

## Israel says Gaza ceasefire has taken effect

*Associated Press*

WADI GAZA, Gaza Strip — A ceasefire between Israel and Hamas came into effect in Gaza on Friday, the military said, hours after Israel's Cabinet approved a deal to pause the fighting and exchange the remaining hostages for Palestinian prisoners.

Tens of thousands of people who had gathered in Wadi Gaza in central Gaza started walking north after the Israeli military's announcement at noon local time. Beforehand, Palestinians reported heavy shelling in parts of Gaza throughout Friday morning, but no significant bombardment was reported after.

The ceasefire marks a key step toward ending a ruinous two-year war that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, reduced much of Gaza to rubble, destabilized the Middle East, and left dozens of host-

ages, living and dead, in the territory. Still, the broader plan advanced by President Donald Trump includes many unanswered questions, such as whether and how Hamas will disarm and who will govern Gaza.

Despite those questions, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted in a televised statement Friday that the next stages would see Hamas disarm and Gaza demilitarized.

"If this is achieved the easy way — so be it. If not — it will be achieved the hard way," Netanyahu said. He added that Hamas agreed to the deal "only when it felt that the sword was on its neck — and it is still on its neck."

Israeli military spokesman Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin said troops had completed their withdrawal to the deployment lines by Friday afternoon, a few hours after the ceasefire offi-

cially went into effect.

Earlier, an Israeli security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the military would control around 50% of Gaza in their new positions.

A steady stream of people, the vast majority on foot, crammed onto a coastal road in the central Gaza Strip, heading north to see what might have remained of their homes. Others headed to other parts of the Palestinian territory in the south.

Under the deal, Israeli troops have withdrawn to new positions in Gaza, and all 48 hostages still in captivity are expected to be released. Israel believes around 20 of them are alive.

In exchange, Israel will release around 2,000 Palestinian prisoners. A list Israel published Friday did not include high-profile prisoner Marwan Barghouti, the most popular Palestinian leader and a poten-

tially unifying figure. Israel views him and some others as terrorist masterminds who murdered Israeli civilians and has refused to release them in past exchanges.

Khalil al-Hayya, a senior Hamas official and lead negotiator, said Thursday evening that all women and children held in Israeli jails will be freed.

The hostage and prisoner releases are expected to begin Monday, two Egyptian officials briefed on the talks and a Hamas official said, though another official said they could occur as early as Sunday night. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to be publicly named speaking about the negotiations.

Five border crossings are expected to reopen, including the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, the Egyptian and Hamas officials said.

## US sending 200 troops to help monitor ceasefire

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The United States is sending about 200 troops to Israel to help support and monitor the ceasefire deal in Gaza as part of a team that includes partner nations, nongovernmental organizations and private-sector players, U.S. officials said Thursday.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said U.S. Central Command is going to establish a "civil-military coordination center" in Israel that will help facilitate the flow of humanitarian aid as well as logistical and security assistance into the territory wracked by two years of war.

The remarks provide some of the first details on how the ceasefire deal would be monitored and that the U.S. military would have a role in that effort. After Israel and Hamas agreed to the first phase of a Trump administration plan to halt the fighting, a litany of questions remain on next steps, including Hamas disarmament, a withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza and a future government in the territory.

One of the officials said the new team will help monitor implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the transition to a civilian government in Gaza.

The coordination center will

be staffed by about 200 U.S. service members who have expertise in transportation, planning, security, logistics and engineering, said the official, who noted that no American troops will be sent into Gaza.

A second official said the troops would be drawn from U.S. Central Command, which has troops stationed in the Middle East as well as other parts of the globe. That official added that the troops already have begun arriving and will continue to travel to the region over the weekend to begin planning and efforts to establish the center.

Two other senior U.S. officials who spoke to reporters on

condition of anonymity offered more details about forces from other countries and what U.S. troops would be doing.

Members of the armed forces of Egypt, Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates are expected to be embedded with the team of 200 U.S. troops, according to one of the officials. The American service members will integrate the multinational force and coordinate with Israeli defense forces, the official said.

The exact location of where U.S. troops will be positioned is something they will be working to determine Friday, the other official said.

# House not at home as shutdown continues

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Mike Johnson is the speaker of a House that is no longer in session.

The Republican leader sent lawmakers home three weeks ago after the House approved a bill to fund the federal government. And they haven't been back in working session since.

In the intervening weeks, the government has shut down. President Donald Trump threatened a mass firing of federal workers. And a Democrat, Adelita Grijalva, won a special election in Arizona but has not been sworn into office to take her seat in Congress.

"People are upset. I'm upset. I'm a very patient man, but I am angry right now," Johnson said during one of his almost daily press conferences on the empty side of the Capitol.

"The House did its job," said

Johnson, of Louisiana. There's nothing left to negotiate, he says, arguing it's up to the Senate, which is also controlled by Republicans, to act. "That ball has been sent to the other court."

The House's absence is creating a risky political dilemma for Johnson. It's testing his leadership, his grip on the gavel and the legacy he will leave as speaker of a House that is essentially writing itself off the page at a crucial moment in the national debate.

