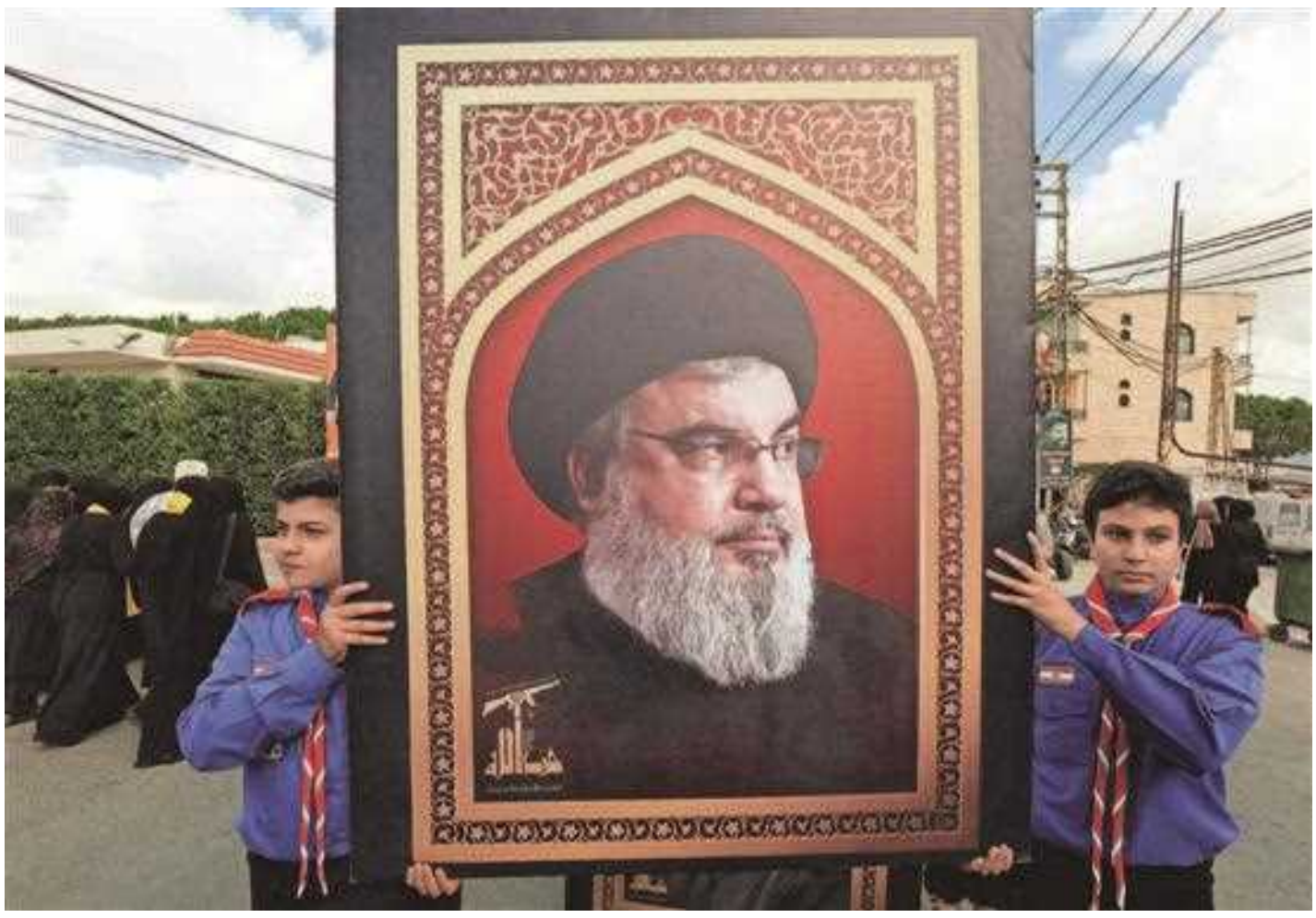
NATION&WORLD EXTRA

INSIDE

Death toll from Helene rises to 47 as states begin cleanup. **4NN**

CRISIS IN MIDDLE EAST



A picture of Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah is carried during a funeral for a Hezbollah member in Kfar Melki, Lebanon, on Sept. 19. Nasrallah was killed in an Israeli strike on Friday. AZIZ TAHER/REUTERS FILE

Hezbollah grapples with its future

Nasrallah's killing reveals depth of Israel's penetration of group

Samia Nakhoul, Parisa Hafezi and Maayan Lubell
REUTERS

In the wake of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah's killing, Hezbollah faces the enormous challenge of plugging the infiltration in its ranks that allowed its archenemy Israel to destroy weapons sites, booby-trap its communications and assassinate the veteran leader, whose whereabouts had been a closely guarded secret for years.

Nasrallah's killing in a command HQ on Friday came barely a week after Israel's deadly detonation of hundreds of booby-trapped pagers and radios. It was the culmination of a rapid succession of strikes that have eliminated half of Hezbollah's leadership council and decimated its top military command.

In the days before and hours after Nasrallah's killing, Reuters spoke to more than a dozen sources in Lebanon, Israel, Iran and Syria who provided details of the damage Israel has wrought on the powerful Shi'ite paramilitary group, including to its supply lines and command structure. All asked for anonymity to speak about sensitive matters.

One source familiar with Israeli thinking told Reuters, less than 24 hours before the strike, that Israel has spent 20 years focusing intelligence efforts on Hezbollah and could hit Nasrallah when it wanted, including in the headquarters.

The person called the intelligence

By the numbers

8 out of 9
Number of Hezbollah's top military commanders killed by Israel this year, including Nasrallah.

20%-25%
of Hezbollah's missile capacity is estimated to have been lost so far during the current conflict.

1,500 Hezbollah fighters
The number maimed by the exploding pagers and walkie-talkies on Sept. 17-18.

150,000 rockets, missiles and drones
The size of Hezbollah's arsenal before the strikes.

1,000 Hezbollah targets
The number of sites Israel has struck in recent days.

"brilliant," without providing details.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his close circle of ministers authorized the attack on Wednesday, two Israeli officials told Reuters. The attack took place while Netanyahu was in New York to speak at the U.N. General Assembly.

Nasrallah had avoided public appearances since a previous 2006 war. He had long been vigilant, his movements were restricted and the circle of people he saw was very small, according to a source familiar with Nasrallah's security arrangements. The assassination suggested his group had been infiltrated by informants for Israel, the source said.

The Hezbollah leader had been even more cautious than usual since the Sept. 17 pager blasts, out of concern Israel would try to kill him, a security source familiar with the group's thinking told Reuters a week ago, citing his absence from a commanders' funeral and his pre-recording of a speech broadcast a few days before.

Hezbollah's media office did not respond to a request for comment for this story. U.S. President Joe Biden on Saturday called Nasrallah's killing "a measure of justice" for his many victims, and said the United States fully supported Israel's right to defend itself against Iranian-backed groups.

Israel says it carried out the hit on Nasrallah by dropping bombs on the

See HEZBOLLAH, Page 7NN

ELECTION 2024

Trump escalates his harsh rhetoric

Wis. speech targets immigrants, Harris

Tim Reid
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Donald Trump on Saturday deployed some of his harshest rhetoric against immigrants who have crossed the border illegally and committed crimes, especially against young women, while he also escalated his personal insults against Kamala Harris.

In the battleground state of Wisconsin, Trump called Democratic Vice President Harris, who on Friday visited the U.S.-Mexico border for the first time in her 2024 presidential campaign, "mentally impaired" and "mentally disabled."

