

Trump floats cutting China tariffs to 80%

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Friday floated cutting tariffs on China from 145% to 80% ahead of a weekend meeting among top U.S. and Chinese trade officials as he looks to deescalate the trade war between the world's two largest economies.

Top U.S. officials are set to meet with a high-level Chinese delegation in Switzerland in the first major talks between the nations since Trump sparked a trade war with stiff tariffs on imports.

"80% Tariff on China seems right! Up to Scott B," Trump wrote on his social media account on Friday morning, referring to Scott Bessent, his Treasury chief, who has been a point person on trade. The Republican president also called on China to open its markets to the U.S., writing: "WOULD BE SO GOOD FOR THEM!!! CLOSED MARKETS DON'T WORK ANYMORE!!!"

Bessent and Trade Representative Jamieson Greer will meet

Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in Geneva in the most-senior known conversations between the countries in months, according to announcements by the Trump administration and the Chinese commerce ministry. It comes amid growing U.S. market worry over the impact of the tariffs on the prices and supply of consumer goods.

No country has been hit harder by Trump's trade war than China, the world's biggest exporter and second largest economy. When Trump announced his "Liberation Day" tariffs on April 2, China retaliated with tariffs of its own, a move that Trump viewed as demonstrating a lack of respect. The tariffs on each other's goods have been mounting since then, with the U.S. tariffs against China now at 145% and China tariffs on the U.S. at 125%.

The U.S. tariff includes a 20% rate tied to Trump's claim that Beijing has failed to stem the flow of chemicals used to manufacture fentanyl, and this portion of the tariff is unlikely to be

brought up.

While an 80% tariff level on Chinese goods would represent a significant reduction from the current 145%, it would still be an extremely high import duty that could create supply chain problems and push up prices.

And even with the reduction, the tariff rate would still be higher than the combined 74% rate on China that Trump announced at his April 2 "Liberation Day" event.

For China, experts say Beijing would insist that any agreement from the U.S. side would be credible and implemented.

Trump had previously said that he wouldn't lower the tariffs against China to hold substantive talks. But he showed signs of softening during an Oval Office appearance on Thursday, when he said he "could" lower the 145% rate charged on Chinese goods if the weekend talks go well.

"We're going to see," Trump said. "Right now, you can't get any higher. It's at 145, so we know it's coming down."

The president's team has acknowledged that the 145% tariff was not sustainable, as taxes at that rate were effectively an embargo on any trade between the two countries.

But it remains unclear how Trump can reconcile the contradictions in his stated goals. He wants large amounts of tariff revenues to offset his income tax cuts, but he also wants deals to increase market access for U.S. goods that would likely require lower tariffs. His aides have said he wants to isolate China, yet his tariffs on other trade partners make it difficult to create a durable alliance on trade.

Trump's social media post was another sign that the president has essentially been publicly negotiating with himself on tariffs. He's started, paused, tweaked and then threatened more import taxes, constantly reversing himself while balancing his promises to address inflation with his claims that tariffs can tilt the global economy in America's favor.

Pope Leo XIV celebrates first Mass as pontiff

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Leo XIV, history's first U.S.-born pontiff, said Friday that his election was both a cross to bear and a blessing as he celebrated his first Mass as the head of the Catholic Church.

Leo spoke off-the-cuff in English in the Sistine Chapel to the cardinals who elected him to follow in the footsteps of Pope Francis, who put a commitment to social justice at the core of his papacy. He acknowledged the great responsibility they had

placed on him before delivering a brief but dense homily on the need to joyfully spread Christianity in a world that often mocks it.

"You have called me to carry that cross and to be blessed with that mission, and I know I can rely on each and every one of you to walk with me as we continue as a church, as a community, as friends of Jesus, as believers, to announce the good news, to announce the Gospel," he said.

The Mass was in the same

frescoed chapel that Leo, the Chicago-born Augustinian missionary Robert Prevost, was elected Thursday afternoon as the 267th pope, overcoming the traditional taboo against a pontiff from the United States because of the secular power the country wields.

Leo will be formally installed as pope at a Mass on May 18, the Vatican said Friday, and will preside over his first general audience May 21. Meanwhile, he asked all Vatican leaders, who technically lost their jobs

when Francis died April 21, to remain in their posts until he decides definitively on whether to confirm them.

Two women delivered the readings of Scripture at the start of the Mass, perhaps an indication of Leo's intention to continue Francis' focus on expanding women's role in the church.

As a cardinal, Leo put into practice one of Francis' most revolutionary reforms by having three women serve on the Vatican board that vets bishop nominations.

Danish leader chides US over Greenland spying allegations

Associated Press

OSLO, Norway — Denmark Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said “you cannot spy against an ally” after reports that the United States has stepped up intelligence gathering on Greenland, a semiautonomous Danish territory coveted by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Frederiksen’s comments Friday are the latest in the spat between Denmark and Greenland and the United States because Trump seeks to annex the strategic Arctic island. Denmark and Greenland insist that the mineral-rich island is not for sale, while Trump has not ruled out taking it by military force even though Denmark is a NATO ally.