There are few easy choices on the schedule ahead. If the speaker calls lawmakers back to Washington, he opens the doors to a potentially chaotic atmosphere of anger, uncertainty and his own GOP defections and divisions as the shutdown drags toward a third week.

But by keeping the represen-

tatives away, lawmakers risk being criticized for being absent during a crisis — "on vacation," as House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries puts it — as the military goes without pay and government services shut down.

Johnson's initial strategy to avoid the government shutdown was a well-worn one — have the House pass its bill, leave town right before the deadline and force the Senate to accept it. Jamming the other chamber, as it's often called. And it often works.

But this time, it's a strategy that is failing.

GOP senators have been unable to heave the House bill to passage, blocked by most of the Democrats, who are refusing to reopen the government as they demand health care funds for insurance subsidies that will expire at year's end if Congress

fails to act.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., has been trying, repeatedly, to peel off more Democratic support.

But after having called a vote more than a half-dozen times to pass the House's bill out of the Senate, not enough Democrats have signed on as they hold out for a deal on the health care issue.

Stalemated, quiet talks are underway, as small groups of lawmakers are privately trying to negotiate off-ramps.

Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska has proposed keeping the health care subsidies in place for the next two years while instituting changes to the program.

Sen. Mike Rounds, R-S.D., has a similar proposal, and GOP Sen. Susan Collins of Maine has shared with leadership her own six-point plan.

## Senate endorses repeal of 2002 Iraq war resolution

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than two decades later, Congress is on the verge of writing a closing chapter to the war in Iraq.

The Senate voted Thursday to repeal the resolution that authorized the 2003 U.S. invasion, following a House vote last month that would return the basic war power to Congress.

The amendment by Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., and Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind., was approved by voice vote to an annual defense authorization bill that passed the Senate late Thursday.

Iraqi deaths were estimated in the hundreds of thousands, and nearly 5,000 U.S. troops were killed in the war after President George W. Bush's administration falsely claimed

that then-President Saddam Hussein was stockpiling weapons of mass destruction.

Supporters in both the House and Senate say the repeal is crucial to prevent abuses. The House added a similar amendment to its version of the defense measure in September, meaning the repeal is likely to end up in the final bill once the two chambers reconcile the two pieces of legislation.

While Congress appears poised to pass the repeal, it is unclear whether President Donald Trump will support it. During his first term, his administration cited the 2002 Iraq resolution as part of its legal justification for a 2020 drone strike that killed Iranian Gen. Qassim Soleimani.

## San Francisco Fleet Week goes on despite shutdown

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The government shutdown has grounded the Blue Angels from the crowd-pleasing, stunt-filled airshow at San Francisco's Fleet Week. But Royal Canadian pilots and Colombian sailors will be on hand to make sure the show goes on, organizers said Wednesday.

The three-masted ARC Gloria, which is the official flagship of the Colombian Navy, will arrive at the Port of San Francisco on Thursday and the Royal Canadian Air Force's Snowbirds will headline the air show this weekend.

The late U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein started Fleet Week in 1981, as a civic celebration of and tribute to all those who

serve in the armed forces.

"And nearly every October since, the sound of jets has become a familiar soundtrack over the city," said San Francisco Mayor Daniel Lurie at a press event at the city's iconic Fisherman's Wharf, with the flags of America, Colombia and Canada flapping behind him.

The festival attracts more than 1 million visitors who stay in San Francisco's hotels, eat at its restaurants and gobble up its natural beauty. There is also live music, ship tours and exhibits focused on military readiness and local disaster response readiness.

Officials said the air show will remain world class, with the Snowbirds performing military aerobatics.

# National Guard set to patrol Memphis, blocked in Illinois

Associated Press

National Guard troops were expected Friday to begin patrolling in Memphis, a day after a federal judge in Illinois blocked the deployment of troops in the Chicago area for at least two weeks.

The on-again, off-again deployments are the result of a political and legal battle over President Donald Trump's push to send the National Guard to several U.S. cities.

His administration claims crime is rampant in those cities, despite statistics not always backing that up.

If a president invokes the Insurrection Act, they can dispatch active-duty military in states that fail to put down an insurrection or defy federal law, but the judge in Chicago said Thursday she found no substantial evidence that a "danger of rebellion" is brewing in Illinois

during Trump's immigration crackdown.

The ruling offered a victory for Democratic officials who lead the state and city.

"The court confirmed what we all know: There is no credible evidence of a rebellion in the state of Illinois. And no place for the National Guard in the streets of American cities like Chicago," Gov. JB Pritzker said.

In Tennessee, where Republican Gov. Bill Lee supports the deployment, the troops are expected to serve as "additional eyes and ears" across Memphis, supporting local, state and federal agencies, according to a city website.

The order in Illinois is set to expire Oct. 23 at 11:59 p.m. U.S. District Judge April Perry set an Oct. 22 hearing to determine if it should be extended for another 14 days.

In her ruling, she said the ad-

ministration violated the 10th Amendment, which grants certain powers to states, and the 14th Amendment, which assures due process and equal protection.

