

Campaigns begin sprint to Election Day

Associated Press

LA CROSSE, Wis. — After a summer of historic tumult, the path to the presidency for both Kamala Harris and Donald Trump this fall is becoming much clearer.

The Democratic vice president and the Republican former president will devote almost all of their remaining time and resources to just seven states. They will spend hundreds of millions of dollars targeting voters who, in many cases, have just begun to pay attention to the election. And their campaigns will try to focus their messages on three familiar issues — the economy, immigration and abortion — even in the midst of heated debates over character, culture and democracy.

The candidates will debate in one week in what will be their first meeting ever. The nation's premier swing state, Pennsylvania, begins in-person absentee voting the week after. By the end of the month, early voting will be underway in at least four states with a dozen more to follow by mid-October.

In just 63 days, the final votes will be cast to decide which one of

them will lead the world's most powerful nation.

Privately, at least, both camps acknowledge that victory is no sure thing as they begin the eight-week sprint to Election Day. Harris and Trump are neck-and-neck in most national polls conducted since President Joe Biden ended his reelection campaign.

The Harris campaign still put out a memo over the weekend casting itself as “the clear underdogs” in the contest.

“There’s not a scenario here that’s easy,” Harris senior adviser David Plouffe said in an interview. “The pathway to beating Donald Trump, the pathway to 270 electoral votes for Kamala Harris, is exceedingly hard, but doable. And that’s just a reality.”

Trump, meanwhile, rejects any indicators that suggest Harris is ahead even as he lashes out at her in deeply personal and sometimes apocalyptic terms, declaring that “our country is finished” if she wins.

“As we move past Labor Day, we will really get into the time where voters start to harden their opinions,” said James Blair, the Trump campaign’s political

director. “We feel pretty good about things. We feel energized. Our people are energized. But there’s certainly plenty of work to be done.”

Just over a month ago, Trump allies suggested Democratic-leaning states like Minnesota, Virginia or even New Jersey might be in play. Neither side believes that is still the case on Labor Day weekend.

In replacing Biden as the party’s nominee, Harris breathed new life into the Democrats’ political prospects, especially across the Sun Belt states of Arizona, Georgia, Nevada and North Carolina. All four states have significant numbers of African Americans and Latinos, traditionally Democratic constituencies who were down nationally on Biden but appear to have come home to rally behind Harris.

South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham was among the senior GOP officials who brokered a peace between Trump and Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, whose feud threatened to undermine the Republican effort in the state. Graham told *The Associated Press* he was worried about

Georgia’s shift leftward.

“Trump was up 5 or 6 points, and all over the course of a month it’s become much more competitive,” he said.

Republican pollster Paul Schumaker, an adviser to North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis, said even a slight uptick in the Black vote has the potential to give Harris the edge in North Carolina, pointing to Mecklenburg County, the home of the Charlotte metro area, but also fast-growing counties such as Durham and Wake.

“If Kamala Harris could get them to turn out at the rate of Republicans in rural North Carolina, game over for Republicans,” Schumaker said of Black voters.

At the same time, Trump remains decidedly on offense in the Midwestern battlegrounds of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, which form the so-called Democratic “blue wall” that he narrowly carried in 2016 and barely lost in 2020.

Those seven states — in addition to swing districts in Nebraska and Maine that each award single Electoral College votes — will draw virtually all of the candidates’ attention and resources over the next eight weeks.

Houthis launch missiles at oil tanker in the Red Sea

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — An attack by Yemen’s Houthi rebels targeted a Panama-flagged oil tanker in the Red Sea on Monday, authorities said, as a nearby Saudi-flagged tanker ship also came under fire suspected to be from the group.

The attacks are believed to be the latest in the Iranian-backed rebels’ campaign that has disrupted the \$1 trillion in goods that pass through the Red Sea each

year over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip and has halted some aid shipments to conflict-ravaged Sudan and Yemen.

The new attacks on oil tankers also come amid efforts to salvage the still-burning Sounion oil tanker earlier hit by the Houthis, seeking to head off the potential ecological disaster posed by its cargo of 1 million barrels of crude oil.

In Monday’s first assault, two ballistic missiles hit the oil tanker

Blue Lagoon I and a third exploded near the ship, the multinational Joint Maritime Information Center overseen by the U.S. Navy said.

“All crew on board are safe (no injury reported),” the center said. “The vessel sustained minimal damage but does not require assistance.”

Houthi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree claimed responsibility for the attack on the Blue Lagoon I late Monday

night.

The Blue Lagoon I is traveling south through the Red Sea to an unlisted destination. The vessel was coming from Russia’s port of Ust-Luga on the Baltic Sea.

The U.S. military’s Central Command, which oversees American operations in the Middle East, identified the second vessel as the Saudi-flagged oil tanker Amjad and blamed the attack on the Houthis. The Amjad carried 2 million barrels of oil, it said.

Delayed medical bills confuse civilians in Japan

By ALEX WILSON
AND KELLY AGEE

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Last year's decision to defer medical billing for Department of Defense civilians has left hundreds confused and concerned about debt, according to the Japan Civilian Medical Advocacy group.