The Republican presidential candidate was flanked by posters of immigrants in the U.S. illegally who have been arrested for murder and other violent crimes, and banners saying "End Migrant Crime" and "Deport Illegals Now."

His speech was unusually devoted almost entirely to undocumented immigrants. He called those who had committed violent crime "monsters," "stone-cold killers" and "vile animals."

Trump is locked in a close race with Harris ahead of the Nov. 5 election. Immigration and the southern border are one of the top issues for voters, according to opinion polls.

Sarafina Chitika, a Harris spokesperson, said after Trump's speech: "He's got nothing 'inspiring' to offer the American people, just darkness."

The former president blamed Harris and Democratic President Joe Biden for allowing undocumented immigrants into the U.S., accusing some migrants of wanting to "rape, pillage, thieve, plunder and kill the people of the United States of America."

At one point Trump admitted: "This is a dark speech."

See TRUMP, Page 5NN

Donald Trump speaks Saturday in Prairie du Chien, Wis., where a Venezuelan who was in the U.S. illegally was detained in September for allegedly sexually assaulting a woman. TIM EVANS/REUTERS

ANALYSIS

Putin draws a nuclear red line for the West

Mark Trevelyan and Andrew Osborn
REUTERS

LONDON – Russian President Vladimir Putin has drawn a "red line" for the United States and its allies by signaling that Moscow will consider responding with nuclear weapons if they allow Ukraine to strike deep inside Russia with long-range Western missiles.

But some in the West are asking: does he actually mean it?

The question is critical to the course of the war. If Putin is bluffing, as Ukraine and some of its supporters believe, then the West may feel ready to deepen its military support for Kyiv regardless of Moscow's threats.

If he is serious, there is a risk – repeatedly stated by Moscow and acknowledged by Washington – that the conflict could turn into World War III.

In the latest in a long series of warning signals, Putin on Wednesday extended the list of scenarios that could lead to Russia using nuclear weapons.

It could do this, he said, in response to a major cross-border conventional attack involving aircraft, missiles or drones. A rival nuclear power that supported a country attacking Russia would be considered a party to that attack. Both those criteria apply directly to the situation that would arise if the West allows Ukraine to strike deep inside Russian territory with Western long-range missiles such as U.S. ATACMS and British Storm Shadows, something Putin has said would need Western satellite and targeting support.

"It was a very clear message: 'Don't make a mistake – all these kind of things may mean nuclear war,' " said Nikolai Sokov, a former Soviet and Russian diplomat.

Bahram Ghiassee, a London-based nuclear analyst at the Henry Jackson Society think-tank, linked the timing of Putin's remarks to Ukraine's lobbying of the West for long-range missiles and the fact that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the U.S. last week.

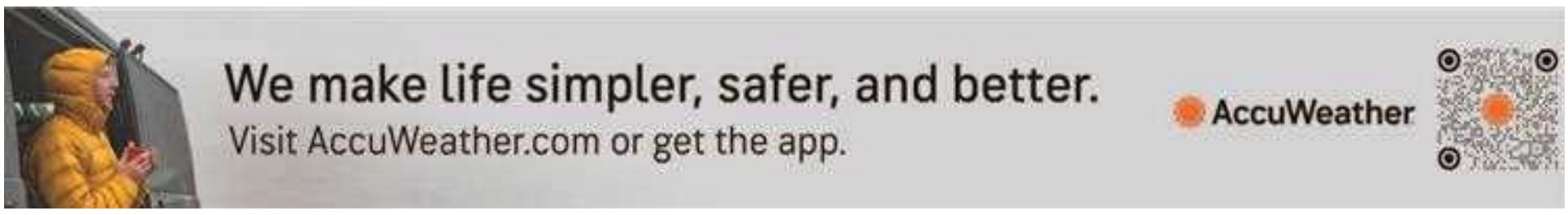
"Putin is saying: just stop it right there," Ghiassee said.

'Nuclear blackmail'

Reaction from Kyiv was swift, with Zelenskyy's chief of staff accusing Putin of "nuclear blackmail."

"In my opinion, this is yet another bluff and demonstration of Putin's weakness. He will not dare to use nuclear weapons because that will make him a complete outcast," Anton Gerashchenko, a former adviser to Ukraine's