It wasn't clear what the 500 Guard members from Texas and Illinois would do next. They were mostly stationed at a U.S. Army Reserve Center in Elwood, southwest of Chicago.

A small number on Thursday were outside a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in Broadview, which for weeks has been home to occasional clashes between protesters and federal agents.

Officials at U.S. Northern Command directed questions to the Department of Defense, which cited its policy of not commenting on ongoing litigation. The troops are under the U.S. Northern Command and had been activated for 60 days.

## NY attorney general charged with bank fraud

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — New York Attorney General Letitia James was indicted Thursday in a mortgage fraud case that President Donald Trump urged his Justice Department to bring after vowing retribution against some of his political enemies.

James, a Democrat who infuriated Trump after his first term with a lawsuit alleging that he built his business empire on lies about his wealth, was charged with bank fraud and making false statements to a financial institution in connection with a home purchase in Norfolk, Va., in 2020.

The top federal prosecutor for the Eastern District of Virginia, a former Trump aide, personally presented the case to the grand jury weeks after she was thrust into the role amid the administration's pressure to deliver charges.

The indictment, two weeks after a separate criminal case charging former FBI Director James Comey with lying to Congress, is the latest indication of the Trump administration's norm-busting determination to use the law enforcement powers of the Justice Department to pursue the president's political foes and public figures who once investigated him.

In a lengthy statement, James decried the indictment as "nothing more than a continuation of the president's desperate weaponization of our justice system."

"These charges are baseless, and the president's own public statements make clear that his only goal is political retribution at any cost. The president's actions are a grave violation of our Constitutional order and have drawn sharp criticism from members of both parties," she added.

## High tides raise flood risk in Carolinas as storms churn in Atlantic, Pacific

Associated Press

MIAMI — A storm without a name and unusual king tides were causing some flooding on the Carolina coast early Friday as tropical storms churned in the Atlantic and along Mexico's Pacific coast.

About a dozen streets were already flooded in Charleston, S.C., and the city offered free parking in some garages. A high tide of 8.5 feet was forecast Friday morning, which would be the 13th highest in more than a century of recorded data in Charleston Harbor.

The unnamed coastal storm and unusually high king tides, when the moon is closer than usual to the Earth, threatened to

bring days of heavy winds that could cause coastal flooding, especially along the vulnerable Outer Banks of North Carolina and around Charleston.

Along the Outer Banks, forecasters said the worst weather should occur Friday through the weekend. They warned it was likely that highway N.C. 12 on Hatteras and Ocracoke islands would likely have to close because of ocean overwash.

In the Pacific, Tropical Storms Priscilla and Raymond threatened heavy rain along the Mexican coast, and Priscilla could cause flash flooding across the U.S. Southwest through the weekend. Flood watches were issued for parts of

Arizona, California and Nevada.

Priscilla was centered about 190 miles west-northwest of Cabo San Lazaro, Mexico, and moving north at 6 mph with maximum sustained winds of about 50 mph.

A tropical storm warning associated with Raymond was issued from Zihuatanejo to Cabo Corrientes, Mexico. Raymond was forecast to remain off the southwestern coast of Mexico through Friday before nearing Baja California Sur on Saturday and Sunday.

Raymond was about 95 miles south-southeast of Zihuatanejo, Mexico. It had maximum sustained winds of 50 mph, forecasters said.



# Maduro foe receives Nobel Peace Prize

Associated Press

OSLO, Norway — Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday, winning recognition as a woman “who keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness.”

The former opposition presidential candidate was lauded for being a “key, unifying figure” in the once deeply divided opposition to President Nicolás Maduro’s government, said Jørgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee.

“In the past year, Ms. Machado has been forced to live in hiding,” Watne Frydnes said. “De-

spite serious threats against her life, she has remained in the country, a choice that has inspired millions. When authoritarians seize power, it is crucial to recognize courageous defenders of freedom who rise and resist.”

He said the committee was able to reach Machado just before the announcement and “it came as a surprise.”

Machado’s ally, Edmundo González, who lives in exile in Spain, posted a short video of himself speaking by phone with Machado.

“I am in shock,” she said, adding, “I cannot believe it.”

González celebrated Macha-

do’s Nobel win in a post on X, calling it a “very well-deserved recognition for the long fight of a woman and of a whole people for our freedom and democracy.”

Maduro’s government has routinely targeted its real or perceived opponents.

Machado, who turned 58 this week, was set to run against Maduro, but the government disqualified her. González, who had never run for office before, took her place. The lead-up to the election saw widespread repression, including disqualifications, arrests and human rights violations.

The crackdown on dissent on-

ly increased after the country’s National Electoral Council, which is stacked with Maduro loyalists, declared him the winner despite credible evidence to the contrary.

The election results announced by the Electoral Council sparked protests across the country to which the government responded with force that ended with more than 20 people dead. They also prompted an end to diplomatic relations between Venezuela and various foreign countries, including Argentina.

Machado went into hiding and has not been seen in public since January.