The Defense Health Agency, which manages U.S. military hospitals and clinics worldwide, decided in June 2023 to defer medical bills for all civilian patients not covered under the DOD's Tricare insurance program while it develops a new federal rule that could discount medical bills in certain situations, said DHA spokesman Peter Graves.

However, the new rule, part of the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, has yet to be implemented, he told Stars and Stripes by email Aug. 27.

"While we do not have a specific date yet of when the federal rule implementing Section 716 will take effect, there has been significant progress in developing it

through the rulemaking process," Graves said. "And we believe that the proposed rule will soon be opened for public comment."

Until the rule is finalized, military treatment facilities will not bill civilians for co-pays, co-insurance, deductibles, nominal fees or noncovered services, he said.

"Moreover, we are confident that the new rule, once implemented, will result in significant reductions to a large portion of patient bills," Graves wrote.

Under Section 716, the DHA is authorized to waive fees for civilians not covered by Tricare "if the provision of such care enhances the knowledge, skills, and abilities of health care providers" as determined by the agency.

It also allows the DHA to implement a sliding fee discount program for civilians who are underinsured or "at risk of financial harm," the law reads.

"The federal rulemaking process is lengthy, but we are working diligently to implement these new protections as soon as possible," Graves said.

While the new policy could potentially benefit civilian patients, it's left hundreds confused, and many are reaching out directly to Japan Civilian Medical Advocacy, group founder Randi Wilson told Stars and Stripes by Facebook Messenger on Aug. 14.

The grassroots advocacy group began as an online forum for DOD employees to share tips on accessing health care. It remains a primary source for DOD civilians in Japan struggling to navigate the changes implemented by the DHA starting in February 2022.

Changes included giving priority to active-duty service members, restricting DOD civilians to space available appointments and curtailing certain services.

"I'm getting nervous, because in order to get a claim filled, it has to be filed with my insurance within a year of the service that occurred," Sydnee Robbins, a former civilian employee at Yokosuka Naval Base and a member of the group, said by Messenger on Aug. 13.

"I'm worried I have a bunch of outstanding bills that I won't even

be able to submit claims for anymore," she added. "Assuming I eventually get the bills, this means I will have to pay out of pocket for everything without getting reimbursed."

Fellow member Jamie Peterson said she hasn't seen a medical bill since December 2023. Despite checking in repeatedly with Naval Hospital Yokosuka, she's been unable to get any information about her account.

"Nothing is showing up on the side of our insurance," she told Stars and Stripes by Messenger on Aug. 13. "This entire situation is beyond frustrating."

While some patients reported no consequences from the delayed billing, others have reported "negative credit impacts and collections notices over less than \$30 they did not know they owed," according to a July 9 Facebook post from the group.

Deferred medical bills shouldn't affect credit scores, security clearances or military employment, Graves said. The DHA is actively working on implementing the changes, he added.

Increased water testing by Navy near Red Hill urged

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The Navy should rethink its protocols for analyzing groundwater samples near the defunct Red Hill underground fuel storage facility in Honolulu in response to questions over testing methods and a chemical plume in the aquifer, a municipal engineer said recently.

"Our ask right now is simply to increase the frequency of testing," Ernest Lau, chief engineer and manager for the Oahu Board of Water Supply, said on Aug. 23 at his Honolulu headquarters. The board manages Oahu's municipal water resources and dis-

tribution system.

"Drilling more monitor wells is going to take years," he said, adding that he believes dozens more are needed. "But in the meantime, just to give a better resolution of what might be happening below in the underground aquifers, [we should] move to weekly testing."

In response, a Navy contractor involved in the program said the tests are viable, and the sampling schedule is already "pretty much every day out there."

The massive World War II-era Red Hill facility, about three miles northeast of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, is being dismantled and permanently

closed after a 2021 jet fuel leak there contaminated the Navy's water distribution system.

Thousands of residents living in military communities on and near the joint base were forced to temporarily relocate as the Navy flushed its distribution system.

One of the three wells used by the Navy was isolated from the system and remains contaminated with jet fuel.

Navy Closure Task Force-Red Hill is charged with dismantling the facility and cleaning up contaminants on and below the site, a process that will take many years.

The water board in tests this summer detected traces of poly-

cyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAH, in samples taken from its wells in Aiea, about two miles northwest of the fuel facility.

PAH are a class of naturally occurring chemicals found in coal, crude oil and gasoline, but are also produced when things such as wood, garbage and tobacco are burned, according to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency fact sheet.

The origins of that PAH plume are unknown, but Lau considers the Red Hill facility, which has an 80-year history of leaks and spills, to be a chief suspect.

Lau has asked the Navy to step up the testing of its monitor wells from biweekly to weekly.

Harris opposes US Steel sale to Japanese firm at Biden event

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Vice President Kamala Harris used a joint campaign appearance with President Joe Biden in the critical swing state of Pennsylvania on Monday to say that U.S. Steel should remain domestically owned — concurring with the White House’s monthslong opposition to the company’s planned sale to Japan’s Nippon Steel.

