen."

Newsom adamantly denied any wrongdoing by him or his wife.

The White House declined to respond to Newsom's allegations that Trump was involved

in instigating the probes, referring all questions to the Justice Department, which declined to comment.

A source familiar with the matter who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly told *The Times* that there are two federal probes underway: one related to Newsom's former chief of staff, Dana Williamson, and one related to Siebel Newsom's taxes.

The source said both investigations have been ongoing for about a year, were launched by federal prosecutors in Sacramento based on information provided by whistleblowers and other local sources in California, and were not the result of directives out of Washington or the White House.

Lauren Horwood, a spokes-

person for the office of U.S. Attorney Eric Grant, a Trump appointee who oversees federal prosecutors in Sacramento, said the office "does not confirm or deny the existence of investigations."

Siebel Newsom, in her own statement, also accused Trump of initiating the investigations.

"There are clearly no boundaries to what Donald Trump will do to get his way or to challenge those who get in his way," she said. "This is not presidential behavior, and the Governor and I will continue to speak truth to power because the American people deserve so much more."

Newsom said that in recent days, "federal agents have knocked on the doors of family friends and former employees," and have been "demanding rec-

ords," "digging through years and years of random documents" and "abusing the grand jury process" in a quest to find any kind of wrongdoing by him or his wife.

"Not because they found a crime. Because they are simply trying to find one," he said.

Newsom did not describe the specific nature of the alleged probe, the line of questioning faced by friends and employees or the types of records taken or reviewed by federal investigators.

Newsom's office said previous allegations of wrongdoing by Newsom in his handling of Activision Blizzard Inc., a video game company where Williamson once worked, were baseless and went nowhere and did not appear to be a focus of the current investigations.

'Weaponization' claims filed under existing federal process

Bloomberg News

The U.S. Justice Department said it has dropped plans for a \$1.8 billion "anti-weaponization" fund that critics denounced as a "slush fund" for President Donald Trump's supporters.

But "weaponization" claims will keep coming.

The new fund was expected to offer a faster and easier path to government payouts for people alleging unfair treatment by the Biden administration or other perceived political enemies of Trump. Long before it was announced, though, U.S. officials were fielding such claims — and in some instances approving million-dollar awards of taxpayer money — under a decades-old process set up by Congress.

Untethered to the fund proposal and the bipartisan political firestorm and legal battles that followed, claims brought under the existing legal pathways are moving ahead.

There are hundreds of pending compensation demands from people charged or convicted in connection with the Jan. 6, 2021, riots as Congress certified Trump's election loss.

The U.S. government is broadly immune against being sued for the actions of officials and employees. But Congress created exceptions through the Federal Tort Claims Act, which dates back to the 1940s. Individuals first file claims directly with agencies, and then can sue if those are denied or they don't get a response within six months.

The government pays for court-imposed judgments or settlements using money from what's known as the Judgment Fund, which gets taxpayer dollars through a permanent and indefinite appropriation from Congress. It's managed by a Treasury Department office. Payments don't always include claim details or who is getting the money.

Poland seeks to host up to 15K deployed US troops

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

Poland is seeking to transform the U.S. military's largely rotational presence in the country into a permanent deployment with up to 15,000 American troops, a senior Polish official said this week.

Marcin Przydacz, a minister in Poland's presidential office, said Warsaw is in discussions with the United States about expanding the American military presence beyond current deployment plans.

"Our ambition is 15,000, while the minimum version is 11,000," Przydacz said in an interview with Polish broadcaster RMF FM. "The final decisions are still ahead of us."

While the U.S. military has operated in Poland for years, virtually all of the infrastructure that has been developed over the past decade has been designed to support rotational units on temporary missions.

If large units such as Army brigades are to be relocated to Poland, garrisons with support services and amenities for family members would also be required.

That means construction of on-post schools, health clinics and family housing units, which would be a multiyear effort if it comes to fruition.

In May, the U.S. canceled the deployment of roughly 4,000 armored brigade soldiers to Poland, prompting outcry in Warsaw. Weeks later, President Donald Trump responded, saying he would send 5,000 troops to the country.

After meeting Trump over the weekend in Washington, Polish President Karol Nawrocki said the talks reaffirmed that the plan for 5,000 troops was still on track.

The Pentagon, however, has yet to detail where those forces will come from, when they might be sent and where in Poland they will go.