## Taiwan president vows to build air defense system

Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Taiwan will accelerate the building of a “Taiwan Shield” or “T-Dome” air defense system in the face of the military threat from China, its leader said Friday.

President Lai Ching-te also pledged to raise defense spending to more than 3% of GDP and to reach 5% by 2030. GDP, or gross domestic product, is a measure of the size of the overall economy.

“The increase in defense spending has a purpose,” he said in an address to an outdoor crowd on Taiwan National Day. “It is a clear necessity to counter enemy threats and a driving force for developing our defense industries.”

Taiwan is a self-governing island off China’s east coast that the Chinese government claims as part of its territory and says must come under its rule.

The United States, while not recognizing Taiwan as a country, supplies its government with military equipment for its defense and opposes any use of military force by China to settle

its dispute with Taiwan.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson on Friday criticized U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and military ties between Washington and Taipei.

“The Lai Ching-te authorities’ attempt to seek independence through military means and resist reunification with force will only drag Taiwan into a perilous situation of military conflict,” said spokesperson Guo Jiakun.

Lai called Taiwan a “beacon of democracy” in Asia, drawing a distinction with China’s one-party state.

“Democratic Taiwan ... will strive to maintain the status quo, protect peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and promote regional prosperity and development,” he said from a large stage set up in front of the early 20th-century presidential office building.

Most of his speech focused on economic issues, including Taiwan’s response to the high tariffs that President Donald Trump has imposed on exports to the United States this year.

## Russian strikes damage homes, cause blackouts

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russian drone and missile strikes wounded at least 20 people in Kyiv, damaged residential buildings and caused blackouts across swaths of Ukraine early Friday, authorities said. A child was also killed in separate attacks in the southeast of the country.

In the heart of the Ukrainian capital, rescue crews pulled more than 20 people out of a 17-story apartment building as flames engulfed the sixth and seventh floors.

Five people were hospitalized, while others received first aid at the scene, authorities said.

“Everyone was sleeping and suddenly there was such a sharp sound; it was clear that something was flying. I managed to pull the blanket over my head, and then the strike hit — it blew out the windows, and the glass flew almost all the way to the door,” 61-year-old resident Tetiana Lemishevskaya said.

“The fire was on the sixth or seventh floor at first, and the

flames went up quickly and spread to other floors. So all the people who could left the building without knowing how it would end,” she said.

The Russian strikes targeted civilian and energy infrastructure as Ukraine prepared for falling winter temperatures, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on social media.

Prime Minister Yuliia Svyrydenko also described the attack as “one of the largest concentrated strikes” against Ukraine’s energy infrastructure.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said that Friday’s attack knocked out power on both sides of the city, divided by the Dnipro River, while Ukraine’s biggest electricity operator, DTEK, said that repair work was already underway on multiple damaged thermal plants.

The energy sector has been a key battleground since Russia launched its invasion in 2022.

Each year, Russia has tried to cripple the Ukrainian power grid before the bitter winter season, apparently hoping to erode public morale.

# Dodgers down Phillies 2-1, head to NLCS

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Philadelphia Phillies and Los Angeles Dodgers didn't blink as the pressure built, inning after scoreless inning. Both teams pushed a single run across, forcing extra innings. Then came one of postseason baseball's craziest endings.

Orion Kerkering made a wild throw past home instead of tossing to first after mishandling Andy Pages' bases-loaded ground ball with two outs in the 11th inning, and the Dodgers escaped with a 2-1 win Thursday for a 3-1 NL Division Series win.

"That was a nail-biter," beer-soaked Dodgers catcher Will Smith said in the postgame celebration. "They cracked. We didn't."

Kerkering hung his head and put hands on knees after his

throw sailed past catcher J.T. Realmuto as pinch-runner Hye-seong Kim crossed the plate, sending the Dodgers to the NL Championship Series against the Chicago Cubs or Milwaukee.

"I was surprised he threw it home," Kim said through a translator. "I just ran as hard as I could."

Realmuto had pointed to first when the broken-bat, two-hopper hit off Kerkering and rolled just in front of the mound.

"Just hit off my foot," Kerkering said. "Once the pressure got to me, I just thought there's a little faster throw to J.T., little quicker throw than trying to cross-body it to Bryce (Harper at first). So just a horses—throw."

Kerkering picked up the ball and in one motion made a si-

dearm throw, 46 feet from the plate. The ball sailed up the third-base line, past Realmuto's outstretched mitt, and fans in the crowd of 50,563 at Dodger Stadium erupted after spending the final three innings on their feet. After originally running past the plate, Kim returned to touch it.

"It's brutal," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "It's one of those things that it's a PFP, a pitcher's fielding practice. He's done it a thousand times. And right there he was so focused, I'm sure, on just getting the hitter and just sort of forgot the outs and the situation."

Phillies manager Rob Thomson wrapped an arm around Kerkering when the distraught 24-year-old reliever reached the dugout.

"He just got caught up in the

moment a little bit," Thomson said. "I feel for him because he's putting it all on his shoulders."

"They held us at bay for eight innings and we just couldn't push through there at the end," Phillies slugger Kyle Schwarber said.