See PUTIN, Page 6NN

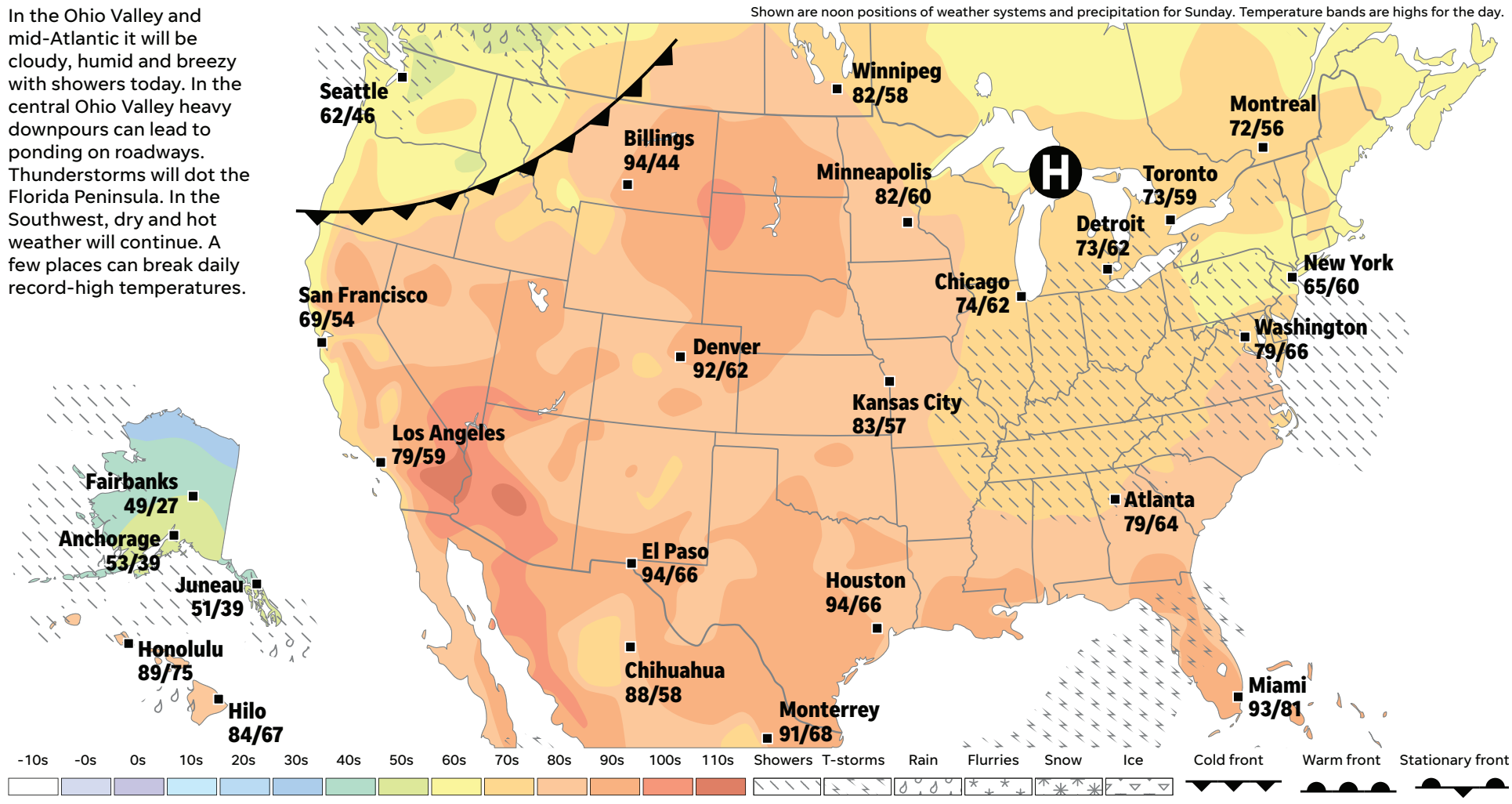


NATIONAL SUMMARY

In the Ohio Valley and mid-Atlantic it will be cloudy, humid and breezy with showers today. In the central Ohio Valley heavy downpours can lead to ponding on roadways. Thunderstorms will dot the Florida Peninsula. In the Southwest, dry and hot weather will continue. A few places can break daily record-high temperatures.

In the digital e-edition, you can click anywhere on the US map to get up-to-date forecasts, radar, MinuteCast® and more.

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation for Sunday. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



SATURDAY EXTREMES

NATIONAL (for the 48 contiguous states)

High:	**116** at Phoenix, AZ
Low:	**25** at Yellowstone N.P., WY
Precip:	**2.24"** at Fort Myers, FL

INTERNATIONAL (excludes Antarctica)

High:	**115** at Phoenix, USA
Low:	**8** at Baimka, Russia
Precip:	**3.39"** at Tegucigalpa, Honduras

TODAY IN HISTORY

Algeria and Tunisia are typically dry, but on Sept. 29, 1969, severe flooding killed 600 people and left a quarter of a million homeless. Biskra, Algeria, had 11.78 inches of rain.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

Q: On average, what is the windiest time of the day?

A: The afternoon

NATIONAL CITIES SUNDAY

● Denotes possible travel delays

	High/low/W	Air Quality
● Aberdeen, SD	92/64/s	59
Abilene, TX	89/60/s	51
● Accomac, VA	79/66/pc	40
Adrian, MI	72/61/sh	39
Akron, OH	69/61/sh	26
Alamogordo, NM	92/57/s	80
● Alexandria, VA	80/66/sh	42
● Alliance, OH	69/61/sh	33
Amarillo, TX	88/56/s	46
Ames, IA	85/53/s	39
Anderson, SC	80/64/pc	38
Appleton, WI	79/56/s	31
Asheville, NC	74/60/c	37
Ashland, OH	69/61/sh	43
Athens, GA	81/63/pc	40
Augusta, GA	86/64/pc	48
Austin, TX	93/62/s	65
Bartlesville, OK	88/54/s	49
● Battle Creek, MI	75/58/sh	29
● Bedford, IN	71/64/sh	28
Binghamton, NY	64/54/pc	20
Bluffton, SC	86/72/pc	53
Bremerton, WA	61/42/pc	30
Brockton, MA	69/50/pc	36
Brownwood, TX	89/59/s	55
Burlington, IA	82/58/pc	31
Burlington, NC	79/64/pc	41
Burlington, VT	75/55/s	25
Cambridge, OH	73/64/sh	24
Camdenton, MO	78/59/pc	31
Canandaigua, NY	69/59/c	24
Canton, OH	69/62/sh	43
Carlsbad, NM	88/58/s	92
● Chambersburg, PA	68/60/sh	30
● Cherry Hill, NJ	69/62/sh	33
Cincinnati, OH	72/63/sh	32
Clarksville, TN	75/64/sh	28
● Coldwater, MI	73/57/sh	31
Columbus, OH	72/65/sh	34
● Corning, NY	68/58/r	26
Corpus Christi, TX	97/67/s	85
● Daytona Beach, FL	89/74/t	34
Deming, NM	93/58/s	73
DeRidder, LA	90/65/s	60
Des Moines, IA	85/59/s	39
Detroit, MI	73/62/sh	43
● Devils Lake, ND	83/57/s	36
Dover, NH	69/49/pc	32
El Paso, TX	94/66/s	82
● Elmira, NY	68/58/c	22
Erie, PA	70/63/sh	26
Eugene, OR	70/43/s	26
Evansville, IN	76/65/sh	26
Fall River, MA	70/52/pc	30
Farmington, NM	90/51/s	69
Fayetteville, NC	85/69/c	48
Fond du Lac, WI	77/53/s	32
Fort Myers, FL	91/77/c	26
Fort Smith, AR	88/65/pc	37
Framingham, MA	69/50/pc	34
Freeport, IL	79/53/pc	30
Fremont, OH	71/64/sh	36
Fort Collins, CO	92/59/s	94
Gadsden, AL	77/60/pc	35
Gainesville, FL	89/70/t	36
Galesburg, IL	81/57/s	29
Gastonia, NC	80/62/c	43
Glen Rose, TX	90/58/s	63
Gonzales, LA	91/67/s	64
● Great Falls, MT	81/35/pc	37
Green Bay, WI	76/51/s	28
Greenville, SC	78/63/c	42
Hackensack, NJ	66/59/c	51
● Hagerstown, MD	69/61/sh	24
Hattiesburg, MS	89/65/pc	56
Henderson, KY	75/64/sh	32
Hendersonville, NC	73/58/c	38
Herkimer, NY	72/55/pc	27
● Hillsdale, MI	73/59/sh	32
Holland, MI	80/57/pc	28
● Hornell, NY	67/57/r	22
Houma, LA	92/66/s	66
Howell, MI	75/58/sh	38
Hutchinson, KS	87/52/s	42
Hyannis, MA	67/53/pc	21
Indianapolis, IN	73/65/sh	31
Iowa City, IA	84/57/s	38
Ithaca, NY	67/55/pc	23
Jackson, MS	85/64/pc	61
Jackson, TN	75/63/c	28
Jacksonville, FL	91/71/pc	42
Jacksonville, NC	85/68/c	43
Kent, OH	69/61/sh	40
Kewanee, IL	78/56/s	31
● Keyser, WV	71/62/sh	31
Kinston, NC	87/68/c	43
Knoxville, TN	70/62/sh	33
Lafayette, IN	77/65/sh	27
Lafayette, LA	92/69/s	74
Lakeland, FL	92/74/t	34
Lansing, MI	75/58/sh	24
Las Cruces, NM	92/60/s	81
Lebanon, PA	67/61/sh	37
Leesburg, FL	89/74/t	39
● Levittown, PA	67/61/sh	33
Lincoln, IL	76/60/sh	30
Louisville, KY	74/65/sh	39
Lubbock, TX	89/56/pc	47
Manitowoc, WI	71/55/pc	30
Mansfield, OH	69/62/sh	30
Marshall, NC	72/60/sh	34
Marshfield, WI	78/50/s	35
● Massillon, OH	70/62/sh	41
● McLean, VA	77/65/sh	32
● Melbourne, FL	90/75/t	30
Memphis, TN	75/65/c	38
Middletown, NY	62/54/c	33
Milford, MA	69/50/pc	34
Milwaukee, WI	72/61/pc	35
Monroe, MI	71/61/sh	34
Monroe, LA	87/65/pc	56
Montgomery, AL	85/63/pc	37
Muncie, IN	72/64/sh	25
Murfreesboro, TN	72/62/sh	31
Naples, FL	92/77/sh	21
Nashville, TN	72/64/sh	33
Neptune, NJ	67/62/c	33
New Bedford, MA	70/51/pc	24
New Bern, NC	87/69/c	39
New Philadelphia, OH	72/62/sh	33
Newark, OH	72/64/sh	44
Newton, NJ	63/55/c	34
New York, NY	65/60/c	53
Norwich, CT	67/52/pc	27
Ocala, FL	89/73/t	32
Oklahoma City, OK	87/56/pc	55
Opelousas, LA	91/65/s	68
Oshkosh, WI	76/55/s	32
Palm Beach, FL	92/80/pc	25
Palm Springs, CA	108/77/s	70
Panama City, FL	89/73/pc	48
Pekin, IL	77/61/c	33
Pensacola, FL	89/69/pc	70
Peoria, IL	79/62/c	32
Petersburg, VA	85/69/c	34
Phoenix, AZ	112/83/s	76
Port Huron, MI	73/59/sh	23
Portsmouth, NH	69/52/pc	24
Poughkeepsie, NY	65/54/pc	28
Providence, RI	68/53/pc	27
Pueblo, CO	90/53/s	60
Quincy, MA	67/52/pc	47
Redding, CA	97/71/s	57
Reno, NV	89/50/s	70
● Ravenna, OH	69/61/sh	36
● Richmond, IN	71/63/sh	40
Rochester, NY	72/61/c	24
Rockford, IL	80/57/pc	30
Ruidoso, NM	79/53/s	73
Salem, OR	70/45/s	33
Salina, KS	88/53/s	41
Salinas, CA	70/52/pc	48
Salisbury, MD	82/67/c	35
San Angelo, TX	89/55/s	51
Sarasota, FL	89/76/t	21
Savannah, GA	89/70/pc	52
Sheboygan, WI	71/59/pc	30
Shelby, NC	79/62/c	44
Sherman, TX	91/61/pc	54
Shreveport, LA	90/67/pc	61
Silver City, NM	88/59/s	67
Sioux Falls, SD	90/62/s	58
● Somerset, PA	66/60/sh	26
Somerville, NJ	66/59/c	36
South Bend, IN	76/60/sh	28
Spartanburg, SC	78/61/pc	45
Springfield, IL	78/61/sh	29
Springfield, MO	80/60/pc	33
St. Augustine, FL	86/73/pc	41
St. Cloud, MN	81/58/s	48
St. George, UT	101/68/s	54
● Staunton, VA	75/64/sh	30
Stevens Point, WI	80/50/s	33
Stockton, CA	91/55/s	52
● Stroudsburg, PA	64/56/c	35
Stuart, FL	93/76/pc	40
● Sturgis, MI	74/58/sh	30
Tallahassee, FL	88/69/pc	42
Thibodaux, LA	91/66/s	65
Topeka, KS	86/55/s	47
Tuscaloosa, AL	80/62/pc	36
Utica, NY	71/55/pc	24
Ventura, CA	68/56/pc	55
Victorville, CA	95/55/s	90
● Vineland, NJ	73/62/sh	22
Visalia, CA	92/56/s	101
● Washington, DC	79/66/sh	35
● Watertown, SD	87/63/s	53
Wausau, WI	80/49/s	32
● Waynesboro, PA	69/61/sh	27
White Plains, NY	64/58/c	36
Wichita Falls, TX	92/58/pc	46
Wilmington, DE	70/62/sh	26
Wilmington, NC	86/70/c	50
Wisconsin Rapids, WI	80/51/s	35
Wooster, OH	70/62/sh	24
Worcester, MA	66/54/pc	32
York, PA	69/63/sh	39