GOP optimistic of pick to lead Department of Justice

Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's nomination of Todd Blanche to lead the U.S. Justice Department was met with cautious optimism by a key Republican senator who has repeatedly split with the administration on other issues.

Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, a member of the Judiciary Committee, said he's "generally satisfied" with Blanche's paperwork and plans to meet with him next week.

Trump last week nominated Blanche, who had been one of his personal lawyers, to serve as the permanent replacement for former Attorney General Pam Bondi, who was fired in April, despite simmering GOP frustrations with the president and Blanche over a proposed \$1.8 billion "anti-weaponization" fund intended to compensate people who claim they were victimized by the gov-

ernment.

After strong opposition to the fund arose among Republicans as well as Democrats, Blanche told a congressional hearing early this month that the proposal was being scrapped, though he declined to put that in writing.

During a hearing on Friday, U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema rebuffed the government's arguments that Blanche's public statements were sufficient confirmation. She entered an order blocking officials from taking action on the fund while the litigation moves ahead.

Trump, in recent days, has made positive statements about payments for his allies, raising doubts about whether the plan truly has been abandoned.

Tillis, who retires in January, has already threatened to block any attorney general nominee who has spoken positively about the people who rioted at the Capi-

tol on Jan. 6, 2021, and he has harshly criticized the fund proposal.

Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, another Judiciary Committee Republican whose vote will be crucial, said he planned to meet with Blanche on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Trump last month endorsed Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton in a runoff against Cornyn for his Senate seat. Paxton won, effectively ending Cornyn's political career.

With a narrow Republican majority, both Cornyn and Tillis could stall Blanche's confirmation in the Judiciary Committee, as Tillis did earlier this year with Kevin Warsh's nomination to chair the Federal Reserve.

Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley, who met privately with Blanche on Monday, said he planned to hold a confirmation hearing in July.

DC Reflecting Pool refilled, algae returns

syracuse.com

Algae has been spotted in areas of the Reflecting Pool in Washington days after it was refilled following repairs ordered by President Donald Trump, according to The Washington Post.

Algae coated several areas of the bottom of the pool, including spots close to the World War II Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial, the Post said. Algae also floated on the surface.

One spot near the World War II Memorial grew significantly between a rainy Wednesday afternoon and Thursday, which was hot and muggy, according to the Post.

"What you are seeing is residual algae from the supply lines which have been sitting dormant for eight weeks while construction has been taking place," Katie Martin, an Interior Department spokesperson, said in a statement. "It's part of the normal startup process."

Trump repeatedly disparaged the state of the Reflecting Pool before he ordered renovations, saying it was feces-infested and in disrepair, according to CNN. His project to coat the bottom of the pool with a new painted surface cost more than \$14 million.

The work took about six weeks, even though Trump originally said it would cost less than \$2 million and take just one week, according to the Post.

Algae has been a consistent problem for the pool. It quickly reappeared after a \$34 million renovation that was completed in 2012, the Post noted.

Trump initially said he personally chose the company that completed the latest project because it had worked on a swimming pool at his golf club in Sterling, Va., according to The New York Times.

He later reversed himself and said he did not know the contractor.

Florida removes record 4 tons of invasive Burmese pythons

Miami Herald

Four tons of invasive Burmese pythons were removed from South Florida ecosystems during the latest breeding season, setting a record for the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

The achievement marks a new milestone in the fight against the giant snakes, which are considered one of the greatest threats to the Everglades ecosystem because of their ability to prey on mammals, birds and other native wildlife.

The Conservancy said it removed more python biomass this season than at any point since launching its research and removal program in 2013.

Biologists monitored pythons across a 200-square-mile area of Collier County during the breeding season, which ran from November 2025 through April 2026.

During the season, the team captured 177 invasive Burmese pythons with a combined weight of 8,080 pounds.

Captured females weighed an average of 95 pounds. The largest measured 17 feet long and weighed 153 pounds.

The females contained an average of 70 eggs, while one in four had remains of white-tailed deer in their stomachs.

"This was our first four-ton removal season. Our tagged scout snakes helped us locate large

breeding snakes deep in the landscape before they had a chance to lay eggs," said Ian Bartoszek, Wildlife Biologist and Conservancy Science Project Manager, who pioneered the nonprofit's python program.

Since 2013, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida's python research and removal program has removed 1,750 pythons weighing more than 53,000 pounds from Southwest Florida.