Nick Castellanos' RBI double in the seventh off Emmet Sheehan had put the Phillies ahead, but Jhoan Duran walked Moo-kie Betts with the bases loaded in the bottom half, forcing in the tying run.

Philadelphia was knocked out in the Division Series for the second straight season while the defending World Series champion Dodgers reached the LCS for the eighth time in 13 years.

No matter who's up next, the Dodgers are rolling at the right time, winning five of their first six postseason games.

## Boyd, Happ lead Cubs past Brewers to set up Game 5

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Matthew Boyd pitched two-hit ball into the fifth inning, and the Chicago Cubs shut down the Milwaukee Brewers for a 6-0 victory Thursday night that pushed their NL Division Series all the way to a decisive Game 5.

Ian Happ, Kyle Tucker and Michael Busch homered for Chicago, delighting a rollicking Wrigley Field crowd of 41,770. Busch went deep for the second straight game and third time in the series.

"It's cool that the brightest lights have brought the best out of a lot of our guys," said Nico Hoerner, who had three of Chicago's 10 hits.

The Cubs were on the brink of

elimination after they dropped the first two games in Milwaukee. But they held on for a 4-3 victory Wednesday before making the most of a sharp performance by Boyd and four relievers in Game 4.

Next up is the finale of the best-of-five series back in Milwaukee on Saturday night. The winner takes on the Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League Championship Series.

"We've got to regroup," Brewers star Christian Yelich said. "We've got one more game to play. We've got to make sure we're ready to go."

The Brewers finished with three hits. They were 1 for 13 with runners in scoring position and left 13 on base overall in the

two games at Wrigley.

"They're built to be great, and they played great these two games," Milwaukee manager Pat Murphy said. "Hopefully the tables will turn when we get into Game 5 at our place. But we have to find out how bad we're going to fight back."

Boyd also started the series opener Saturday. Pitching on three days' rest, he recorded just two outs while Freddy Peralta worked into the sixth inning in Milwaukee's 9-3 win.

Given another opportunity, Boyd delivered. The All-Star left-hander struck out six and walked three in 4½ innings.

The 34-year-old Boyd was staked to an early lead when Happ drove a 1-1 fastball from

Peralta deep to right for a three-run drive with two out in the first. Hoerner singled and Tucker walked ahead of Happ's third career postseason homer.

It was a big swing for Happ, who went 2 for 21 with 11 strikeouts in Chicago's first six postseason games this year.

"The guys have been carrying me all postseason, so to contribute in that moment and give us the lead was awesome for me," Happ said.

The Cubs had a 3-0 lead when Boyd exited with runners on second and third in the fifth, drawing a huge ovation from the crowd. Daniel Palencia came in and retired Jackson Chourio on a popup to shortstop, ending the inning.

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# Skattebo scores 3 TDs as Giants beat Eagles

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Cam Skattebo ran for three touchdowns, Jaxson Dart had one rushing and another passing and the New York Giants beat the Philadelphia Eagles 34-17 on Thursday night.

“Quite honestly, nobody really expected us to put up a performance like this,” said Dart, who was 17 of 25 for 195 yards passing and had 13 carries for 58 yards. “We felt confident. We just tried to play hard for each other. We’re not trying to make statements. We’re just trying to play for each other and win games.”

Skattebo bulldozed his way into the end zone from 4 yards out and twice from the 1.

Dart scampered in untouched on his 20-yard TD run and connected with Wan'Dale Robinson on a 35-yard catch-

and-run to the end zone.

“I’m going sleep with No. 3 tonight as my pillow,” Skattebo said while holding up a game ball. “We played hard, and props to the guys up front for all the effort they gave me and this team.”

Dart also cleared a concussion test after taking a big hit in the second half, and Skattebo ran 19 times for a career-high 98 yards and had two catches for 12 more. It was quite the bounce-back for players who each fumbled in the previous week’s loss to the New Orleans Saints, and Dart also had two interceptions.

“You go through some tough times,” Daboll said. “Sometimes you can get stronger from it, or sometimes you can fold. I like our guys. These young players, I have a lot of confidence in these young players. These rookies, they have the

right mindset. They’re tough.”

Dart said he and Skattebo told each other they had each other’s backs and were “going to lay it all on the line each and every play.”

“We know that everybody’s going to rally around each other the more that we have performances like this,” Dart said.

The Giants (2-4) also sacked Jalen Hurts three times and picked off a pass.

Brian Burns got to the Eagles quarterback twice to tie for the NFL lead in sacks this season with seven.

Hurts overthrew a wide-open DeVonta Smith on a play in the third quarter that almost certainly would have been a touchdown if it was on the mark and in the fourth was intercepted by Cor'Dale Flott, who returned it 68 yards. It was Hurts’ first interception of the season and just

his second, the other being in the Super Bowl, over his past 15 games.

The Eagles (4-2) ran the tush push four consecutive times in the second quarter, with Hurts scoring on the final try, and he had a shovel-pass TD to Dallas Goedert. But Hurts’ miscues combined with the defense faltering contributed to their first back-to-back losses since three in a row to end the 2023 regular season, which eliminated them from the playoffs.