The Danish prime minister spoke to The Associated Press the day after Denmark summoned the top American diplomat in the country for an explanation following a Wall Street

Journal report which said several high-ranking officials under the U.S. director of national intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, had directed intelligence agency heads to learn more about Greenland’s independence movement and sentiment about U.S. resource extraction there.

Jennifer Hall Godfrey, acting head of the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen, met with high-ranking Danish diplomat Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen at the Danish Foreign Ministry, the ministry said in an email. It provided no further details. The embassy declined to comment.

Frederiksen said Friday the report was “rumors” in an international newspaper. The Journal cited two people familiar with the U.S. effort which it did not identify.

“Cooperation about defense and deterrence and security in the northern part of Europe is getting more and more impor-

tant,” Frederiksen said. “Of course, you cannot spy against an ally.”

Greenlandic Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen, in comments to Greenland newspaper Sermitsiaq, said the reports of espionage are unacceptable and disrespectful.

Finnish President Alexander Stubb said Friday there is “no question” that the pressure Denmark and Greenland are under “doesn’t feel right.” He spoke after a meeting in Norway where the issue of Greenland was discussed between Nordic and Baltic leaders and the U.K., with representatives from Greenland and the Faroe Islands dialing in via video link.

In response to questions about the Journal’s report, Gabbard’s office released a statement noting that she had made three “criminal” referrals to the Justice Department over intelligence community leaks.

Trump eyes Fox News host as top prosecutor

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Thursday that he is naming Fox News host Jeanine Pirro, a former county prosecutor and elected judge, to be the top federal prosecutor for the nation’s capital after abandoning his first pick for the job.

Pirro, who joined Fox News in 2006, co-hosts the network’s show “The Five” on weekday evenings. She was elected as a judge in New York’s Westchester County Court in 1990 before serving three terms as the county’s elected district attorney.

Trump tapped Pirro to at least temporarily lead the nation’s largest U.S. Attorney’s office after pulling his nomination of conservative activist Ed Martin Jr. for the position earlier Thursday. In a post on Truth Social, Trump said he was naming Pirro as the interim U.S. attorney in Washington, D.C., but didn’t indicate whether he would nominate her for the Senate-confirmed position on a more permanent basis.

“Jeanine is incredibly well qualified for this position, and is considered one of the Top District Attorneys in the History of the State of New York. She is in a class by herself,” Trump wrote.

Trump withdrew Martin from consideration after a key Republican senator said he could not support Martin for the job due to his defense of rioters who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

Martin’s leading role in Trump’s “Stop the Steal” movement was demoralizing for subordinates who spent four years prosecuting over 1,500 riot defendants only to see the president pardon them en masse.

Administration asks court to allow end of humanitarian parole for 500,000 people

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration asked the Supreme Court on Thursday to allow it to end humanitarian parole for hundreds of thousands of immigrants from four countries, setting them up for potential deportation.

The emergency appeal asks the justices to halt a lower-court order keeping in place temporary legal status for more than 500,000 people from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela.

The Republican administration argues that the decision wrongly intrudes on the Depart-

ment of Homeland Security’s authority.

“The district court has nullified one of the administration’s most consequential immigration policy decisions,” Solicitor General John Sauer wrote.

The order from U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani in Boston blocked the Trump administration from putting an early end to the migrants’ temporary legal status. Her ruling in mid-April came shortly before their permits were due to be canceled, opening them up to removal from the country.

Talwani, who was appointed

by Democratic President Barack Obama, said that people in the program faced the option of “fleeing the country” or staying and “risk losing everything.” She said the government’s explanation for ending the program was “based on an incorrect reading of the law.”

The Justice Department went to the Supreme Court after an appeals court refused to lift Talwani’s order.

Sauer argued that the judge was instead wrong on the law, including her finding that any revocations of parole must be made on a case-by-case basis.

FedEx board member selected to be USPS postmaster general

Associated Press

David Steiner, a former CEO of the nation's largest waste management company who currently serves on the FedEx board of directors, is poised to take over control of the U.S. Postal Service, becoming the nation's 76th postmaster general.

The announcement of Steiner's appointment, which drew immediate concerns from postal unions over possible efforts to privatize the USPS, was made Friday by Amber McReynolds, chairperson of the USPS' Board of Governors, during a meeting of the independent group that oversees the service.

"We anticipate that Mr. Steiner will join the organization in July, assuming his successful completion of the ethics and security clearance processes that are currently underway," McReynolds said.

Friday's announcement by

the Board of Governors comes as President Donald Trump and his adviser Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency have raised the idea of privatizing the nearly 250-year-old Postal Service, which has faced financial challenges amid a changing mail mix and other issues.

The choice of Steiner has been seen by the postal unions as a harbinger for possible privatization of some or all of the venerable quasi-public institution, which is largely self-funded and has a mission to serve every address in the country — nearly 167 million residences, businesses and post office boxes.

Postal unions have held protests throughout the country over potential privatization, job cuts and possibly ending the universal service obligation.

Brian L. Renfroe, president of the National Association of

Letter Carriers, said Steiner is not just any executive from the private sector but someone who sits on the board of one of the Postal Service's top competitors.