Researchers track the reptiles during the breeding season using radio telemetry and 40 tagged male pythons known as "scout snakes." Females are captured before they can lay eggs.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Lemonade stand robbed at gunpoint

MA BOSTON — Boston Police are investigating two pint-sized hoodlums suspected of putting the squeeze on a children's lemonade stand in Southie — at gunpoint.

Boston Police responded to a report of an armed robbery at 157 W. 9th St. in South Boston at around 4:45 p.m. Wednesday, according to the police report. There, they met up with the child victims who were now with their father.

The children said that two boys had “made several passes by the Lemonade Stand before they approached and asked whether or not they would accept Apple Pay,” according to the report. Before the young lemonade entrepreneurs could respond, however, the child robbers grabbed the stand's cashbox, which contained about \$50 in cash, and one of the suspects flashed a black handgun before the pair ran off.

Candidate found guilty of violating protective order

MD BALTIMORE — A Frederick County jury found Dwight Douglas Larcomb, a Republican candidate for Maryland governor, guilty on Wednesday of 17 charges, including violation of a protective order, stalking and witness intimidation, following a three-day trial.

The charges against Larcomb, 61, of Frederick, stem from his breaking an October 2020 protective order, which ordered no contact with an ex-partner. The violations took place from February to March

2021, court records show.

Larcomb is one of nine active Republican gubernatorial candidates in the June 23 primary election.

Charging documents say Larcomb contacted the victim several times via phone calls, voice-mails and his personal Facebook, as well as a fake account. The news release said there were 44 contacts over the phone and 177 Facebook Messenger messages.

Suspect dead in fatal vet clinic shooting

TX MIDLAND — Authorities have identified the suspect in a mass shooting Friday in Midland, Texas, as a man who was wanted by police after he fired shots at officers earlier in the week.

One victim was killed and at least 10 were injured in Friday's active shooter incident, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety. The suspect, 45-year-old Victor Mata Villarreal, was found dead after he barricaded himself inside an abandoned veterinary clinic building, Texas DPS said in a news release.

Student accused of espionage in China

CA BERKELEY — Chinese authorities said they arrested a Northern California scholar this month, accusing him of espionage and endangering national security.

U Min Zin was taken into custody on June 3 at Kunming Changshui International Airport in Yunnan Province, southwestern China, according to a New York Times report. Details about the arrest are still un-

known. Min Zin was traveling for academic purposes.

Min Zin is a doctoral student at the University of California, Berkeley, where he also obtained a master's in political science and government, according to his LinkedIn page. His studies center on Myanmar and Chinese foreign policy, according to his published works.

Judge rejects lawsuit over trans flag demonstration

CA LOS ANGELES — What began as an act of solidarity ultimately took a bitter turn for a National Park Service biologist.

After helping display a pink, white and blue transgender flag at El Capitan in May 2025, Shannon Joslin, who uses “they/them” pronouns, found themselves at the center of controversy, claiming they were wrongfully terminated for their involvement and that their free speech rights had been violated.

In February 2026, Joslin filed a lawsuit against several government agencies and officials, alleging unlawful and retaliatory action in response to peaceful off-duty expression.

On Friday, a federal judge dismissed the case, ruling the court has no authority to force the park service to reinstate Joslin's position.

Hurricane center tracks system in Gulf

FL ORLANDO — The National Hurricane Center on Monday increased its forecast chances a system could move into the Gulf and develop into the season's first tropical depression or storm, and watches or warnings could be in store this week.

The trough of low pressure was inland over northeastern Mexico, producing a large area of disorganized shower and thunderstorm activity.

“Development is not expected during the next day or so while the trough remains inland,” forecasters said. “However, the system could re-emerge over the northwestern Gulf of America late Tuesday or Wednesday.”

The NHC gives it a 50% chance to develop in the next two to seven days. If it spins up into a named system, it could become Tropical Storm Arthur.

Reiner trustee agrees to release money

NY NEW YORK — The 32-year-old son of slain filmmakers Rob and Michelle Reiner appears close to receiving inheritance money from his parents' estate as he prepares his criminal defense.

Nick Reiner was to have received cash from a trust fund when he turned 30 in 2023, according to TMZ.

He's charged with killing his parents in their southern California home in December. Reiner, who has struggled with substance abuse and mental health issues, pleaded not guilty to the killings and is awaiting trial.