That stretch from Dec. 31, 2023-Jan. 15, 2024, also included the only time New York beat Philadelphia over the NFC East rivals’ seven previous meetings. This was just the Giants’ fourth victory in their past 18 games against the Eagles.

“We’re still trying to find our identity,” receiver A.J. Brown said.

## Belichick’s 1st season at UNC runs into problems

Associated Press

Of all the ugly moments so far — bad play, blowout losses, home fans fleeing early for the exits — the most telling moment of Bill Belichick’s first season at North Carolina came during an open week.

It took the form of a pair of terse statements from Belichick and athletic director Bubba Cunningham posted on social media late Wednesday, reaffirming the marriage between the six-time Super Bowl winner from the NFL’s New England Patriots and the school desperately seeking to elevate its football program beyond decades of also-ran status.

“I’m fully committed to UNC Football and the program we’re building here,” Belichick said.

The fact it came at all, though — following a day of speculation and reports of behind-the-scenes troubles in the program — said more about how the first few weeks of Belichick’s first

college season have gone.

The confident messaging about building the “33rd” NFL team with a pro-style approach at a college program has given way to school leaders and the Tar Heels’ general manager pleading for patience from fans and donors jarred by the team’s lack of competitiveness. And now the school has suspended an assistant coach for violating rules tied to improper benefits.

It all comes amid elevated financial investments into the program, none more significant than spending at least \$10 million annually to hire the 73-year-old Belichick as a first-time college coach.

“It’s not the kind of thing we judge after four games or even after one season,” Chancellor Lee Roberts told reporters after a meeting of university trustees two weeks ago. “These things take time.”

The Tar Heels (2-3) have managed a total of four touch-

downs in three losses to power-conference opponents, each coming by at least 25 points. One of their two wins came against a Championship Subdivision opponent in Richmond.

In games against fellow Bowl Subdivision opponents, UNC ranks last among all 67 power-conference teams in scoring offense (13.3), total offense (253.0 yards) and third-down conversion rate (26.5%). The Tar Heels also rank amid the bottom dozen in scoring defense (30.8), total defense (416.8 yards) and third-down conversion defense (43.4%), according to Sportradar.

UNC opened Belichick’s tenure on Labor Day with a national TV spotlight, only to see TCU roll to a 48-14 win that had UNC fans largely gone from Kenan Stadium by the end of the third quarter.

Last week, it happened again, this time by halftime, as Clemson took a 28-3 lead in the first

quarter of a game that ended in a largely empty Kenan Stadium.

“We’re just going to keep working every day and every week,” Belichick said afterward. “And let the guys get better.”

The school has also dealing with issues away from the games.

The school announced Thursday evening that cornerbacks coach Armond Hawkins has been suspended. UNC said in its statement that Hawkins would remain on leave while the school “further investigates other potential actions detrimental” to the team and school.

Additionally, a person with knowledge of the situation said a planned TV show from streaming service Hulu on Belichick’s first UNC team is no longer in development. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Thursday because UNC hasn’t publicly discussed the project.



# LeBron to miss 1st night of his 23rd season

Associated Press

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. — LeBron James will miss opening night of his record 23rd NBA season due to sciatica that will be re-evaluated in three to four weeks, the Los Angeles Lakers announced Thursday.

The 40-year-old superstar will be sidelined at least until the end of October with sciatica — pain in the nerves running from the buttocks and down the back of the legs — on his right side.

James has yet to participate in a full practice since the Lakers opened training camp last week, and coach JJ Redick said James was “on his own timeline” Thursday after practice. An hour later, the Lakers announced an injury timeline that means James is likely to miss at least their first five or six games, and possibly several more.

The Lakers open the regular season at home Oct. 21 against

Golden State. They have eight games in a 13-day span beginning Oct. 24.

James began camp for his unprecedented 23rd NBA season last week with the lower-body nerve injury keeping him off the court. The Lakers held their sixth full practice of camp Thursday without the top scorer in NBA history, who also missed both of their first two preseason games while he worked to get back into competitive condition.

“You’ve got to play the cards you’re dealt,” Redick said. “That’s a shame, but that’s just the reality. ... No one has got any time with LeBron. That’s not just (new center Deandre Ayton), but everybody. (James) hasn’t been on the court with the team, but that’s just the reality.”

Redick and the rest of the Lakers expressed excitement last week about the chance to have their first full training camp together with James and Luka Doncic, who scarcely ever

got to practice with his new team after joining Los Angeles in the middle of last season.

Instead, the Lakers are installing their offense and building court chemistry during this camp largely without James on the court. They’re also getting limited time so far with Doncic, who is making a deliberate return to full speed after his participation in EuroBasket during a busy summer.

The Lakers return to the court Sunday at home against Golden State.

Doncic participated in some full practices last week, including scrimmages, but Ayton said Wednesday that he would love to get more practice time with the Lakers’ two biggest stars.