Air Quality Index: 0-50, Good; 51-100, Moderate; 101-150, Unhealthy for sensitive groups; 151-200, Unhealthy; 201-300, Very unhealthy; 301-500, Hazardous

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

	Sunday High/low/W	Monday High/low/W
● Acapulco	83/72/t	84/73/r
Addis Ababa	72/53/c	73/54/sh
Algiers	82/62/s	85/63/s
Amman	85/63/s	85/65/s
Amsterdam	59/49/pc	59/54/sh
Ankara	88/52/s	74/51/sh
Asuncion	94/73/s	100/76/s
● Athens	88/67/s	80/63/s
Auckland	62/49/c	66/53/pc
Baghdad	97/71/pc	100/72/pc
Bangkok	94/81/t	94/79/t
● Beijing	80/57/r	68/50/r
Beirut	86/74/s	84/75/s
Belgrade	57/46/r	62/43/s
Berlin	59/43/pc	60/49/pc
● Bogota	63/50/sh	68/48/sh
Brussels	59/47/pc	61/53/r
● Bucharest	74/54/t	59/51/r
Budapest	61/44/r	63/39/s
Buenos Aires	75/66/s	78/57/t
Cairo	91/73/s	89/74/s
Cape Town	57/48/sh	58/43/sh
Caracas	90/74/t	92/74/t
Casablanca	87/63/s	90/67/s
Colombo	88/78/sh	86/78/t
Copenhagen	58/46/s	59/53/c
Damascus	93/61/s	91/62/s
● Dublin	55/51/r	54/47/r
Geneva	59/52/c	68/55/r
Guatemala City	76/62/t	77/63/t
Hanoi	91/77/t	89/76/r
Harare	92/65/s	96/67/s
Havana	92/75/t	90/73/sh
Helsinki	53/45/pc	55/49/s
Hong Kong	88/79/s	91/81/s
Jakarta	93/78/t	92/77/t
Jerusalem	81/62/s	81/65/s
● Johannesburg	83/47/t	70/37/s
Kabul	75/58/pc	78/57/s
Khartoum	106/83/pc	103/83/pc
● Kyiv	69/50/c	64/50/pc
Kingston	90/80/t	91/80/t
La Paz	61/38/pc	62/37/c
Lagos	85/76/sh	87/76/t
Lima	70/61/s	69/61/pc
Lisbon	81/60/s	82/64/s
● London	59/53/r	63/51/r
Madrid	78/48/s	83/49/s
Manila	90/78/t	89/78/r
Mexico City	70/54/r	73/56/pc
Milan	71/58/pc	70/55/pc
Mombasa	88/73/c	87/72/pc
Montevideo	78/62/pc	82/57/t
Montreal	72/56/s	72/53/s
● Moscow	66/48/r	52/44/r
Nairobi	79/60/t	79/60/t
New Delhi	89/77/pc	94/78/pc
● Panama City	84/75/t	82/75/t
Paris	58/53/c	64/53/c
Port-au-Prince	94/74/pc	94/74/t
Rio de Janeiro	78/68/s	81/70/s
Riyadh	103/79/pc	106/82/pc
Rome	77/53/s	74/53/s
● San Jose	79/65/t	77/65/r
● San Salvador	82/68/t	81/69/t
Santiago	70/49/pc	66/43/c
● Sao Paulo	80/63/pc	87/68/s
Sarajevo	55/40/r	59/35/pc
Shanghai	88/77/s	88/77/s
● Singapore	88/78/t	88/78/t
Stockholm	50/31/s	54/37/s
● Sydney	69/60/r	67/53/s
Taipei	90/78/sh	89/79/r
● Tegucigalpa	84/66/t	83/66/t
Tehran	65/55/pc	69/59/sh
● Tokyo	77/69/c	79/71/pc
Toronto	73/59/pc	71/61/c
Tunis	81/60/s	81/63/s
Vancouver	60/44/pc	59/49/c
Vienna	59/40/pc	59/42/pc
Warsaw	59/40/pc	59/38/c
Yerevan	69/49/s	66/52/s
Zagreb	63/39/s	59/40/s
Zurich	58/45/c	65/52/c

● Denotes possible travel delays Sunday

Weather(W): **s**-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **t**-thunderstorms, **r**-rain, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow, **i**-ice.