Trustee Jodi Montgomery intends to file court documents next week asking a judge to release that money to the defendant, TMZ sources say.

Reiner claims that he needs the money to finance his legal defense. He's currently being represented by a public defender.

— From wire reports

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Serena, Venus back together for doubles

Associated Press

Even at a combined age of 90, opponents should still be wary of facing the Williams sisters at Wimbledon.

Serena and Venus Williams won a combined 21 titles on the storied grass of the All England Club in their singles and doubles careers, and now they're going for one more.

A doubles wild card invitation for the sisters was announced Tuesday by organizers of Wimbledon, which starts in less than two weeks.

The move comes after 44-year-old Serena recently returned to competition after nearly four years away from professional tennis.

Venus, who has still been competing sporadically, turns 46 on Wednesday.

The sisters have won 14 Grand Slam titles together in doubles, including six at Wimbledon — the first of them in 2000 and the last in 2016. Their first two doubles titles at Wimbledon, in 2000

and 2002, came as wild cards.

In all, their records at the All England Club look like this: Seven singles titles for Serena and five singles titles for Venus at Wimbledon; those six Wimbledon doubles titles together; a mixed doubles title for Serena with Max Mirnyi at Wimbledon in 1998; plus a singles gold medal for Serena at the 2012 London Olympics and a doubles gold for the sisters at the same Games. That makes for a combined 21 trophies and medals, as their powerful serves always did more damage on grass than any other surface.

With their six titles, the Williams sisters share the record for most trophies as a pair in women's doubles at Wimbledon with Suzanne Lenglen and Elizabeth Ryan, who won their titles consecutively from 1919-25.

The Williams sisters last played doubles together at the 2022 U.S. Open, where they lost their opening match. That was the first time they had played

doubles together in 4½ years.

In her first competition since 2022, Serena won her doubles match with partner Victoria Mboko at Queen's Club in London last week before the pair had to withdraw after Mboko injured her knee in a singles match.

Serena was slated to play doubles with Karolina Muchova at the Berlin Open later Tuesday.

Serena has not ruled out a return in singles, too, and one of the eight wild card spots for women's singles was left as "to be announced."

Recent French Open finalist Maja Chwalinska received a singles wild card, as did six British women: Harriet Dart, Alicia Dudeney, Hannah Klugman, Mika Stojsavljevic, Katie Swan, and Mimi Xu.

Men's singles wild cards went to Stan Wawrinka and Grigor Dimitrov and four British players: Jacob Fearnley, Arthur Fery, Jack Pinnington Jones and Toby Samuel.

Wawrinka, a three-time

Grand Slam champion whose best result at Wimbledon was reaching the quarterfinals twice, plans to retire at the end of the year.

Dimitrov led eventual champion Jannik Sinner two sets to none in the round of 16 last year before having to retire early in the third due to an injured pectoral muscle. Dimitrov is now ranked No. 169.

Two more men's singles wild cards were also left open.

In men's doubles, a wild card went to the pairing of Alexander Bublik and Nick Kyrgios. Kyrgios was a singles finalist in 2022.

Matteo Berrettini, a Wimbledon finalist in 2021, was left off the list despite a quarterfinal appearance at the French Open. He's ranked No. 49 but was ranked outside the top 100 when Wimbledon's entry list was established. Still, Berrettini could get direct entry into the main draw depending on withdrawals.

Wimbledon starts Monday, June 29.

Study of difficult course started ahead of US Open practice

Associated Press

SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y. — The U.S. Open brought big wind and not nearly as much activity for a Monday, typical these days of practice rounds at majors that move to a different course each year.

More players are coming early, not so much to avoid the rush but to avoid the wait.

"It's gotten terrible," Justin Thomas said leading into the third major of the year. "You have to sign up for tee times at the (British) Open and U.S. Open, and then people sign up with you and play in a four-somes. You can't play nine holes in less than three hours."

The way around that is to follow a script from Jack Nicklaus back in his prime — see the course early before it becomes populated with pros and amateurs, contenders and dreamers.

Scottie Scheffler and Rory McIlroy took a detour on their way to Ohio two weeks ago to play Shinnecock Hills, the first time seeing it for the No. 1 player and a refresher course for McIlroy.

Jon Rahm arrived last Friday to see what he should expect for the U.S. Open. Patrick Reed, who hasn't played since the PGA Championship last month, is said to have played the course more often than some of the Shinnecock members.