“It’s something I’ve just been waiting on,” Ayton said. “Just got to prepare. JJ and the coaching staff probably have something where they can put stuff together for all of us to really grow chemistry.”

James traveled with the Lakers on their preseason trips to Palm Desert, Calif., and San Francisco, but he has been performing individual drills and doing his own workouts.

James made news and scared his fans earlier this week when he teased “The Second Decision” on social media — for what turned out to be an advertisement for a cognac brand.

James has repeatedly said he doesn’t know whether he will retire after this season, only saying that the end to the longest career in NBA history will be “sooner than later.”

Redick had said he was hopeful that James and Doncic would participate in at least one preseason game that could be used as a “dress rehearsal” for the regular season, but that won’t happen.

Redick still expects Doncic to play in the preseason at least once. The Lakers have four preseason games remaining.

## Las Vegas’ dominance may shorten expanded finals

Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Las Vegas Aces are in position to make short work of the WNBA’s expanded playoff schedule.

A’ja Wilson’s turnaround jumper with 0.3 seconds remaining lifted the Aces over the Phoenix Mercury for a thrilling 90-88 win on Wednesday night. It also gave Las Vegas a 3-0 lead in the first best-of-seven WNBA Finals in league history.

In the previous best-of-five format, the Aces would already be celebrating their third championship in four seasons. In 2025, there’s Game 4 on Friday night in Phoenix.

“We don’t look at it too big,” Wilson said. “We just win one game, win one possession, win one quarter and then everything will pan out.”

The Aces were one of the best teams in the WNBA all season,

earning the No. 2 seed in the playoffs with a 30-14 record, but they looked surprisingly vulnerable early in the postseason. They dropped a game to Seattle in the opening round and needed the full five games to squeeze past the Indiana Fever in the semifinals, prevailing in overtime for a 107-98 win in the decisive Game 5.

In the finals, the Aces have looked unstoppable.

Wilson — a four-time MVP who is already one of the league’s all-time greats — continued to add to her legacy on Wednesday night with a 34-point, 14-rebound performance that helped the Aces navigate a hostile road environment and shake off a late Mercury rally.

Wilson has already set a WNBA record with 291 postseason points through 11 games and is averaging 26.5 points and 10.1

rebounds per game. The 29-year-old is still at the peak of her basketball powers, using her 6-foot-4 frame and soft touch around the basket to score in bunches.

“I always have to credit my teammates, because they give me the basketball in the right space at the right time,” Wilson said. “Like Jewell (Loyd) said, the ball has energy. Players understand, there’s something different where you get a pass and it’s like ‘This is a pass to score the basketball.’”

Wilson’s presence was more important than ever in the closing moments of Game 3.

The Aces had coughed up a 76-59 lead entering the fourth quarter and the game was tied at 88 with 5 seconds left. Las Vegas had the ball and the daunting task of trying to close the game against a desperate Mer-

cury team that had a raucous home crowd on its side.

Aces coach Becky Hammon didn’t need to consult her playbook for the right call.

Just throw it to A’ja. Boom. Game over.

“These are the moments that you dream of, the times you see on TV, you’re watching and you’re like, ‘Oh my god, to be in that building,’” Wilson said.

The Mercury will try to shake off the tough loss and force the series back to Las Vegas for a Game 5. Phoenix will be without star forward Satou Sabally, who suffered a concussion late in Wednesday’s game after scoring 24 points.

DeWanna Bonner led the Mercury with 25 points in Game 3 while Alyssa Thomas was one assist short of a triple double, finishing with 14 points and 12 rebounds.

# Marchand goal lifts Panthers over Flyers

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Brad Marchand broke a tie at 2:19 of the third period and the two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Florida Panthers beat Philadelphia 2-1 on Thursday night to spoil Rick Tocchet's Flyers coaching debut.

Marchand fired a wrist shot from the left boards past goalie Dan Vladar and into the top right corner to help the Panthers win their second straight at home to open the season. Marchand missed a chance to pad the lead with 6½ minutes left, sending a wrister over the crossbar on a breakaway.

Tocchet rejoined the Flyers during the offseason. The former Philadelphia player won Stanley Cups as an assistant in Pittsburgh and was a head coach in Tampa Bay, Arizona and, most recently, Vancouver.

Anton Lundell also scored for injury-depleted Florida, and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 19 shots.

**Canadiens 5, Red Wings 1:** Mike Matheson had a goal and an assist and Montreal spoiled Detroit's season opener with a victory.

Zachary Bolduc, Oliver Kapapanen, Alexandre Carrier and Juraj Slafkovsky also scored for the Canadiens, who bounced back from a 5-2, season-opening loss at Toronto on Wednesday night.

Patrick Gallagher and Nick Suzuki had two assists apiece, while Jakub Dobes made 30 saves.

**Rangers 4, Sabres 0:** Igor Shesterkin stopped 37 shots and Alex Lafreniere's first-period goal stood up as the winner in the New York Rangers' victory over Buffalo in a season-opener.

Mike Sullivan earned his first win as Rangers coach, and the 480th of his career. Fired after 10 seasons in Pittsburgh last spring, the two-time Stanley Cup winner took over in New York after Peter Laviolette was fired in April.