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NOTABLE DEATHS

Roy Clay Sr., 95, a Black pioneer in the technology industry whose influence spanned nearly five decades in Silicon Valley, died Sept. 22. Clay, who lived in Oakland, California, had been in declining health for some time. His death was confirmed by his family. After earning a degree in mathematics from St. Louis University, he applied unsuccessfully for several jobs before McDonnell Aircraft Manufacturing in St. Louis hired him in 1956. Clay was a key figure in the development of the personal computer and of Hewlett-Packard. He was also credited with breaking down racial barriers in a largely white business.

Kathryn Crosby, 90, the widow of Bing Crosby, died of natural causes on Sept. 20, family spokesman Harlan Boll confirmed to USA TODAY. The Houston-born beauty queen, who adopted the stage name Kathryn Grant, launched her acting career in 1953, starring in more than 20 films opposite A-listers such as Tony Curtis, Jimmy Stewart, Bob Hope and Jack Lemmon, and appeared most famously in "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad."

Lillie Lester, 102, believed to be the first woman in the nation to serve as a legislative sergeant-at-arms, died Sept. 20, family and friends confirmed. Mary Lewis said her mother had a stroke earlier that week and was under hospice care. Lester worked at the Michigan Capitol in the 1960s and '70s and was not only the first woman to hold the position, but also the first Black woman in that role.

Eugene "Mercury" Morris, 77, a two-time Super Bowl-winning running back for the Miami Dolphins, died Sept. 21. His son announced Morris' death over social media on Sept. 22, and the Dolphins confirmed the news, per The Miami Herald. A Pittsburgh native, Morris arguably was the most vocal advocate of the 1972 undefeated Dolphins team, which he led with 12 rushing touchdowns.

Freddie Salem, 71, a guitarist who played for The Outlaws, has died after a long battle with cancer. In 1973, the Akron, Ohio, native auditioned for the Chambers Brothers, a psychedelic soul group famous for the song "Time Has Come Today." The 19-year-old landed the gig and hit the road for the next year and a half. At age 23, Salem joined The Outlaws, best known today for the Top 40 hits "There Goes Another Love Song" and "Ghost Riders in the Sky," and the FM classics "Green Grass & High Tides" and "Hurry Sundown."

David Charles Smith, 93, a one-time business editor at the Detroit Free Press who was part of a team that won a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of the city's 1967 riot, died at his home Sept. 19 with his wife of 67 years, Isabelle, at his side, according to his family obituary. Early in his career, Smith worked as a columnist for the Detroit Times, the Toledo Blade and The Wall Street Journal. He took a job as business and financial editor at the Free Press in 1964.

Maggie Smith, 89, the trailblazing British actress best known for her starring roles in "Harry Potter" and "Downton Abbey," died Friday at a London hospital, her sons said in a statement provided to USA TODAY. Her career spanned generations and countless memorable roles, including an Academy Award in 1969 for "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" and another Oscar in 1978 for her performance in "California Suite." Other critically acclaimed roles included Lady Bracknell in Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" on the West End stage, a 92-year-old bitterly fighting senility in Edward Albee's play "Three Tall Women," and her part in 2001 black comedy movie "Gosford Park." In 1990, Smith was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.

– USA TODAY Network and Reuters

Some parts of Kathmandu, Nepal, reported up to 12.68 inches of rain, officials say. NAVESH CHITRAKAR/REUTERS

Officials: At least 66 dead in Nepal floods, landslides

Gopal Sharma
REUTERS

KATHMANDU, Nepal – At least 66 people have been killed in Nepal since early on Friday as persistent downpours triggered flooding and landslides, closing major roads and disrupting domestic air travel, officials said on Saturday.

The death toll could rise, they added, with another 69 people reported missing, and 60 injured since Friday morning, home ministry official Dil Kumar Tamang told Reuters.

Most of the deaths took place in the Kathmandu valley, which is home to 4 million people and the country's capital, where the flooding brought traffic and normal activity to a standstill.

Rescue workers used helicopters and rubber boats to help people stranded on rooftops or elevated ground as some parts of Kathmandu reported up to 12.68 inches of rain over the last day.

Most rivers in the Himalayan nation have swollen, spilling over roads and bridges, authorities said, after nearly a week's delay in the retreat of South Asia's annual monsoon rains brought torrential downpours across the region.

Police were working to clear debris and reopen roads after landslides blocked highways in 28 places, said police spokesperson Dan Bahadur Karki.

The earliest let-up in the rains might not come until Sunday, said Binu Maharjan, a weather forecasting official in Kathmandu, who said a low pressure system over parts of neighboring India had caused this year's extended rains.

"Heavy rains are likely to continue until Sunday morning and weather is likely to clear after that," Maharjan told Reuters.

Most central and eastern areas had received moderate to extremely heavy rainfall, ranging from 2 inches to more than 8 inches, she added, with moderate levels recorded elsewhere.

International flights are operating, but many domestic flights have been disrupted, said Rinji Sherpa, a spokesperson for Kathmandu airport.

The Koshi River in the southeast, which causes deadly floods in India's eastern neighboring state of Bihar almost every year, was running above the danger level at 450,000 cusecs, versus the normal figure of 150,000 cusecs, one official said.

A cusec is a measurement of water flow equivalent to one cubic foot a second.

The river level is still rising, added Ram Chandra Tiwari, the area's top bureaucrat.

Hundreds of people die in the monsoon season every year in the landslides and flash floods common in the mountainous nation.

Daughter of late Greek king weds in Athens

Alkis Konstantinidis
REUTERS

ATHENS, Greece – Princess Theodora of Greece and Denmark, the youngest daughter of the late King of Greece Constantine II, married her fiance in an Orthodox ceremony in Athens on Saturday.

Royals from both countries joined the service at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Athens, where the funeral service for Constantine II, Greece's last king and second cousin of Britain's King Charles III, was held in January 2023.

Dozens of onlookers and enthusiastic admirers of the Greek royal family lined the streets outside the cathedral to watch Theodora, 41, in a white embroidered dress with a long veil attached to a tiara, walk down the aisle escorted by her older brother Pavlos, to marry Matthew Kumar, a Los Angeles-based lawyer.

Among the guests was Spain's former Queen Sofia, paternal aunt of Theodora.

"The couple's desire to have their wedding in Athens reflects their love for Greece, the strong ties they maintain with the country and their desire to share Greek culture and hospitality and identity with their guests," the Greek royal family said in a statement published on its website on Friday.

Princess Theodora of Greece and Denmark and American lawyer Matthew Kumar exit the Metropolitan Cathedral of Athens after their wedding ceremony on Saturday. ALKIS KONSTANTINIDIS/REUTERS

Constantine II was 27 and had been king for three years when he was forced into exile in 1967. The junta who seized power that year abolished the monarchy in 1973 and a referendum in 1974 rejected the monarchy again.

Born in London and holder of a bachelor degree in theater arts, Theodora moved to Los Angeles in 2010 to become an actress. She made her debut in the TV soap opera "The Bold and the Beautiful" a year later.