This is one of the most energy-draining weeks of the year, a product of the mental stress a course like Shinnecock tends to elicit.

Thomas and Jordan Spieth arrived over the weekend and played practice rounds two days before the official start of practice rounds. They didn't have the course all to them-

selves, but it felt like it. And it beat the alternative of long rounds when players hit different clubs off the tee, dozens of shots from the rough and closely mown area around the green, putting to all four corners of the green.

Their preparation largely done, official practice days are now light work. That's the Nicklaus way.

"That's why I never wanted to practice then," Nicklaus said "I got my practice in the week before so I knew what I wanted to do, instead of waiting for everybody else. I didn't like that. So I tried to get my practice in, and go back on Tuesday (of major week). I didn't want to get stuck in that six hours.

"If I had been there the week before, why did I need to get there on Monday?"

McIlroy had limited practice

time at the PGA Championship because of a nagging blister on his right toe. But then, he had come to Aronimink two weeks earlier for serious practice.

But there was one image during his practice round when McIlroy had a small army tagging along inside the ropes, from television personalities to equipment staff and photographers. It didn't feel very productive to him.

"Too many people inside the ropes I think is the big part of it," he said of the long practice rounds at the majors. "I think as well, guys are resigned to the fact that they're going to play nine holes, so it's OK to be out there for three hours. No one plays 18-hole practice rounds anymore the week of (a major). I guess it gives everyone the ability to play slow and hit as many balls as they like."

Iran coach says team forced out of US

Associated Press

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — The coach of Iran's World Cup team said it was ordered to leave the United States and return to its training base in Mexico only a few hours after opening its politically charged tournament by playing to a 2-2 draw with New Zealand on Monday night.

Coach Amir Ghalenoei didn't say who ordered the Iranians to leave earlier than planned. The team had expected to spend the night in California to maximize the normal recovery process after its opening game, only to be told after the match that everyone must immediately get on a plane for the 140-mile trip back to Tijuana.

"They didn't even give us time to recover," Ghalenoei said through an interpreter. "After the game today, they said to us, 'You have to leave immediately.' It's very important for us to have time for recovery, (but) we are asked to get on a plane and return to our camp in Tijuana, and we are really troubled by that."

The Iranians' World Cup cycle has been in upheaval since the U.S. and Israel began a war against Iran on Feb. 28. Iran ultimately decided to compete even after FIFA rejected its request to move its three group-stage matches out of the U.S.

Iran captain Mehdi Taremi

said the team endured five hours of travel and security checks during what's normally a very short trip from Tijuana to the Los Angeles area Sunday.

"We don't know why they are returning us, to be honest," Ghalenoei said. "I think it's very strange. It seems like others are doing the planning for us. The decision-making for us is being made elsewhere. We were supposed to come two nights before the game, and we were supposed to stay tonight to recover and return tomorrow at lunchtime. We have no idea why."

"I think our team is perhaps the most oppressed in the World Cup."

Taremi and Ghalenoei both decried the team's lack of many important staff members — including the president of Iran's football federation, coaching support personnel and media officials — who were denied visas by the U.S., amplifying the team's difficult preparations.

"We have to leave Los Angeles right now, and it's not good for us," Taremi said about an hour after the match. "I think FIFA has to help us more than this. ... Everything is like a disaster, actually, for us."

Ghalenoei said several players developed cramps during the game, which was played in mild conditions. He attributed the inju-

ry problems to the lack of proper preparation time caused by Iran's bureaucratic and diplomatic obstacles.

"Before the game, I said we haven't had time to adjust because of the travel," Ghalenoei said. "Many of our players, they had cramps, and that's why we had to substitute them. So it wasn't for technical reasons that we made substitutions. It was because of the injury and because of the cramp. They will be examined (Tuesday) by our technical staff, but the fact they delayed our arrivals and they are forcing us to go back early without time for recovery, they are making the situation more difficult."

The Iranians' remaining two games in group stage play are against Belgium in Inglewood on Sunday, followed by a trip to Seattle to face Egypt next week.

Iran opened its World Cup with a disappointing draw to a team ranked 65 places lower in FIFA's rankings. Yet the Iranians also overcame two deficits in an exciting match, getting the tying goal from Mohammad Mohebi in the 64th minute before a strongly pro-Iranian crowd at SoFi Stadium near Los Angeles, which has the world's largest population of Iranians outside Iran.