"His selection isn't just a conflict of interest — it's an aggressive step toward handing America's mail system over to corporate interests," Renfroe said in a statement. "Private shippers have been waiting to get USPS out of parcel delivery for years. Steiner's selection is an open invitation to do just that."

Renfroe's union represents 205,000 active city letter carriers and around 90,000 retirees.

Steiner, who will leave the FedEx board, said in a written statement that he admires the public service mission of the USPS and called it "an incredible honor to be asked to lead the world's greatest postal organization."

Air traffic controllers lose radar again in NJ

Associated Press

The air traffic controllers directing planes into the Newark, N.J., airport lost their radar Friday morning for the second time in two weeks.

The Federal Aviation Administration said the radar at the facility in Philadelphia that directs planes in and out of Newark airport went black for 90 seconds at 3:55 a.m. Friday. That's similar to what happened on April 28.

That first radar outage led to hundreds of flights being canceled or delayed at the Newark airport in the past two weeks after the FAA slowed down traffic at the airport to ensure safety. Several controllers also went on trauma leave after that outage, worsening the existing shortage.

The FAA said earlier this week that it is installing new fiber-optic data lines to carry the radar signal between its facilities in Philadelphia and New York. Officials said some of the lines connecting those two facilities are outdated copper wire.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy announced a multi-billion-dollar plan Thursday to replace the nation's aging air traffic control system to prevent problems like this from happening and give controllers modern technology.

Officials developed the plan to upgrade the system after a crash in January between a passenger jet and an Army helicopter killed 67 people in the skies over Washington, D.C.

But the shortcomings of the air traffic control system have been known for decades. The National Transportation Safety Board has not determined that a problem with the air traffic control system caused that crash near Reagan National Airport.

Trump fires librarian of Congress

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump abruptly fired Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden as the White House continues to purge the federal government of those perceived to oppose the president and his agenda.

Hayden was notified in an email late Thursday from the White House's Presidential Personnel Office, according to an email obtained by The Associated Press. Confirmed by the Senate to the job in 2016, Hayden was the first woman and the first African American to be librarian of Congress.

Hayden, whose 10-year term was set to expire next year, had come under backlash from a conservative advocacy group

that had vowed to root out those standing in the way of Trump's agenda. The group, American Accountability Foundation, accused her and other library leaders of promoting children's books with "radical" content and literary material authored by Trump opponents.

"The current #LibrarianOfCongress Carla Hayden is woke, anti-Trump, and promotes trans-ing kids," AAF said on its X account just hours before the firing was made public.

All around the government, Trump has been weeding out officials who he believes don't align with his agenda, from the Justice Department to the Pentagon and beyond. At times, the firings come after conservative voices single out officials for

criticism.

Earlier Thursday, the acting administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency was pushed out one day after he had testified that he did not agree with proposals to dismantle the organization. Trump has suggested that individual states, not FEMA, should take the lead on responding to hurricanes, tornadoes and other crises.

The unexpected move Thursday against Hayden infuriated congressional Democrats, who initially disclosed the firing.

"Enough is enough," said Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, who called Hayden "a trailblazer, a scholar, and a public servant of the highest order."

India, Pakistan swap intense artillery fire

Associated Press

SRINAGAR, India — Indian and Pakistani soldiers exchanged heavy volleys of shells and gunfire across their frontier in Kashmir overnight, killing at least five civilians in a growing military standoff that erupted following an attack on tourists in the India-controlled portion of the disputed region.

In Pakistan, an unusually intense night of artillery exchanges left at least four civilians dead and wounded 12 others in areas near the Line of Control that divides Kashmir, local police official Adeel Ahmad said. People in border towns said the firing continued well into Friday morning.

“We’re used to hearing exchange of fire between Pakistan and India at the Line of Control, but last night was different,” said Mohammad Shakil, who lives near the frontier in Chakothi sector.

In India, military officials said Pakistani troops barraged their posts overnight with artillery, mortars and gunfire at

multiple locations in Indian-controlled Kashmir. They said Indian soldiers responded, triggering fierce exchanges until dawn.

Two people were killed and four others injured in Uri and Poonch sectors, police said, taking the civilian death toll in Indian-controlled Kashmir to 18 since Wednesday. Pakistan said Indian mortar and artillery fire has killed 17 civilians in Pakistan-administered Kashmir in the same period.

Indian authorities have evacuated tens of thousands of civilians from villages near the volatile frontier. Thousands of people slept in shelters for a second consecutive night.

Tensions between the nuclear-armed rivals have soared since an attack on a popular tourist site in India-controlled Kashmir left 26 civilians dead, mostly Hindu Indian tourists, on April 22. New Delhi has blamed Pakistan for backing the attack, an accusation Islamabad rejects.

On Wednesday, India con-

ducted airstrikes on several sites in Pakistani territory it described as militant-related, killing 31 civilians according to Pakistani officials. Pakistan said it shot down five Indian fighter jets.

On Thursday, India said it thwarted Pakistani drone and missile attacks at military targets in more than a dozen cities and towns, including Jammu city in India-controlled Kashmir.

Pakistan denied that it carried out drone attacks. India said meanwhile it hit Pakistan’s air defense systems and radars close to the city of Lahore. The incidents could not be independently confirmed.