Her comments came during a rally before cheering union members marking Labor Day in the industrial city of Pittsburgh, where Harris said U.S. Steel was “an historic American company and it is vital for our country to maintain strong American steel companies.”

“U.S. Steel should remain American-owned and American-operated, and I will always have the backs of America’s steelworkers,” she said.

That echoes Biden, who re-

peated Monday what he’s said since March — that he opposes U.S. Steel’s would-be sale to Nippon, believing it would hurt the country’s steelworkers. It also overlaps with Republican former President Donald Trump.

It’s little surprise that Harris would agree with Biden on the issue, but it nonetheless constitutes a major policy position for the vice president, who has offered relatively few of them since Biden abandoned his reelection bid and endorsed his vice president in July.

Biden took the stage first and was met with chants of “Thank You, Joe” as he and Harris appeared in an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers hall.

The president called Harris the only “rational” choice for president in November. He said choosing her to be vice president was the “single best” deci-

sion of his presidency and told the union members that electing her will be “the best decision you will ever make.”

Biden also started to say, “Kamala Harris and I are going to build on this” as if he were still running and she was his running mate — but he corrected himself. It underscored just how much the race has changed and how Harris has been careful to balance presenting herself as “a new way forward” while remaining intensely loyal to Biden and the policies he has pushed.

Her delivery is very different — and in some cases she’s pushed to move faster than Biden’s administration — but the overall goal of expanding government programs to buoy the middle class is the same.

“We know this is going to be a tight race till the very end,” Harris told the Pittsburgh crowd.

Pot policy decision to come after the election

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A decision on whether to reclassify marijuana as a less dangerous drug in the U.S. won’t come until after the November presidential election, a timeline that raises the chances it could be a potent political issue in the closely contested race.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration last week set a hearing date to take comment on the proposed historic change in federal drug policy for Dec. 2.

The hearing date means a final decision could well come in the next administration. While it’s possible it could precede the end of President Joe Biden’s term, issuing it before Inauguration Day “would be pretty expedited,” said cannabis lawyer Brian Vicente.

That could put a new spotlight on the presidential candidates’ positions on marijuana. Vice President Kamala Harris has backed decriminalizing the drug and said it’s “absurd” to have it in the DEA’s Schedule I category alongside heroin and LSD. The Democratic nominee’s position has shifted over the years; she once oversaw the enforcement of cannabis laws and opposed legalized recreational use for adults in California while running for attorney general in 2010.

Former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee, signaled support for a Florida legalization measure on Saturday, following earlier comments that he increasingly agrees that people shouldn’t be jailed for the drug now legal in multiple states, “whether that’s a good thing or a bad thing.”

Trump’s campaign didn’t immediately respond to a query about his position on rescheduling the drug.

China-linked Spamouflage mimics Americans online to sway US debate

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When he first emerged on social media, the user known as Harlan claimed to be a New Yorker and an Army veteran who supported Donald Trump for president. Harlan said he was 29, and his profile picture showed a smiling, handsome young man.

A few months later, Harlan underwent a transformation. Now, he claimed to be 31 and from Florida.

New research into Chinese disinformation networks targeting American voters shows Harlan’s claims were as fictitious as his profile picture, which analysts think was created using artificial intelligence.

As voters prepare to cast their ballots this fall, China has been making its own plans, cultivating networks of fake social media users designed to mimic Americans. Whoever or wherever he really is, Harlan is a small part of a larger effort by U.S. adversaries to use social media to influence and upend America’s political debate.

The account was traced back to Spamouflage, a Chinese disinformation group, by analysts at Graphika, a New York-based firm that tracks online networks. Known to online researchers for several years, Spamouflage earned its moniker through its habit of spreading large amounts of seemingly un-

related content alongside disinformation.

“One of the world’s largest covert online influence operations — an operation run by Chinese state actors — has become more aggressive in its efforts to infiltrate and to sway U.S. political conversations ahead of the election,” Jack Stubbs, Graphika’s chief intelligence officer, told The Associated Press.

Intelligence and national security officials have said that Russia, China and Iran have all mounted online influence operations targeting U.S. voters ahead of the November election. Russia remains the top threat, intelligence officials say.

Russian strike kills dozens in Ukraine

Associated Press

POLTAVA, Ukraine — Two ballistic missiles blasted a military training facility and nearby hospital Tuesday in Ukraine, killing more than 50 people and wounding more than 200 others, Ukrainian officials said, in one of the deadliest Russian strikes since the war began.

The missiles tore into the heart of the Poltava Military Institute of Communications' main building, causing several stories to collapse. It didn't take long for the smell of smoke and word of the deadly strike to spread through the central-eastern town.

"People found themselves under the rubble. Many were

saved," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video posted on his Telegram channel. He ordered an investigation.

Shattered bricks were visible inside the closed gates of the institution, which was off-limits to the media, and small pools of blood could be seen just outside hours later. Roads were covered in glass from shattered apartment windows.

"I heard explosions ... I was at home at that time. When I left the house, I realized that it was something evil and something bad," said Yevheniy Zemskyy, who arrived to volunteer his help.