The game was played in a crackling atmosphere created in part by a conflicted, diasporic fan-

base which remains furious with the current Iranian government, but is still largely supportive of Team Melli.

While several hundred Iranian Americans protested the government outside, many fans from the diaspora jeered and turned their backs on the field during the national anthem. Dozens of Lion and Sun emblems — the centerpiece of Iran's official flag before 1979 — were displayed in the crowd despite FIFA's attempts to keep them away, while dozens more fans wore the Lion and Sun emblems on T-shirts.

Yet the vast majority of the crowd vocally supported the Iranian players once the match kicked off.

"It was an incredible atmosphere in the game, all 90 minutes," Taremi said. "It was like at home for us."

Both of Iran's next two matches are tougher on paper, endangering their chances of getting out of the World Cup group stage for the first time. Iran, Belgium, Egypt and New Zealand have one point apiece after the opening round.

"We're facing more hurdles, but we're not going to let that stop us from doing our best," Ghalenoei said. "I think today was one of the best games in the World Cup so far, and I think the fans really enjoyed it inside the stadium and outside the stadium."

Pulisic trains separately while recovering from injury

Associated Press

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — U.S. forward Christian Pulisic trained on his own during practice Monday while he rehabilitates a calf injury which limited him to one half of action in the Americans' opening World Cup victory last week.

Pulisic participated in individual work and then went to the gym while his teammates practiced at their training base in Irvine, Calif. The AC Milan attacker got kicked in the calf

during training last week, and he left the Americans' 4-1 victory over Paraguay at halftime for precautionary reasons.

Pulisic was outstanding in the first match of his second World Cup, tormenting Paraguay's defense with repeated runs down the left side at SoFi Stadium. He recorded an assist on a goal by Folarin Balogun, and his playmaking was directly responsible for an own-goal scored by Paraguay while the Americans went ahead 3-0 in their highest-

scoring performance in World Cup history.

The United States gave no update on Pulisic's condition Monday, but he said after the game that he didn't think it was serious.

"I just got a bit of a kick in the first half, so I'm really hoping that it's nothing," Pulisic said at the time. "I'm hoping I'll be fine the next few days. Just the back of my leg, sort of my calf area. I'm staying positive. I don't think it's anything."

Pulisic and coach Mauricio Pochettino didn't speak to reporters Monday, but teammate Tyler Adams was not concerned.

"Christian will be ready, everyone," Adams told reporters. "Let's relax."

The U.S. continues group play in its home World Cup in Seattle on Friday against Australia, which also won its opening match. The Americans return to Inglewood on June 25 to face Turkey.

PCA hits for cycle, Cubs rally in 9th vs. Rockies

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Pete Crow-Armstrong became the first major league player to hit for the cycle this season as the Chicago Cubs rallied for a 5-4 victory over the Colorado Rockies on Monday night.

Chicago trailed 4-3 in the ninth inning before Pedro Ramírez hit an RBI single off Seth Halvorsen with the bases loaded and nobody out. Matt Shaw then walked on five pitches to force home the winning run.

Cole Carrigg's three-run homer off Caleb Thielbar in the eighth, his third home run in seven big league games, gave Colorado a 4-2 lead. Crow-Armstrong's sacrifice fly in the bottom half pulled the Cubs within one.

Crow-Armstrong extended his on-base streak to 19 games with his second leadoff home run in three games, a 434-foot shot center field off Michael Lorenzen.

"I absolutely put up great at-bats tonight and I'm proud of the production that I've helped have over the past few weeks," he said. "But you saw it tonight: The game's not over until it's over. I did everything I could to help the team. But I also had a real lapse in focus and that really could have hurt us tonight. That's what I'm talking about. Not going to dwell on that."

Crow-Armstrong led off the third with a triple to center. He doubled in the fifth and singled

leading off the seventh for the 13th cycle in franchise history and second since 1993.

When he came up again to lead off the seventh, the 24-year-old said he was more prepared for the moment than he might have been earlier in his career, or even earlier this season.

"Earlier, it probably made me a little nervous," Crow-Armstrong said. "I felt like I 'had to' instead of 'I get to' hit in this really cool moment with this crowd of 40,000 pulling for me. I think I'm learning to use that to my advantage instead of me shaking in my boots when I'm up there and wanting to get the job done so badly. It's also a regular thing at Wrigley. That happens a lot."