The Indian army said Friday that Pakistan fired about 300-400 drones overnight in violation of Indian airspace to target military installations in nearly three dozen sites along the western borders.

India brought down a number of the drones using “kinetic and nonkinetic means,” Wing Commander Vyomika Singh of the

Indian air force told a news conference.

Meanwhile, social platform X in a statement on Thursday said the Indian government had ordered it to block users in the country from accessing more than 8,000 accounts, including a number of “international news organizations and other prominent users.”

The social platform did not release the list of accounts it was blocking in India, but said the order “amounts to censorship of existing and future content, and is contrary to the fundamental right of free speech.” Later, X briefly blocked access to the Global Affairs Account from which it had posted the statement, also citing a legal demand from India.

India’s biggest domestic cricket tournament, the Indian Premier League, which attracts top players from around the world, was suspended for one week. Pakistan also moved its own domestic tournament to the United Arab Emirates because of the tensions.

Russia recalls Nazis’ defeat with Victory Day parade

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia on Friday celebrated the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, as President Vladimir Putin presided over a massive parade of tanks, missiles and troops through Red Square and welcomed over two dozen world leaders — the most since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine.

Victory Day, which Russia marks on May 9, is the country’s most important secular holiday.

Friday’s parade was the largest since Russia sent troops into Ukraine in 2022 and drew the most global leaders to Moscow in a decade, including high-pro-

file guests like Chinese President Xi Jinping, who sat next to Putin, and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Their attendance underscored how Putin has tried to emphasize the failure of the West to turn Russia into a global pariah.

Addressing the crowd in Red Square, Putin praised Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, saying that “we are proud of their courage and determination, their spiritual force that always has brought us victory.”

Putin, who has ruled Russia for 25 years, has turned Victory Day into a key pillar of his tenure and has tried to use it to justify his action in Ukraine.

Jury selection delayed for Combs sex trafficking trial

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The final stage of jury selection for the racketeering and sex trafficking trial of hip-hop mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs was postponed until next week, right before opening arguments begin, a federal judge decided on Friday.

Prosecutors allege that Combs, 55, used his fame and power at the top of the hip-hop world to sexually abuse women from 2004 to 2024. He pleaded not guilty after his September arrest and has remained held without bail at a federal lockup in Brooklyn.

Judge Arun Subramanian granted the defense lawyers’ request to delay the last step in ju-

ry selection until Monday, when both sides will narrow down the pool of 45 people to 12 jurors and six alternates. Generally, lawyers do not have to explain why they are ejecting candidates.

The defense said striking prospective jurors could take as little as 10 to 15 minutes, so why not do it on Monday when they will be present. The jurors weren’t required to be in the Manhattan courtroom on Friday, but Combs was there.

Prosecutors objected, saying the whole process could get gummed up if several jurors panic after being chosen and decide they don’t want to take part in a high-profile trial that’s expected to last two months.

Wilson rules at country awards once again

Associated Press

NEW YORK — It was her night once again. Lainey Wilson took home the top prize at the 60th annual Academy of Country Music Awards — the title of entertainer of the year — for a second year in a row. And that was after she cleaned house, taking home trophies for both female artist and album of the year.

“I really do have the best fans in the world,” she said in her final acceptance speech, admitting to experiencing impostor syndrome. “I dreamed about entertaining. ... Country music has given me more than I deserve.”

Beyond Wilson’s dominance, the 2025 ACM Awards were

packed with celebration. Earlier, first-time and leading nominee Ella Langley’s duet with Riley Green, the ubiquitous “You Look Like You Love Me,” was named single and music event of the year.

Both Langley and Green used their first acceptance speech to shout out classic country — songs with talking in them — that inspired their modern hit.

A revisitation of the past might have been a theme Thursday night, evidenced right at the top of the ceremony: a 14-minute medley of six decades of country classics, performed by giants of the genre.

Host Reba McEntire launched into Merle Haggard’s “Okie from Muskogee,” fol-

lowed by Clint Black with Glen Campbell’s “Rhinstone Cowboy” and Wynonna Judd with The Judds’ “Why Not Me.” LeAnn Rimes returned to the ACM Awards stage for her 1997 ballad “Blue.” Little Big Town tackled their 2014 track “Girl Crush” and Dan + Shay delivered their “Tequila.”

It was an exciting way to kick off the ACM Awards, live from the Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, Texas, just north of Dallas.

And it was a show highlight, rivaled only by the introduction of the ACM Alan Jackson Lifetime Achievement Award, the inaugural trophy given to its namesake, Jackson, after he performed “Remember When.”

In his acceptance speech, he joked that a fan named a dog after him. Having an award named after him? That isn’t half bad, either.

The first trophy of the night, the coveted song of the year, was awarded to Cody Johnson for his radio hit “Dirt Cheap.”

The Oak Ridge Boys gave the group of the year award to Old Dominion.

It was a moving gesture; in 2024 the Oak Ridge Boys’ Joe Bonsall, a Grammy award winner and celebrated tenor, died from complications of the neuromuscular disorder Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

Male artist of the year went to Stapleton. Duo of the year was awarded to Brooks & Dunn.