SUNDAY TALK SHOWS

Washington Journal (C-SPAN)

Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia Center for Politics, discusses "campaign 2024 and political news of the day."

This Week with George Stephanopoulos (ABC)

Interviews House Majority Whip Tom Emmer, R-Minn., Jeff Flake, former U.S. ambassador to Turkey, and John Kirby, coordinator for strategic communications at the National Security Council. ABC's Martha Raddatz reports from near the Israel-Lebanon border to speak with residents there "reacting to the escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah." A political roundtable with Wall Street Journal national politics reporter Vivian Salama; Politico senior Washington correspondent Rachael Bade; Susan Glasser, a staff writer at The New Yorker; and Politico senior political columnist Jonathan Martin.

Fox News Sunday with Shannon Bream (FOX)

Interviews with FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell, Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., and Sen. Katie Britt, R-Ala. A political roundtable with USA Today White House correspondent Francesca Chambers; Mollie Hemingway, editor-in-chief at The Federalist; Mario Parker, managing editor for U.S. economy and government at Bloomberg News; and Kevin Walling, a former 2020 Biden-Harris campaign surrogate. Actor Scott Bakula discusses playing Abraham Lincoln in the show "Mister Lincoln."

State of the Union with Jake Tapper and Dana Bash (CNN)

Interviews with Gov. JB Pritzker, D-Ill. and Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-S.C. A political roundtable with Ashley Etienne, former communications director for Vice President Kamala Harris; Erin Perrine, former director of press communications for the Trump 2020 presidential campaign; Karen Finney, former senior spokesperson and adviser for the 2016 Hillary Clinton campaign; and Scott Jennings, former special assistant to President George W. Bush.

Meet the Press with Kristen Welker (NBC)

Interviews with Sens. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Mark Kelly, D-Ariz. NBC News national political correspondent Steve Kornacki discusses the results of a new NBC News/Telemundo/CNBC Latino poll. A discussion with Dan Slepian, author "Letters from Sing Sing: One Journalist, Six Innocent Men, and a 20 Year Fight for Justice"; and JJ Velazquez, who was granted clemency in 2021 after serving after nearly 24 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. A political roundtable with former DHS secretary Jeh Johnson; Danielle Pletka, senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute; Noticias Telemundo anchor Julio Vaqueiro; and NBC News senior White House correspondent Kelly O'Donnell.

Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan (CBS)

Interviews with Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark.; Rep. Madeleine Dean, D-Pa.; former Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate; and retired Gen. Stan McChrystal, former commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, who has endorsed Kamala Harris for president.

Reuters

David Hester inspects the damage in Horseshoe Beach, Fla. A total of 11 people died in the state, Gov. Ron DeSantis said. CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Helene death toll rises to at least 47 across several states

Rich McKay and Joseph Ax and Andrew Hay
REUTERS

ATLANTA – Authorities across the southeastern U.S. faced the daunting task on Saturday of cleaning up from Hurricane Helene, one of the most powerful and perhaps costliest to hit the country, as the death toll continued to rise.

At least 47 deaths were reported by Saturday, and officials feared still more bodies would be discovered across several states.

Damage estimates across the storm's rampage range between $95 billion and $110 billion, potentially making this one of the most expensive storms in modern U.S. history, said AccuWeather chief meteorologist Jonathan Porter.

Downgraded late on Friday to a post-tropical cyclone, the remnants of Helene continued to produce heavy rains across several states, sparking massive flooding that threatened to cause dam failures that could inundate entire towns.

"The devastation we're witnessing in Hurricane Helene's wake has been overwhelming," President Joe Biden said on Saturday. "Jill and I continue to pray for all of those who have lost loved ones and for everyone impacted by this storm."

Biden was briefed about the loss of life and storm's impact on multiple states by Deanne Criswell, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Liz Sherwood-Randall, the White House's homeland security adviser, the White House said.

The president directed them to continue to focus on speeding up support to storm survivors and accelerating recovery efforts, including the immediate deployment of additional search and rescue teams into North Carolina, it added.

At least 3 million customers remained without power on Saturday afternoon across five states, with authorities warning it could be several days before services were fully restored. The worst outages were in South Carolina with more than 1 million homes and businesses without power, and Georgia with 750,000 without power.

Some of the worst rains hit western North Carolina, which saw almost 30 inches fall on Mount Mitchell in Yancey County, the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center reported.

Atlanta was hit with 13 inches of rain, and in South Georgia farmers were assessing the damages to the state's $1 billion cotton crop and $400 million pecan crop now in harvest season.

Before moving north through Georgia and into Tennessee and the Carolinas, Helene hit Florida's Big Bend region as a powerful Category 4 hurricane on Thursday night, packing 140 mph winds. It left behind a chaotic landscape of overturned boats in harbors, felled trees, submerged cars and flooded streets.

Police and firefighters carried out thousands of water rescues throughout the affected states on Friday.

More than 50 people were rescued from the roof of a hospital in Unicoi County, Tennessee, about 120 miles northeast of Knoxville, state officials said, after flood waters swamped the rural community.

The National Weather Service issued flash flood warnings overnight for a swath of eastern Tennessee covering 100,000 residents, warning them to seek higher ground. The Nolichucky Dam in Tennessee's Greene County was on the brink of failure on Saturday, officials reported, adding that a breach could occur at any time.

Scott Richardson surveys his collapsed house in Boone, N.C., on Saturday in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. JONATHAN DRAKE/REUTERS

In western North Carolina, Rutherford County emergency officials warned residents near the Lake Lure Dam that it might fail, although they said late on Friday that did not appear imminent.

Multiple people in and around Chimney Rock, North Carolina, described the downtown as washed out, with images online showing inches of mud and sediment, uprooted trees and snapped telephone poles and buildings turned into debris.

"All right folks, listen up, Chimney Rock is gone, Flowering Bridge is gone," said poster Touristpov on TikTok, showing videos of the destruction. "I don't know what they'll do to get us out of here."

In nearby Buncombe County, landslides forced interstate highways 40 and 26 to close and parts of the highways were washed out, the county said on X.

Mountain communities such as Boone and Burnsville in North Carolina were cut off as highways were clogged with debris or washed out, said Rebecca Newton, who was scrambling to find anyone with cell service in the area who could check on her family home near Mount Mitchell.

"Towns are totally cut off," she said after spending her morning making dozens of calls to friends in the area. "They're using helicopters to get people out of Boone and Asheville."

Boats are piled up in front of homes in Treasure Island, Fla., on Saturday after Hurricane Helene hit the area.
JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

"Spruce Pine is gone, nothing but rooftops poking out of water," she said of the mountain community about 50 miles northeast of Asheville.

Newton said a friend told her she had watched houses in her neighborhood slide one at a time into a river near Boone.

"It's unreal," she said.

The Burnsville Hub Facebook page is replete with people desperate to find anyone to check on relatives and friends cut off from telephone service.

One poster, Rachel Richmond, wrote, "I need any route that will get me as close as I can. I will walk the rest of the way. I need to get to my parents."

Waking to disaster

The extent of the damage in Florida began emerging after daybreak on Friday.

In coastal Steinhatchee, a storm surge – a wall of seawater pushed ashore by winds – of 8 feet to 10 feet moved mobile homes, NWS said. In Treasure Island, a barrier island community in Pinellas County, boats were grounded in front yards.