By Tuesday evening, the

death toll stood at 51, according to the general prosecutor's office.

Poltava Gov. Filip Pronin announced the death toll on Telegram and said 219 people were wounded. Up to 18 people may be buried under the rubble, he said. Poltava is about 200 miles southeast of Kyiv, on the main highway and rail route between Kyiv and Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, which is close to the Russian border.

The attack happened as Ukrainian forces sought to carve out their holdings in Russia's Kursk border region after a surprise incursion that began Aug. 6 and as the Russian army hacks its way deeper into eastern Uk-

raine.

The missiles hit shortly after an air-raid alert sounded, when many people were on their way to a bomb shelter, Ukraine's Defense Ministry said, describing the strike as "barbaric."

Rescue crews and medics saved 25 people, including 11 who were dug out of the rubble, a Defense Ministry statement said.

Pronin announced three days of mourning starting Wednesday.

"A great tragedy for Poltava region and entire Ukraine," Pronin wrote on his Telegram page. "The enemy certainly must answer for all (its) crimes against humanity," he said.

Venezuelan judge issues warrant for ex-candidate

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela — A Venezuelan judge on Monday issued an arrest warrant for the opposition's former presidential candidate Edmundo González as part of a criminal investigation into the results of the highly anticipated July election that both the ruling party and its opponents claim to have won.

The warrant was issued at the request of authorities who accuse González, a former diplomat, of crimes including conspiracy, falsifying documents and usurpation of powers. The move is the latest escalation of repression against the opposition in the month after election officials declared President Nicolás Maduro had won a third six-year term in office.

Authorities sought the warrant after González failed to appear three times to answer questions from prosecutors. González, 75, has not made any public appearances since the day after the election.

His campaign did not imme-

diately respond to a request for comment.

Prosecutors have zeroed in on thousands of tally sheets known as *actas* — printouts measuring several feet that resemble shopping receipts — that have long been considered the ultimate proof of election results in Venezuela. Each of the 30,000 electronic voting machines used in the July 28 election printed several copies of the sheets, whose information was also transmitted to the National Electoral Council.

Ruling party-loyal electoral authorities declared Maduro the victor hours after polls closed, but they did not publish results broken down by voting machine as they had done in previous presidential elections. The National Electoral Council claimed it could not release the detailed information because its website was hacked.

By law, each party participating in the election has the right to a tally sheet from every machine.

Mongolia ignores warrant for Putin, gives him big welcome

Associated Press

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia — Russian President Vladimir Putin received a red-carpet welcome to Mongolia on Tuesday, as the country ignored calls to arrest him on an international warrant for alleged war crimes stemming from Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The trip, which concluded Tuesday night, is Putin's first to a member nation of the International Criminal Court since it issued the warrant in March 2023.

Ahead of his visit, Ukraine urged Mongolia to hand Putin over to the court in The Hague, and the European Union expressed concern that Mongolia might not execute the warrant.

The warrant put the Mongolian government in a difficult position. After decades under communism with close ties to the Soviet Union, it transitioned to democracy in the 1990s and built relations with the United States, Japan and other new partners.

But the landlocked country

remains economically dependent on its two much larger and more powerful neighbors, Russia and China.

The ICC has accused Putin of being responsible for the abductions of children from Ukraine. Member countries are required to detain suspects if a warrant has been issued, but Mongolia needs to maintain its ties with Russia and the court lacks a mechanism to enforce its warrants.

The Russian leader was welcomed in the main square in Ulaanbaatar, the capital, by an honor guard dressed in vivid red and blue uniforms styled on those of the personal guard of 13th century ruler Genghis Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire.

A throng of people watched from behind temporary barriers as Putin and Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa walked up the red-carpeted steps of the Government Palace and bowed toward a statue of Genghis Khan before entering the building for their meetings.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Governor: Made 'honest mistake' on Bronze Star

MD ANNAPOLIS — Maryland Gov. Wes Moore said he made “an honest mistake” in failing to correct a White House fellowship application 18 years ago when he wrote he had received a Bronze Star for his military service in Afghanistan though he never ended up receiving it, after The New York Times obtained a copy of the application and reported on it.

The newspaper reported that Moore made the claim on the application in 2006 when he was 27.

In a statement, the governor wrote that he had been encouraged to fill out the application for the fellowship by his deputy brigade commander serving overseas in the Army. At the time, Moore said the deputy brigade commander had recommended him for the Bronze Star — and told him to include the award on his application “after confirming with two other senior-level officers that they had also signed off on the commendation.”

Toward the end of his deployment, however, Moore said he was disappointed to learn he had not received the Bronze Star.

“Still, I sincerely wish I had gone back to correct the note on my application,” Moore, a Democrat, said in a statement Thursday. “It was an honest mistake, and I regret not making that correction.”

During 2008 and 2010 television appearances, Moore was introduced as a Bronze Star recipient, but did not correct the hosts.

Fire destroys popular seafood restaurant

ME DAMARISCOTTA — An early morning fire on Sunday destroyed a popular seafood restaurant in the mid-coast Maine town of Damariscotta, the fire department said.