Daughter: Mom ‘gave me life twice’ with kidney donation

Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — For years, Ambreale Brown was forced to put her dreams of becoming a nurse on hold due to a life-threatening kidney disease that left her temporarily incapacitated.

Amid inner doubts about whether she would ever return to living a normal life, Brown’s mother stepped in and offered to donate her kidney. Doctors performed Louisiana’s first robotic kidney transplant, giving Brown a renewed chance at life and Nija Butler the opportunity to see her daughter thrive.

Nearly two years after the successful transplant, the Louisiana mother and daughter shared another journey. Donning white caps and gowns, they walked across the stage together in Baton Rouge and gradu-

ated from nursing school.

“As parents, we always tell our children, we would die for you, and kids don’t always understand that kind of love,” Butler, 48, said. “I would have given anything for her to live. I mean that from the bottom of my heart, without a second thought.”

The duo has always been close. Butler gave birth to her daughter when she was in high school, and as a result, they grew up together. Butler poured herself into raising her daughter and son, and Brown planned to become a nurse.

But in 2016, when Brown was diagnosed with Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis, a rare kidney disease that can cause kidney failure, everything changed. Her prognosis quickly worsened. One day, Brown, who

was taking prerequisite courses for nursing school, felt her legs tighten to the point that she could not move.

Shortly after, Brown’s doctor delivered detrimental news: Brown would either need to start dialysis or have a kidney transplant to survive. The average wait for a kidney transplant can vary from two to five years, or longer, depending on certain factors, based on data from the National Kidney Foundation.

Brown desperately hoped for a new kidney. But as she awaited news of a transplant, she was forced to turn to dialysis — a treatment that lasted nine to 13 hours, every single day. Brown’s daily life was limited, and she had to stop school.

Although doctors had previously told Butler she likely wasn’t a match to be a kidney

donor for her daughter, she still scheduled an appointment to get tested the next day. She opted not to tell her daughter, not wanting to get her hopes up in case it wasn’t a viable match.

Soon after, Brown got news she had been waiting five years to hear — she was getting a new kidney. She called her mother to tell her, but her mom already knew. Confused, Brown asked how she would know that.

“It’s me,” Butler responded.

The two underwent surgery in March 2023, with Tulane University School of Medicine doctors performing the state’s first kidney transplant using a robotic surgical system. The practice offers increased precision so the procedure is minimally invasive, with the hope there will be less pain and a speedier recovery.

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Bucs rookie tops list of NFL heavyweights

Associated Press

Even though Desmond Watson is trying to make Tampa Bay's roster, he's already made history — as the NFL's heaviest player.

The 6-foot-6, 464-pound defensive tackle from Florida signed with his hometown Buccaneers after going undrafted and will begin his NFL journey during Tampa Bay's three-day rookie minicamp that opens Friday. He's sure to get plenty of attention — maybe even as much as the team's first-round draft pick, former Ohio State receiver Emeka Egbuka.

The Bucs would no doubt like to see Watson a little lighter on his feet. The Gators struggled for four years to make tangible progress with a guy Florida coach Billy Napier called “a unicorn” and “just a big man.”

While no current NFL player tops 400 pounds — Baltimore Ravens guard Daniel Faalele is the heaviest at 380 — there have been a few who have played at or near four bills. Here's a look at some of the beefiest guys in league history:

■ **Aaron Gibson, 410 pounds:**

A first-round draft pick by Detroit in 1999, Gibson started 15 games for the Lions before getting waived in the middle of his third season. Shoulder issues landed the offensive tackle on injured reserve in each of his first two years. He also played with Dallas and Chicago before getting one final shot in the NFL with Buffalo in 2006; the Bills cut him near the end of training camp. He bounced around the Arena Football League from there. He battled depression after his playing days ended and weighed as much as 480 pounds.

■ **Terrell Brown, 403 pounds:** The 6-foot-10 Brown signed with the St. Louis Rams as an undrafted rookie from Mississippi in 2013. He showed up 15 pounds heavier than then-Rams coach Jeff Fisher expected. He shed some weight during training camp — the Rams had him playing right tackle after working him on both sides of the ball — but he didn't make the team.

■ **Nate Newton, 401 pounds:** Cut by Washington before spending two years (1984-85) in the USFL, Newton's career

changed dramatically when he signed with the Dallas Cowboys. Nicknamed “The Kitchen” because of his size, Newton lost a footrace with then-Cowboys coach Jimmy Johnson that pushed him to get into better shape. He ended up becoming one of the league's most dominant guards in the 1990s. He made six Pro Bowls while blocking for Emmitt Smith and Troy Aikman and helped the Cowboys win three Super Bowls. Newton was back over 400 pounds in retirement, but he eventually lost nearly half his body weight thanks to stomach surgery in 2010.

■ **Michael Jasper, 394 pounds:** Despite weighing as much as 450 pounds as a two-way player at Bethel University of the NAIA, Buffalo drafted Jasper in the seventh round in 2011. He dropped to 375 pounds during training camp but was released in final cuts. He landed on Buffalo's practice squad but never played in a regular-season game. He's now the head coach at Stetson.