The city of Tampa posted on X that emergency personnel had completed 78 water rescues of residents and that many roads were impassable because of flooding. The Pasco County sheriff's office rescued more than 65 people.

A total of 11 people died in Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis said Saturday, speaking in Perry, which saw 15-foot storm surges, larger than hurricanes in recent years.

"If you look around here, you can see that some homes are just rubble," he said. "This stuff comes in, it's fierce and it's just unstoppable."

Criswell, the FEMA director, joined DeSantis touring storm damaged areas of the state.

"I just want to say on behalf of the president that we extend our deepest sympathies for those families that have lost loved ones," Criswell said.

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp's office reported 15 storm-related fatalities in that state, while North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said there had been two deaths there.

At least 19 people died during the storm across South Carolina, the Charleston-based Post and Courier newspaper reported, citing local officials.

IN BRIEF

Steward Health CEO who refused to testify to Senate will step down

WASHINGTON – Ralph de la Torre will step down as CEO of troubled Steward Health Care this week, the company said on Saturday, after he was held in criminal contempt by the U.S. Senate for refusing to testify about cost-cutting decisions at the group's 31 hospitals before it filed for bankruptcy.

In a statement, the Dallas-based company said de la Torre would no longer serve as its CEO and chairman as of Oct. 1 as part of an agreement in principle reached earlier this month.

A spokesperson for de la Torre confirmed that the former heart surgeon "has amicably separated from Steward on mutually agreeable terms," and "he will continue to be a tireless advocate for the improvement of reimbursement rates for the underprivileged patient population."

The Senate unanimously voted on Wednesday to hold de la Torre in criminal contempt of Congress after he declined to attend a Sept. 12 hearing before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, which was probing Steward's financial troubles. De la Torre had been subpoenaed to attend the hearing.

Steward, the largest privately owned hospital network in the U.S., filed for bankruptcy in May, seeking to sell all of its hospitals and address $9 billion in debt. The company has sold several hospitals since that filing.

At least 9 dead after migrant boat capsizes in Spain's Canary Islands

MADRID – At least nine migrants died and 48 are missing after their boat capsized early on Saturday near the Spanish island of El Hierro, rescue services said, in what threatens to be the deadliest such incident in 30 years of such crossings to the Canary Islands.

The emergency services were able to rescue 27 of 84 migrants who were trying to reach the Spanish coast, they added.

Spanish authorities said the migrants were from Mali, Mauritania and Senegal.

The rescue team received a call shortly after midnight local time from the boat, which was located around four miles east of El Hierro. It sank during the rescue, they said.

6 have died of Marburg virus in Rwanda, health minister says

KIGALI, Rwanda – Rwanda has confirmed six deaths and 20 cases of Marburg disease since the beginning of the epidemic, the country's health minister Sabin Nsanzimana said late on Saturday.

The majority of victims are health workers in the intensive care unit, Nsanzimana said in a video statement posted on X.

Marburg disease, a viral hemorrhagic fever, can cause death among some patients, with symptoms including severe headache, vomiting, muscle aches and stomach aches, the ministry has said.

Institutions and partners are working to trace those who have been in contact with the virus-affected individuals, the minister added.

With a fatality rate as high as 88%, Marburg is from the same virus family as the one responsible for Ebola and is transmitted to people from fruit bats. It then spreads through contact with bodily fluids of infected people.

Moldovan broadcaster's building defaced ahead of election

CHISINAU, Moldova – Moldova's state-owned broadcaster said on Saturday that vandals had poured paint across an entrance to its building in the capital, Chisinau, a day after police blamed similar incidents on a group trained in Moscow to destabilize upcoming elections.

"We are not afraid of this act of vandalism, as long as we are devoted to society and citizens," said Andrei Zapsa, Teleradio-Moldova's deputy director general, adding that the station had always known it could be targeted by "radical groups."

Paint was also poured on the Supreme Court building overnight, police said.

Moldovan authorities have linked such incidents to a group trained in Moscow to provoke instability ahead of a presidential poll next month in which pro-European incumbent, President Maia Sandu, is favored to beat a field of 10 challengers.

Sandu's opponents are led by Alexander Stoianoglo, who was dismissed from his position as prosecutor general and is backed by pro-Russian opposition parties, and Renato Usatii, who favors good links with both the West and Moscow.

Reuters

Wall Street executives wary of Trump and Harris

Many still weighing their economic policies

Michelle Price, Carolina Mandl and Lananh Nguyen
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Many Wall Street executives have reservations about backing either candidate in the U.S. presidential election, worried that former President Donald Trump's policies will hurt the economy but wary Vice President Kamala Harris will lean too far left.

While multiple Wall Street heavyhitters including Bill Ackman, John Paulson and George Soros have backed a candidate, many other senior executives are still weighing the economic policies central to the closely fought race and the ramifications for legal and democratic institutions, according to conversations with two dozen executives in recent weeks.

Despite a track record implementing Wall Street-friendly measures, Republican candidate Trump's policies threaten to create economic and policy instability, many executives said.

While Harris would be a safe pair of hands, she has only been the Democratic candidate since late July when President Joe Biden exited the race and remains a big unknown, they said. Many worry the vice president will continue Biden's regulatory crackdown on lucrative Wall Street businesses.

Among the executives were Republican and Democrat supporters, including a handful who are publicly backing Trump or Harris, and others with no obvious partisan affiliation.

"Most expect Trump to continue where he left off, which is certainly more populist, protectionist and aggressively deregulatory," said Bruce Mehlman, partner at bipartisan lobbying firm Mehlman Consulting with clients in all sectors.

"But they're eager to better understand who Harris is and what she believes," Mehlman said.

As with his first presidency, Trump is promising to cut taxes and regulations, but most executives said the benefits could be erased by his planned import tariffs which could spark inflation, while tax cuts could widen the U.S. deficit. Trump ramped up his planned tariffs in comments last week.

> **"Most expect Trump to continue where he left off, which is certainly more populist, protectionist and aggressively deregulatory."**
> **Bruce Mehlman**
> Partner at Mehlman Consulting

> **"I would say financial services voters are split pretty evenly." But many will vote "with their hearts" for Harris.**
> **Michael Bright**
> Chief executive of Structured Finance Association

Karoline Leavitt, Trump campaign National Press Secretary, said in a statement that Wall Street investors want Trump to win because they remember that his policies "fueled growth, drove down inflation, and kept more money in everyone's pockets."

Billionaire investor and Trump backer Paulson told Reuters on the sidelines of a September New York event at which Trump outlined his economic plan that tariffs would boost revenues, helping to reduce the deficit.

Harris' plan, which analysts predict would be better for the economy, calls for hiking taxes, likely denting company earnings and stocks but partly offsetting an expected widening of the deficit. She has said little on financial policy but has touted her tough stance on banks as a former prosecutor and said she will continue Biden's assault on hidden bank fees.

A Harris spokesperson pointed Reuters to endorsements by hundreds of economists and CEOs.

In an email to Reuters, billionaire entrepreneur and Harris backer Mark Cuban noted that stocks rose when company taxes were higher, adding: "Anything that is a step towards reducing the deficit is a plus." But he said that both candidates are making promises they may not be able to keep. "Neither candidate's policies have any details about how they would get passed."

For many firms, a Harris White House and Republican Senate, which would block tax increases and force Harris to pick moderates for top jobs, is the best-case scenario.