No one was injured in the fire at the Schooner Landing and Marina, fire officials said. The cause of the fire had not been determined.

Schooner Landing, on the Damariscotta River in the quaint downtown, featured indoor and outdoor seating, with live music outside.

A section of Main Street was closed on Sunday morning but reopened later in the day, police said.

NTSB: Pilot declared loss of autopilot, emergency

WY CHEYENNE — The pilot of a plane that crashed in northeast Wyoming in July, killing seven people, declared an emergency and loss of the autopilot shortly before the incident that claimed the lives of three members of the Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame quartet The Nelons.

The preliminary report released recently by the National Transportation Safety Board states the plane had taken off from an airport in Nebraska on July 26, with plans to stop in Billings, Mont., when the aircraft went down about 12 miles northeast of Recluse, Wyo.

During the last part of the flight, the pilot declared an emergency to the Salt Lake City Air Route Traffic Control Center and reported the loss of autopilot, prompting the controller

to ask him where he would like to land, the report states. The controller did not receive an initial response, but the pilot later said he was “trying to get control of the airplane,” the report states.

Once radar and radio contact were lost, the Federal Aviation Administration issued an alert notice for the plane, which was later found crashed in a remote area, according to the report.

McAuliffe 1st woman with statue at state's capitol

NH CONCORD — Decades after she was picked to be America's first teacher in space, Christa McAuliffe is still a pioneer — this time as the first woman to be memorialized on the grounds of New Hampshire's Statehouse, in the city where she taught high school.

McAuliffe was 37 when she was killed, one of the seven crew members aboard the Challenger when the space shuttle broke apart on Jan. 28, 1986.

“Beyond the tragedy, her legacy is a very positive one,” said Benjamin Victor, the sculptor from Boise, Idaho, whose work was unveiled in Concord on Monday, on what would have been McAuliffe's 76th birthday. “And so it's something that can always be remembered and should be.”

The Shark trying again to cross Lake Michigan

MI GRAND HAVEN — An ultra swimmer is trying again to cross Lake Michigan, from Michigan to Wisconsin, just a few weeks after trouble with a GPS device forced him to give up after 60 miles.

Jim Dreyer set out after 6

p.m. Monday in Grand Haven. He said the journey to Milwaukee would cover at least 80 miles in the water and last 72 hours or more without sleep.

Dreyer, 61, will also be towing a small inflatable boat with supplies.

Dreyer, who calls himself The Shark, crossed Lake Michigan in 1998, starting in Two Rivers, Wis., and finishing in Ludington, Mich. But three attempts to do it again have been unsuccessful since 2023.

His last effort began on Aug. 6. The next day, he paused to get fresh AA batteries to keep a GPS device working. But during the process, Dreyer said he somehow lost the bag in the lake.

Police: Man rams cars, kills 3, then is shot dead

HI HONOLULU — Three people were killed and two others injured in a shooting at a home stemming from a dispute between neighbors on Saturday night in Hawaii, police said. The shooter was also fatally shot by a resident, who was arrested on a second-degree murder charge.

Witnesses reported that a 58-year-old man was using a front-end loader to ram cars into the home where a family gathering was taking place, then opened fire at people gathered in the carport, fatally shooting three women at the residence in Waianae, a community about 30 miles west of downtown Honolulu, Honolulu police detective Lt. Deena Thoemmes said.

At some point, a 42-year-old man who lived in the home fatally shot the suspect with a handgun, she said.

— From wire reports

STARS  AND STRIPES®

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit www.stripes.com.

Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Boston College stuns No. 10 Florida St.

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Bill O'Brien cautioned it was just one win. What a massive first win of 2024 it was for Boston College — and for the O'Brien Era.

Treshaun Ward totaled 138 yards of offense, including a 13-yard touchdown reception, against his former team as Boston College stunned No. 10 Florida State 28-13 on Monday night.

Ward, a Tampa native who played at Florida State from 2019-22, had 77 yards rushing and 61 yards receiving as the Eagles (1-0, 1-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) totaled 263 yards rushing.

It was a resounding debut for O'Brien, who was introduced in mid-February after Jeff Hafley's departure to become the Green Bay Packers' defensive coordinator.

"I'm very proud of these guys," O'Brien said. "They were resilient tonight. To come down here against a team that really in their minds had to have this win, that's a heck of a statement for BC. But it's just one win."

The Eagles' offense produced touchdown drives of 71 yards, 68 yards and 60 yards.

BC defensive back Max Tucker also intercepted DJ Uiagalelei and his 58-yard return set up the Eagles on FSU's goal line for another touchdown.

Florida State had won five straight in the series, but was overmatched on offense and

defense in this one.

The Seminoles, viewed as a contender for a spot in the 12-team College Football Playoff, dropped to 0-2 for the first time since 2021.

"Sick to how this season started," Florida State coach Mike Norvell said. "I failed in preparing the team to be able to go out and respond tonight."

Uiagalelei completed 21 of 42 passes for 272 yards and a 29-yard touchdown pass to Kentron Poitier in the third quarter, cutting BC's lead to 21-13.