■ **Bryant McKinnie, 386 pounds:** McKinnie played in 179

games, with 162 starts, over a 12-year NFL career. A college standout at Miami and the seventh overall pick by Minnesota in 2002, McKinnie's 6-foot-8 frame handled the weight well. He made the Pro Bowl in 2009 and won the Super Bowl with Baltimore following the 2012 season.

■ **William Perry, 382 pounds:** A first-round draft pick by Chicago in 1985, Perry quickly earned the nickname “The Refrigerator” and became a fan favorite as a rookie. The run-stuffing nose tackle also carried five times for 7 yards and two touchdowns in the regular season and had a TD catch. His bone-jarring TD run — and subsequent spike — against New England in the 1986 Super Bowl remains an iconic moment in NFL lore. He finished his pro career with 524 tackles, including 29½ sacks, over 138 games. The Fridge may have gained popularity in retirement: He was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame and participated as a celebrity contestant in the 2003 Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest.

Pope Leo XIV brings hope to Chicago sports fans

Associated Press

The sports loyalties of Pope Leo XIV became a topic of conversation almost as soon as the white smoke emerged from the Vatican's Sistine Chapel.

Robert Prevost is the first pope from the United States in the history of the Catholic Church. The Chicago-born missionary, who took the name Leo XIV, also attended Villanova University near Philadelphia, where he received a Bachelor of Science in 1977.

Chicago's two baseball teams were front and center as sports fans reacted to the news.

It was initially reported that the new pope was a Cubs fan. The team congratulated Pope

Leo XIV in a post on X that had a picture of Wrigley Field's iconic marquee with the message: HEY, CHICAGO. HE'S A CUBS FAN!

But his brother, John Prevost, set the record straight in an interview with WGN-TV. The pope is a White Sox fan.

“He was never ever a Cubs fan, so I don't know where that came from. He was always a Sox fan,” John said, adding that the confusion might stem from the fact their mother's side of the family were North Siders and Cubs fans.

The White Sox posted a clip from the brother's WGN interview on X, along with a picture of the Rate Field videoboard

with the message: HEY CHICAGO, HE'S A SOX FAN! The post read “Well, would you look at that... Congratulations to Chicago's own Pope Leo XIV.”

“Family always knows best, and it sounds like Pope Leo XIV's lifelong fandom falls a little closer to 35th and Shields,” the White Sox said in a statement. “Some things are bigger than baseball, and in this case, we're glad to have a White Sox fan represented at the Vatican. A pinstripes White Sox jersey with his name on it and a hat already are on the way to Rome, and of course, the Pontiff always is welcome at his ballpark.”

The TV interview had White

Sox fans wondering about the pope's ability to convince owner Jerry Reinsdorf to sell the last-place team.

Long-suffering Bears fans weighed in, too. One remarked on X that Chicago developed a pope before the Bears developed a quarterback. Another said the Bears now have a direct line to God. And another said the Bears no longer will be on the wrong side of Hail Marys, a reference to Washington Commanders quarterback Jayden Daniels' 52-yard Hail Mary completion to Noah Brown to beat the Bears in October.

“Daaaaaa Pope,” Bears quarterback Caleb Williams posted on X on Thursday night.

Red Sox shut out Rangers for series win

Associated Press

BOSTON — Rafael Devers homered and drove in two runs, and five Boston pitchers combined for a five-hit shutout as the Red Sox defeated the Texas Rangers 5-0 on Thursday.

Devers hit a solo shot for his sixth home run of the season, sending it into the Green Monster seats in the 7th inning. His first RBI of the game came on a single in the 5th inning. Carlos Narvaez also produced a run-scoring single for the Red Sox, taking two of three against the Rangers.

Red Sox starter Bryan Bello teamed up with four relievers to produce Boston's third shutout of the season. Justin Slaten (1-3) earned the win with 1.1 scoreless innings. Garrett Whitlock tossed one inning with Liam Hendricks finishing off Texas with two innings.

Texas starter Jack Leiter (2-2) took the loss, giving up four runs and walking four in 5.1 innings. No. 9 hitter Tucker Barnhart collected two of the Rangers' five hits.

Boston took advantage of Leiter issuing two walks and throwing a wild pitch in the second inning en route to building a 2-0 lead. Trevor Story led off with a single and scored on a wild pitch while Jarren Duran's grounder to second plated the second run of the frame.

Twins 5, Orioles 2: Brooks Lee had a go-ahead two-run double with two outs in the eighth inning to propel Minnesota to a win over Baltimore, completing a three-game sweep with their fifth straight victory.

Lee's double came off reliever Gregory Soto, who entered after Yennier Cano (0-2) walked Harrison Bader leading off and Byron Buxton with one out. Soto struck out Trevor Larnach before Lee doubled to center. Ty France followed with an RBI single for a three-run lead.

Buxton went 0 for 2 after homering in three straight games, but he walked twice, scored two

runs, stole a base and threw a runner out at home.

Emmanuel Rivera and Ramón Laureano had RBI doubles in back-to-back innings off Twins starter Bailey Ober to take a 2-1 lead in the third.

Buxton threw out Rivera, who doubled and failed to score on a Gunnar Henderson single in the sixth.