Crow-Armstrong finished 4 for 4 with two RBIs but only scored once as Chicago went 0 for 9 with runners in scoring position until the ninth. He was picked off first base by Brennan Bernardino after his single.

"My excitement was a little short-lived," Cubs manager Craig Counsell quipped after the game.

Daniel Palencia (2-1) pitched a scoreless ninth for Chicago (38-35).

Juan Mejia (1-6) took the loss for the Rockies (27-46).

Cubs starter Shota Imanaga allowed one run over 5⅔ innings. Imanaga was lifted with two on before reliever Phil Maton walked Carrigg to force home Colorado's first run.

May throws 1-hit shutout as Cardinals beat Padres

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Dustin May took a perfect game into the seventh inning before finishing a one-hitter as the St. Louis Cardinals beat the San Diego Padres 3-0 on Monday night.

Jimmy Crooks had a two-run double and Alec Burleson added an RBI double for St. Louis, which won for the eighth time in 11 games.

May (5-6) struck out nine and walked one. He threw 69 of his 101 pitches for strikes during his first complete game in 71 starts.

"This is about as good as I've felt in a long time," said May, who has been plagued by injuries since his debut in 2019.

The 28-year-old right-hander didn't allow a baserunner until he walked Fernando Tatis Jr. to begin the seventh. Manny Machado singled one out later, putting runners at the corners, but Gold Glove shortstop Masyn Winn turned a nifty double play on Gavin Sheets' grounder up the middle to keep it 3-0.

Tigers 9, Astros 3: Colt Keith hit three home runs and six RBIs as visiting Detroit took down Houston.

Kevin McGonigle and Spencer Torkelson each added homers in an 11-hit game for the Tigers.

The 24-year-old Keith, who entered the day with one home run in 65 games this season, became the youngest Detroit player

with a three-homer game since 1955.

Phillies 7, Marlins 0: Zack Wheeler (6-1) struck out nine in six scoreless innings of two-hit ball, Gabriel Rincones Jr. homered for his first career hit and host Philadelphia beat Miami.

J.T. Realmuto also went deep and Bryce Harper had an RBI for the Phillies, who opened a six-game homestand.

Nationals 7, Royals 3: Luis García Jr. hit a go-ahead single, Dylan Crews added a three-run homer and host Washington scored five times in the fifth inning to beat Kansas City.

Brad Lord (5-0) threw three innings in relief and allowed two runs on two hits. Nationals starter Andrew Alvarez gave up one run in four innings, striking out five.

Reds 12, Mets 0: Eugenio Suárez homered twice and drove in a career-high six runs, including a grand slam in the second inning as host Cincinnati over New York.

JJ Bleday added a three-run shot and Chase Burns (8-1) struck out seven in five innings in the Reds' most lopsided shutout since a 13-0 win against Philadelphia on April 15, 2023.

Twins 4, Rangers 2: Josh Bell hit a three-run homer in the first inning, Byron Buxton went deep for the 23rd time this season leading off the sixth and visiting Minnesota beat Texas.

Twins rookie Mike Paredes fell an out

short of his first major league win. The 25-year-old left-hander allowed four hits and two runs in 4⅔ innings.

Diamondbacks 4, Angels 3: Pavin Smith hit a tiebreaking solo homer off the right-field foul pole, Ryne Nelson (3-5) gave up two runs in seven innings and host Arizona beat Los Angeles.

Geraldo Perdomo added an RBI double later in the seventh that made it 4-2. Paul Sewald gave up a solo homer to Donovan Walton with two outs in the ninth, but struck out Oswald Peraza to earn his 18th save in 19 chances.

Athletics 11, Pirates 2: Nick Kurtz hit two homers and drove in five runs, Jeff McNeil also went deep and knocked in four, and the host Athletics beat scuffling Pittsburgh.

Lawrence Butler sparked a five-run seventh with an RBI double after Zack Gelof reached on a two-out error by second baseman Brandon Lowe.

Dodgers 4, Rays 3: Pinch-hitter Miguel Rojas launched a tiebreaking homer in the seventh inning and Los Angeles erased an early deficit to beat Tampa Bay in the opener of a six-game homestand.

Kyle Tucker hit a three-run homer for the Dodgers and threw out a runner at the plate from right field. Kyle Hurt (2-1) earned the win with a scoreless inning of relief, and Tanner Scott retired the side in order in the ninth for his eighth save.