But BC responded on the next drive, marching 60 yards in 12 plays as Kye Robichaux's 2-yard TD run gave the Eagles a 28-13 lead with 1:03 left in the third quarter.

Florida State scored on just one of six second-half drives.

Thomas Castellanos nearly pulled off an upset of Florida State in 2023, throwing for 305 yards and rushing for 95 yards as well as a touchdown passing and rushing in a 31-29 loss.

While not as prolific on Monday, the BC quarterback completed 10 of 16 passes for 106 yards and two touchdowns to go with 73 yards rushing and a 4-yard touchdown run.

"Everything we did this offseason, from a winter workout, summer workout, it led up to this," Castellanos said. "This is what we prepared for. It all panned out."

Injury report

BC played without Logan Taylor, who started 12 games at Virginia in 2023. Taylor had 23 career starts.

Florida State played without starting right tackle Jeremiah Byers and two reserve linebackers, Omar Graham Jr. and Shawn Murphy, on Monday. Wide receiver Hykeem Williams missed his second straight game. None of the injuries were specified.

Poll implications

Florida State is almost certain to tumble out of the top 25 following its two losses to open the season.

Takeaways

Boston College: The Eagles averaged 5.4 yards per play and converted on 9 of 16 third-down opportunities to build the upset.

Florida State: A strength going into the season has instead been a weakness. The Seminoles had just 21 yards rushing on 16 carries.

Up next

Boston College hosts Duquesne on Saturday.

Florida State has a bye week and next hosts Memphis on Sept. 14.

MWC isn't renewing deal with former Pac-12 teams

Associated Press

The Sept. 1 deadline for the Mountain West and Washington State and Oregon State to renew their football scheduling arrangement passed without an agreement, and the conference said Monday that it is anticipating making schedules for next season without the Pac-12 schools.

The announcement does not necessarily close the door on the two sides agreeing to another arrangement, as the 12-team Mountain West typically does not release its conference football schedule until December at the earliest.

"For the 2025 season, the Mountain West and its member institutions are moving forward with their conference

and nonconference schedules," the league said in a statement.

Oregon State and Washington State are operating as a two-team league this season and intend to do so in 2025 as well after 10 Pac-12 schools scattered to other power conferences this year.

To fill out football schedules, Washington State and Oregon State agreed to a deal with the Mountain West to play six games against those schools that do not count toward the conference standings. The deal paid the Mountain West about \$14 million for this year.

The Mountain West and the Pac-12 schools said at the time they would look to possibly ex-

tend the agreement another year by Sept. 1, but the sides could not come to terms.

Oregon State currently has seven football games booked for next season, including against Washington State.

Washington State has six games booked, including its conference game against the Beavers. Major college football teams typically play 12-game regular seasons.

Mountain West schools could also arrange games separately with Oregon State and Washington State.

Oregon State and Washington State struck a separate scheduling agreement with the West Coast Conference for basketball and other Olympic sports. That does not include

Oregon State's traditionally strong baseball program, which is operating as an independent.

Oregon State and Washington State are taking advantage of an NCAA rule that allows them to operate as a two-team conference for two years. Schools leaders have said their first priority is to rebuild the Pac-12, and they have accumulated tens of millions of dollars in conference-related funds they hope can aid those efforts.

Their agreement with the Mountain West included millions of dollars in extra fees over the next two years if Oregon State and Washington State tries to add schools from the conference to the Pac-12.

Pegula to face Swiatek in US Open quarterfinals

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jessica Pegula is back in the quarterfinals at the U.S. Open after a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Diana Shnaider on Monday, her seventh trip to that round at a Grand Slam tournament. Now comes the hard part: Pegula is 0-6 in major quarterfinals over her career — and this next one will come against No. 1 Iga Swiatek.

The No. 6-seeded Pegula, an American whose parents own the NFL's Buffalo Bills and NHL's Buffalo Sabres, is on quite a run at the moment, having won 13 of her past 14 matches, all on hard courts. That included her second consecutive title in Canada and an appearance in the final at the Cincinnati Open, where she lost to No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka.

"I feel like there's been more pressure this year, because I did so well coming into this tournament," said the 30-year-old Pegula, the oldest woman left in the field. "I want to keep working my way and hopefully bringing my best tennis for the later rounds this time."

Swiatek was tied at 4-all with No. 16 Liudmila Samsonova on Monday night before grabbing seven straight games en route to winning 6-4, 6-1. When Swiatek captured the 2022 U.S. Open for one of her five Grand Slam titles, she eliminated Pegula in the quarterfinals.

"She's in a good rhythm right

now, and she won so many matches past weeks," Swiatek said about Pegula, "that, for sure, it's going to be a challenge."

Indeed, half of Pegula's six quarterfinal exits at Slams came against a No. 1 player — Swiatek twice and Ash Barty once.

"I'll just try to draw from those experiences and kind of how I felt going into the next match, but it's just so tough," Pegula said. "I mean, I know you don't want the cliché answer, but it's just kind of one match at a time, and every day kind of feels different. It depends on who you are playing, how the conditions are, when you're playing. There are so many variables day to day."