The Twins tied it in the bottom half on a leadoff homer by Larnach—his fifth. Kremer has surrendered eight of Baltimore's MLB-high 55 homers.

Ober allowed two runs — one earned — on eight hits in five innings. Griffin Jax (1-2) pitched a scoreless eighth and Jhoan Duran earned his sixth save.

Kremer went seven innings, allowing two runs on three hits with eight strikeouts for the Orioles, who have lost five straight and 9 of 11.

Royals 10, White Sox 0: Bobby Witt Jr. had four hits, Kris Bubic pitched seven innings and Kansas City beat Chicago.

Salvador Perez had three RBIs as the Royals posted their sixth consecutive win. Jonathan India had two hits, two RBIs and scored three times.

Bubic (4-2) allowed six hits, struck out seven and walked one. Chris Stratton and Steven Cruz each got three outs for the Royals, finishing a six-hitter.

Kansas City scored its first six runs on two-out hits.

The Royals jumped in front in the first against Davis Martin (1-4). Vinnie Pasquantino singled, on Perez's ninth double in his last 12 games.

Witt singled and stole second before scoring on a single by Perez for a 2-0 lead in the third.

Witt singled, stole his 13th base and scored on a two-run triple by Maikel Garcia in the 5th. India and Witt added back-to-back RBI doubles in the 6th.

Martin allowed four runs and seven hits in 4½ innings.

Tigers 10, Rockies 2, 1st game — Tigers 11, Rockies 1, 2nd game: Keider Montero

pitched eight strong innings, Colt Keith homered and Detroit beat Colorado in the second game to sweep the doubleheader.

Spencer Torkelson had three hits and Brewer Hicklen singled in the 3rd for his first career hit for Detroit. The Tigers won the first game 10-2 and finished 7-3 on their road trip.

Montero (1-1) allowed a run and five hits to earn his first victory since Sept. 15, 2024.

Colorado has lost six in a row for a major league-worst 6-31.

The Tigers trailed 1-0 but rallied in the third against Tanner Gordon (0-1), who was making his first start of the season.

With bases loaded and no outs, Kerry Carpenter hit a grounder to Ryan McMahon at third base. The ball went through the webbing of McMahon's glove for a base hit, and Gleyber Torres followed with his three-run double.

Torkelson doubled and Jace Jung singled to drive in two more and make it a six-run inning.

Braves 5, Reds 4, 11 Innings: Drake Baldwin hit an RBI single in the 11th inning to drive in automatic runner Ozzie Albies and give Atlanta its fourth win in its last five games, beating Cincinnati.

Scott Blewett (1-0) pitched two scoreless innings to pick up the win.

The Braves forced extra innings with a two-run rally in the ninth inning. Eli White bunted home Albies with the first run and Michael Harris II drove in pinch runner Eddie Rosario with a single to left field. Harris was three for five with two RBIs.

Taylor Rogers (1-1) took the loss.

Rookie Rece Hinds hit a tie-breaking two-run homer off Raisel Iglesias in the ninth inning to give the Reds a 4-2 lead. He was 2 for 3 with two RBIs and a walk in his second game of the season with the Reds.

Reds catcher Jose Trevino was 3 for 4 with three doubles and an RBI.

Spencer Schwellenbach lasted six innings and gave up five hits, one run, two walks and five strikeouts. It was his sixth quality start of the season in eight outings.

Phillies 7, Rays 6, 10 Innings: Brandon Marsh and Trea Turner each had two hits and drove in a run in the 10th inning to cap a comeback from four runs down and lead Philadelphia to a win over Tampa Bay.

Philadelphia tied the score in the ninth, handing Pete Fairbanks his first blown save in nine opportunities. After Kyle Schwarber led off with a single to extend his on-base streak to 43 games, the Phillies lifted him for pinch runner Johan Rojas. Fairbanks sailed a pickoff attempt over first base, allowing Rojas to take third and score on Max Kepler's RBI grounder.

Marsh led off the 10th with a double to left-center off Manuel Rodriguez (0-1) to drive in pinch-runner Edmundo Sosa, scoring two batters later on Turner's single to center.

Junior Caminero hit a solo homer for Tampa Bay in the 1st and Yandy Diaz hit a three-run shot in the 7th to give the Rays a 5-1 lead.

Bryson Stott hit a three-run homer, his second hit of the game, off Edwin Uceta to cut the Rays' lead to 5-4 in the eighth.

Matt Strahm gave up a run in the 10th, stranding the tying run on second to register his second save.

Diamondbacks 5, Dodgers 3: Gabriel Moreno hit a grand slam off Yoshinobu Yamamoto, Brandon Pfaadt threw 6⅓ scoreless innings and Arizona beat Los Angeles in the opener of a four-game series between the NL West rivals.

Shohei Ohtani hit a solo homer in the ninth — his 11th long ball of the season — but the Dodgers have now dropped three of their past five games.

Timberwolves defeat Curry-less Warriors

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Timberwolves were stewing over their rough start in Game 1 against Golden State, a reaction coach Chris Finch was pleased to see.