**Penguins 4, Islanders 3:** Justin Brazeau beat Ilya Sorokin on a breakaway with 5:39 left to lift Pittsburgh past the New York Islanders.

Brazeau collected a lead pass from Evgeni Malkin, then deked his way by a sprawled Sorokin as the Penguins won for the second time in as many games under first-year coach Dan Muse.

Malkin finished with a goal and two assists while Sidney Crosby added a goal and an assist.

Crosby's second-period tally from one knee at the top of the crease gave him 626 goals in his career, broke a tie with Hall of Famers Jarome Iginla and Joe Sakic, and moved Crosby into 16th place by himself on the NHL's career list.

**Senators 5, Lightning 4:** Shane Pinto scored his second goal of the night late in the third period to lift Ottawa to a win over Tampa Bay Lightning in the opener for both clubs.

Dylan Cozens and Artus Zub also scored for the Senators, and Claude Giroux added an empty-netter. Brady Tkachuk had three assists.

Brayden Point had a goal and two assists for Tampa Bay, which fell to 21-10-2 in season openers.

**Bruins 4, Blackhawks 3, OT:** Fraser Minten scored at 2:12 of overtime to give Boston a victory over Chicago in its home opener.

Minten converted on a 2-on-1 break for his first career overtime goal, giving the Bruins their second straight victory under new head coach Marco Sturm.

Casey Mittelstadt, Tanner Jeannot and Elias Lindholm scored in regulation for Boston. Backup goalie Joonas Korpisalo stopped 21 shots.

**Hurricanes 6, Devils 3:** Seth Jarvis scored the go-ahead goal with a redirect with 2:43 left to help Carolina beat New Jersey in the opener for both teams.

Jarvis got position at the top of the crease as Sebastian Aho sent the puck in for the deflection, with Jarvis getting it past Jacob Markstrom. That allowed Carolina to finally take control after alternating goals with New Jersey.

**Wild 5, Blues 0:** Ryan Hartman scored twice, Filip Gustavsson made 27 saves for his 12th NHL shutout and Minnesota beat St. Louis in the opener for both teams.

Matt Boldy, Joel Eriksson Ek and Marco Rossi also scored, and Kirill Kaprizov had three assists in his first game since signing an eight-year, \$136 million contract. Gustavsson played days after agreeing to a five-year, \$34 million contract extension.

**Predators 2, Blue Jackets 1:** Ryan O'Reilly scored a power-play goal early in the third period, and Nashville opened the season by beating the Blue Jackets and extending their home winning streak over Columbus to 10 games.

The Predators' streak on home ice against Columbus dates to March 30, 2019. They are 44-6-4 in Music City against the Blue Jackets.

Overall, they have 71 wins over Columbus, which ranks second only to Nashville's 72 wins against Chicago for the most by the franchise against any opponent.

**Stars 5, Jets 4:** Mikko Rantanen scored the first goal and had two assists and Dallas won in coach Glen Gulutzan's return, overcoming Kyle Connor's hat trick to hold off Winnipeg in the opener for both teams.

Gulutzan took over for the fired Pete DeBoer during the offseason.

Jason Robertson had a goal and an assist for Dallas, which knocked the Jets out of the second round of the playoffs in six games last season. Nils Lundkvist, Tyler Seguin and Wyatt Johnston also scored, and Jake Oettinger made 21 saves.

**Avalanche 2, Mammoth 1:** Nathan MacKinnon scored the go-ahead goal early in the third period on a power play, Scott Wedgewood made 32 saves and Colorado beat Utah.

Ross Colton also scored for the Avalanche, who followed a 4-1 victory over Los Angeles on Tuesday with a successful home opener. Colorado is starting its 30th season since relocating from Quebec in 1995.

**Golden Knights 4, Sharks 3, OT:** Reilly Smith tapped the puck into an open net in overtime following the second late-game blunder by San Jose goaltender Alex Nedeljkovic and Vegas rallied for a victory.

The Sharks seemed poised for their first season-opening win in five seasons after they killed a penalty protecting a one-goal lead late in the third before a run of bad bounces and mistakes led to a crushing loss.

**Kraken 3, Ducks 1:** Mason Marchment scored in his Seattle debut, Joey Daccord made 35 saves and the Kraken beat Anaheim to win their season opener for the first time in team history.

Vince Dunn and Jared McCann also scored for the Kraken, who had gone 0-3-1 in their previous four openers, including a 5-4 overtime loss to Anaheim in 2022.

Daccord, who last Friday became the first player in Arizona State hockey history to have his number retired, made 16 of his saves in the first period on 17 shots.

**Canucks 5, Flames 1:** Filip Chytil scored twice and Vancouver opened its season with a victory over Calgary.

The Czech center batted a puck into the net at 2:53 of the third period after it went off the back of Calgary defenseman Kevin Bahl's head.

Chytil followed up just under six minutes later, collecting a puck from Arshdeep Bains and streaking up the ice, then firing a shot up and over Dustin Wolf.