Also returning to the quarterfinals was Karolina Muchova, a 6-3, 6-3 winner over No. 5 Jasmine Paolini, the runner-up at the French Open and Wimbledon this season. Muchova next plays No. 22 Beatriz Haddad Maia, who got past 2018 Australian Open champion Caroline Wozniacki 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 to become the first woman from Brazil in the U.S. Open quarterfinals since Maria Bueno in 1968.

Haddad Maia is a 28-year-old left-hander who was given a 10-month suspension after failing a doping test in 2019. She was a semifinalist at the French Open last year but had not been past the second round at Flushing

Meadows until now.

Muchova enjoyed a breakthrough 2023, getting to the final in Paris and the semifinals in New York before needing surgery on her right wrist in October, sidelining her for 10 months.

"This was my worst and most serious injury, I would say. But, I mean, I love the sport, so in my head, I was like, 'I will do everything I could to (get) better and try.' And here I am today," said Muchova, whose U.S. Open ended a year ago with a loss to eventual champion Coco Gauff. "I'm just a really happy kid now."

Gauff was seeded No. 3 this year and was eliminated Sunday by No. 13 Emma Navarro.

In men's action Monday, No. 1 Jannik Sinner beat No. 14 Tommy Paul 7-6 (3), 7-6 (5), 6-1 at night to set up a quarterfinal showdown against 2021 champion Daniil Medvedev.

No. 5 Medvedev, the only past men's winner still in the bracket, overwhelmed Nuno Borges 6-0, 6-1, 6-3 in a victory delayed for six minutes — along with every other match going on at the time — because of a fire alarm in the building that houses the electronic line-calling system.

No. 25 Jack Draper became the first British man to reach the quarterfinals in New York since the recently retired Andy Murray did it in 2016. Draper, who exited in the fourth round a

year ago, will appear in his first Slam quarterfinal thanks to a 6-3, 6-1, 6-2 win against unseeded Tomas Machac.

"I obviously miss Andy. Shoutout to Andy. What an unbelievable career the guy's had. Just an icon of the game. I miss him in the change rooms. I miss being next to his stinky shoes and all his stinky clothes," said Draper, who'll take on No. 10 Alex de Minaur, a 6-0, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5 winner against Jordan Thompson in an all-Australian matchup. "Andy's a legend, and if I have half the career he had, then I'll be a happy man."

Everything went Pegula's way against the 18th-seeded Shnaider, a 20-year-old Russian who played one season of college tennis at NC State and won a silver medal in women's doubles at the Paris Olympics.

Pegula compiled 22 winners, hit six aces, saved 7 of 9 break points that she faced and claimed five of Shnaider's service games.

"My movement has really improved, which has really helped me stay into a lot of these points and these sets and these games and be super consistent," Pegula said. "I've been serving pretty well. Even if it's not working, I've been kind of getting myself out of service games by serving smart or serving well in big moments like today where she was returning really well."

Oilers sign Draisaitl to 8-year, \$112M extension

Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — The Edmonton Oilers have signed Leon Draisaitl to an eight-year contract extension worth \$112 million, a deal that gives the German star the highest salary cap hit in NHL history at \$14 million.

The new contract begins with the 2025-26 season and runs through 2033. General manager Stan Bowman announced the extension Tuesday.

"This is a historic day for the Edmonton

Oilers," Bowman said. "Leon's commitment to our team, our city and Oilers fans everywhere cannot be overstated. His desire to help bring a Stanley Cup title home to Edmonton is central to everything he does both on and off the ice."

Draisaitl and Connor McDavid helped the team reach Game 7 of the Stanley Cup final this past year. Draisaitl, the league's MVP in 2020, was set to be an unrestricted free agent next summer.

Getting Draisaitl signed was the biggest

task of the Oilers' offseason. Bowman was hired as GM in late July, weeks after being reinstated by the league office following a ban for his role in the Chicago Blackhawks 2010 sexual assault allegations.

Draisaitl surpasses Auston Matthews' \$13.25 million cap hit with this new contract, which nearly doubles his salary. The 28-year-old Draisaitl is making \$8.5 million on average on his current contract, which was signed in 2017 and became one of the most team-friendly deals in the league.

Guardians extend Royals' losing streak to 6

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Gavin Williams pitched seven sharp innings, and the Cleveland Guardians beat the Kansas City Royals 4-2 on Monday.

Lane Thomas and Josh Naylor each hit two-run homers for AL Central-leading Cleveland, which won for the fourth time in five games.

Williams (3-7) allowed one run and one hit in an encouraging September performance after he went 1-4 with a 6.56 ERA in five starts last month.

"Filling up the zone," Williams said. "Talking with (catcher) Bo (Naylor) and having a better plan. Just seeing the way they took different pitches."

The right-hander walked two while throwing 46 pitches in the first two innings. But he settled down from there, retiring his final 16 batters.

"The first couple of innings he was fighting himself," Guardians manager Stephen Vogt said. "Made an adjustment. To go seven was much needed, for him, for us, and everything."