Julius Randle had 24 points and 11 assists to help the Timberwolves capitalize on Warriors star Stephen Curry's absence in a 117-93 victory Thursday that tied the second-round series at a game apiece.

The foundation was laid in an ornery film session with Finch and his staff the day before.

"He was unhappy, and he let us know he was unhappy, and we felt that," Randle said. "We were pretty motivated as a team."

Anthony Edwards finished with 20 points after an injury

scare for the Wolves, who more than tripled their 3-point output (going 16 for 37) from their Game 1 loss when Curry was sidelined by a left hamstring strain that likely will keep him out at least until next week.

Nickeil Alexander-Walker added 20 points to spearhead a superb performance by the bench, combining with Donte DiVincenzo and Naz Reid to go 10 for 22 from deep.

"We looked a lot more like ourselves," Finch said.

Jonathan Kuminga (18 points) and Trayce Jackson-Davis (15) combined to shoot 14 for 17 from the floor for the Warriors.

They took nearly five minutes to score, finally breaking through down 13-0 on Jimmy Butler's 3-pointer.

With the NBA's career leading 3-point shooter next to him on the bench, coach Steve Kerr used a kitchen-sink experiment with 14 players getting time.

"But I would still like to win," Butler said. "I think the biggest lesson is, don't start off in a hole like we did tonight, and the game maybe could have ended up a little bit differently."

Kuminga, the seventh overall pick in the 2021 draft who dropped out of the rotation at times during the regular season and missed significant time with a sprained right ankle, was a bright spot off the bench.

But this Warriors team was already thin on offense with a healthy Curry.

"We have to figure out what we're going to be able to do in

this series without Steph," Kerr said. "So we gave a lot of people a lot of chances, and some guys really stepped up."

Against the Wolves and their athletic, long and versatile defense, there wasn't much to lean on. Without Curry to worry about, the Wolves had an easier time keeping shooters Buddy Hield and Brandin Podziemski quiet.

The Warriors put up their lowest first-quarter score (15) in the playoffs since Game 6 of the 2016 NBA Finals, according to Sportradar, when they had 11 in a loss to Cleveland.

Draymond Green picked up his fifth technical foul of the playoffs, two short of an automatic one-game suspension, for elbowing Naz Reid after Reid had just fouled him.

Draisaitl scores in OT as Oilers beat Golden Knights

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — It's not often that Leon Draisaitl and Connor McDavid don't make it onto the scoresheet, but they were noticeably quiet for nearly the entire game Thursday night.

Nearly.

Draisaitl took a pass from McDavid and scored off the rush at 15:20 of overtime to give the Edmonton Oilers a 5-4 victory over the Vegas Golden Knights on Thursday night and a 2-0 lead in the second-round series.

After failing to capitalize on a five-minute power play when Vegas defenseman Nicolas Roy was assessed a major penalty for cross-checking 5:37 into overtime, the Oilers didn't waste the opportunity later when the NHL's most dynamic offensive duo combined for the winner.

Draisaitl said McDavid's pass was so spectacular that "it's tough to even celebrate my part

of the goal."

He said that tongue in cheek, but the game's ending was no laughing matter to the Golden Knights, who were critical that a penalty wasn't called on Viktor Arvidsson after defenseman Brayden McNabb went into the boards and then to the locker room. The Golden Knights went from a potential power play to watching Draisaitl and McDavid skate off in victory.

Vasily Podkolzin, Jake Walman, Darnell Nurse and Evander Kane also scored for the Oilers, and Arvidsson and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins each had two assists.

Victor Olofsson scored two power-play goals and had an assist for the Golden Knights, Alex Pietrangolo had a goal and an assist, and William Karlsson also scored. Jack Eichel had three assists, and Mark Stone two assists to extend their points streaks to five games apiece.

Game 3 is Saturday night.

Capitals return to form in beating Hurricanes 3-1

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Knowing full well the chances of being competitive in their second-round series against the Carolina Hurricanes hung in the balance, the Washington Capitals flipped the script from the opener in a big way in Game 2.

Tom Wilson had a monster performance with a couple of blocked shots, an assist on the winning goal and the empty-netter that sealed a 3-1 victory Thursday night. From Wilson down, the Capitals looked far more like themselves and showed they could skate with the Hurricanes and seize some opportunities needed to beat them.

"It was much better, there's no doubt about that," coach Spencer Carbery said. "We feel like we can punch back."

Connor McMichael scored on a breakaway, John Carlson got a power-play goal off a textbook cross-ice pass from Wilson, and

Logan Thompson stopped 27 of the 28 shots he faced. The Capitals started slow before looking like the top seed in the Eastern Conference, dictating their style and not getting hemmed in their end for long stretches.

That was essential after they were thoroughly outplayed in the series opener, an overtime loss.

At the other end of the ice, Thompson kept up his stellar goaltending that helped the Capitals get past Montreal in five games in the first round. Chants of "LT! LT!" filled the arena just about every time Thompson made a stop and halted play.

The Hurricanes got 18 saves from Andersen and a power-play goal from Gostisbehere with 10:34 left but could not erase their deficit. The last team this postseason to be perfect on the penalty kill, entering 17 for 17, their streak was broken on Carlson's goal.