The Guardians extended their lead over the Royals in the AL Central to 4½ games, maintaining a 3½-game lead over the second-place Twins.

Kansas City finished with two hits in its season-high sixth consecutive loss.

"The ball's not bouncing our way," Royals infielder Michael Massey said. "We've gone through streaks where the ball hits on the right side of the chalk

line and streaks where it hits the wrong side. We're just on the wrong side right now."

Brewers 9, Cardinals 3: Willy Adams tied the major league record with his 13th three-run homer of the season, going deep on his 29th birthday to lift NL Central-leading Milwaukee over visiting St. Louis for its sixth win in seven games.

Adams homered for the fifth consecutive game, matching the Brewers record. Adams' 13 three-run homers equaled Ken Griffey Jr. in 1996 and his 99 RBIs set a career high, one more than his 2022 total.

Orioles 13, White Sox 3: Gunnar Henderson tied a franchise record for shortstops with his 34th home run, and host Baltimore extended Chicago's losing streak to 11 with a rout.

Chicago dropped to 31-108 and lost its 20th straight game in which Chris Flexen (2-14) started, breaking a major league mark for most consecutive losses in a pitcher's starts that had been held by Milwaukee's Chris Capuano.

Reds 5, Astros 3: Santiago Espinal's well-placed bloop single drove in two runs in the fifth inning, and host Cincinnati beat Justin Verlander and Houston.

Ty France had four hits as the Reds stopped the Astros' five-game win streak. Amed Rosario had two hits and drove in a run.

Dodgers 11, Diamondbacks 6: Freddie Freeman hit two homers and had five RBIs, Shohei Ohtani stole three bases and

visiting Los Angeles beat Arizona.

Teoscar Hernández went 5-for-5 to help Los Angeles take three of four games in a crucial series between NL West rivals. The Dodgers—who have won 17 of their last 23—now have a six-game lead over the D-backs with 24 to play. Arizona and San Diego are jostling for second place.

Padres 3, Tigers 0: Joe Muro pitched six strong innings and Fernando Tatis Jr. went 0-for-4 in his first game since June 21 as host San Diego beat Detroit.

Luis Arraez had two RBI singles for the Padres, who edged ahead of Arizona and into the NL's top wild card spot.

Twins 5, Rays 4: Trevor Larnach and Brooks Lee homered to help visiting Minnesota beat Tampa Bay.

The Twins earned a second straight victory for the first time since they won three in a row from Aug. 15-17. They remained 3½ games behind AL Central-leading Cleveland and moved a game ahead of Kansas City for the AL's second wild-card spot.

Athletics 5, Mariners 4: Shea Langeliers led off the ninth inning with his second home run of the game, lifting host Oakland over Seattle.

Langeliers hit a three-run homer in the fourth for the A's, who returned home from a six-game trip in which they lost three of the last four. He has a career-high 25 home runs.

Mets 4, Red Sox 1: Luis Seve-

rino pitched seven crisp innings, Francisco Lindor sparked host New York's lineup again and the surging Mets inched closer to a playoff position by beating Boston.

Brandon Nimmo hit an RBI double and saved a run with a terrific catch in center field for the Mets, who have won five straight and 12 of 17 to move within a half-game of idle Atlanta for the final National League wild card spot.

Pirates 5, Cubs 3: Bryan Reynolds and Andrew McCutchen homered during visiting Pittsburgh's four-run eighth inning, cooling off Chicago with a victory.

Chicago returned home after closing out an 8-1 trip with six consecutive victories. It was hoping to add to its push for the third NL wild card against Pittsburgh, but it blew a 3-0 lead in the opener of a three-game series.

Yankees 8, Rangers 4: Giancarlo Stanton reached 25 homers for the 10th time in his big league career, Gerrit Cole struck out nine over six innings before his right calf cramped and visiting New York beat Texas.

Gleyber Torres had three hits for the AL-leading Yankees, including a two-run double in the third inning that put them ahead to stay. Anthony Rizzo had a two-run double in their five-run sixth inning after Aaron Judge doubled for his MLB-best 124th RBI.

Tatis back with Padres amid push for playoff spot

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Star right fielder Fernando Tatis Jr. was activated from the 60-day injured list Monday by the San Diego Padres after being sidelined for more than two months with a stress reaction in his right thighbone.

He went 0 for 4, but did advance two runners in the two-run eighth inning in a 3-0 win against the Detroit Tigers.

Tatis last played June 21. He was put on the injured list June 24, retroactive to June 22.

He received ovations when the lineups were announced and when he ran out to his defensive position at the start of the game, when he was gesturing to the fans and clapping.

"It's a beautiful feeling, man," he said. "I wish I could put it into words, but I had goosebumps, and my energy went right through

the roof. And that was the push that I definitely needed and it was just beautiful all the way around."

He spent last week working out at the team's spring training complex in Arizona.

The Padres are currently in a position to make the playoffs, as the win moved them past Arizona and into the NL's first wild-card spot after the Diamondbacks lost to the Dodgers on Monday.