So far, donors tied to the securities and investment sectors have given $8.7 million to the Biden/Harris campaign versus about $3 million to Trump, data from nonpartisan donations tracker OpenSecrets as of Aug. 21 shows. Those contributions, capped in the thousands of dollars, come from individuals and political action committees and are not comprehensive because there are several other ways to route cash to support candidates.

In a nod to the policy whiplash and personnel churn of Trump's first presidency, his felony conviction and role in the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, some executives also worried Trump would undermine Democracy and the rule of law. A few flagged concerns about his stances on Federal Reserve independence, immigration and abortion.

Michael Bright, chief executive of the Structured Finance Association, a Washington lobby group representing lenders and investors, said that in addition to Jan. 6, some of his members had soured on Trump due to his role in helping to overturn federal abortion rights when president.

"I would say financial services voters are split pretty evenly," said Bright, whom Trump nominated in 2018 to run government housing agency Ginnie Mae. Many will vote "with their hearts" for Harris, he added.

The role of populism in personnel picks was another theme. Several executives fretted Harris would stick with Biden's progressive agency heads, although a few said they believe she may be friendlier to the industry than Biden. "She is practical and pragmatic," said Jon Henes, Harris' national campaign finance chair in 2020 and CEO of corporate consultancy C Street Advisory Group, adding Harris believes in sensible regulation that allows for transparency and certainty.

A more populist Trump and Republican Party may pick inexperienced loyalists hostile to Wall Street to lead the agencies, some executives said, although others believe he would pick traditional industry conservatives.

Supporters of former President Donald Trump listen during a campaign event in Prairie du Chien, Wis., on Saturday. Because of security concerns, the event was moved to an indoor facility. TIM EVANS/REUTERS

Trump

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Trump's speech was in the small Wisconsin city of Prairie du Chien, where a Venezuelan who was in the U.S. illegally was detained in September for allegedly sexually assaulting a woman and attacking her daughter.

Some 7 million migrants have been arrested crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally during Biden's administration, according to government data, a record high number that has fueled criticism of Harris and Biden from Trump and fellow Republicans.

In her visit to the border on Friday, Harris outlined her plans to fix "our broken immigration system" while accusing Trump of "fanning the flames of fear and division" over the impact of immigrants on American life.

Harris also called for tighter asylum restrictions and vowed to make a "top priority" of stopping fentanyl from entering the U.S.

Trump also repeated his false claim that his 2020 election defeat to Biden was fraudulent.

If reelected, and "if allowed," Trump said he would prosecute people he blames for his loss then.

Studies generally find there is no evidence immigrants commit crimes at a higher rate than native-born Americans and critics say Trump's rhetoric reinforces racist tropes.

Trump typically focuses on young women allegedly killed by Hispanic assailants to drive home that message, eschewing cases that involve male victims.

Trump's opponents accuse him of cynically exploiting grieving families to fuel his narrative that foreign-born, often Hispanic, arrivals are part of an invading army.

But some of the families of the victims have welcomed Trump's focus on the issue of violent crime and the death toll of teenagers caused by the opioid drug fentanyl, much of which crosses into the U.S. over the southern border.

Several parents who had lost children to attacks by immigrants in the U.S. illegally, or to fentanyl, spoke in support of the former president before his remarks on Saturday.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Switzerland praises China-led plan

Kyiv expresses disappointment in position

Emma Farge
REUTERS

GENEVA – Switzerland's foreign affairs ministry voiced support for a Chinese-led peace plan to end the Ukraine war, saying on Saturday that its view on such efforts had significantly changed, a position Kyiv said was disappointing and illogical.

With Russia's invasion of Ukraine in its third year, the two sides to the conflict remain far apart on any future path to peace. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is pursuing a "victory plan," while Russian President Vladimir Putin says any negotiations can only begin if Kyiv abandons vast swaths of territory and drops its bid to join NATO.

Ukraine's foreign ministry responded to the Swiss move, releasing a statement saying Zelenskyy's peace formula was "the only way to a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace."

It said Ukraine and Switzerland were still working to collect signatories for the communique arising from a global peace summit in June. "We cannot understand the logic of such a decision," the foreign ministry added.

Conflict mediator Switzerland, which hosted the June summit in Buergenstock, attended a 17-nation meeting on Friday on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly chaired by China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, and Brazilian foreign policy adviser Celso Amorim.

"We took part in this meeting as an observer and we support this dynamic," Nicolas Bideau, chief spokesperson for the Foreign Affairs Ministry, told Reuters. Bideau said Switzerland's view of the Chinese plan first issued in May has shifted since a reference was added to the U.N. Charter – the founding treaty of the global body which commits nations to upholding peace.

"For us, this translates into a significant change in our view of these initiatives," Bideau said. "A concrete diplomatic effort organized by the Sino-Brazilian group could be of interest to us."

The Buergenstock summit, to which Russia was not invited, was seen by some foreign policy experts as a Western-led effort to isolate Moscow and drew allegations that it was straying from its centuries' old tradition of neutrality. Since then, diplomats say Bern has been pursuing talks to find a host for a sequel summit, with "Global South" countries seen as the main candidates.

The Ukrainian foreign ministry restated its adherence to the principles of "nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine," and that proposals had to be based on the UN Charter and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within internationally recognized borders.

It called on Switzerland "and all countries that support international law and the UN Charter" not to participate in initiatives that "can only complicate the process of achieving a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace for Ukraine."

"Those initiatives that do not recognize the fact of Russia's unprovoked armed aggression against Ukraine, equate the victim and the aggressor, propose deescalation at the expense of Ukraine's sovereignty and territories, cannot be supported by Ukraine," it added.

Ukraine's foreign ministry said President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's peace formula was "the only way to a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace." MICHAEL LOCCISANO/GETTY IMAGES

Zelenskyy says Trump assured him of support for Ukraine

REUTERS

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in an interview with Fox News aired on Saturday, said he received "very direct information" from Donald Trump that the former U.S. president would support Ukraine in the war against Russia if he is reelected in the November election.

Zelenskyy, who was in the United States for the U.N. General Assembly, presented his war "victory plan" to Trump during a closed-door meeting on Friday, after the Republican presidential candidate said he would work with both Ukraine and Russia to end their conflict.

Speaking to Fox News after that meeting, Zelenskyy said: "I don't know what will be after elections and who will be the president... But I've got from Donald Trump very direct information that he will be on our side, that he will support Ukraine."

He has used his U.S. visit to promote his "victory plan," which a U.S. official described as a repackaged request for more weapons and a lifting of restrictions on the use of long-range missiles. The plan presupposes the ultimate defeat of Russia in the war, the official said. Some officials see the aim as unrealistic.

Zelenskyy, who also met with Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris and President Joe Biden, said he was seeking united U.S. support in its continuing war with Russia and was not backing either side in U.S. elections. "I don't want to be involved to the election period ... I don't want to lose one or another part of Americans," Zelenskyy told Fox News.

On Friday, Trump said he was pleased to meet with Zelenskyy, a marked change in tone from some of his previous comments on the campaign trail.

Trump and Harris' differences on Ukraine echo splits in their respective Democratic and Republican parties, and their view of the U.S. role in the world.

Trump and some Republicans in Congress have questioned the value of U.S. funding and additional weapons for Ukraine's battle against Russia, calling it futile, while Democrats led by Biden have pushed to punish Russia and bolster Ukraine, framing Ukraine's victory as a vital national security interest.

Putin

Continued from Page 1NN

internal affairs minister, said on X.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Putin's warning was irresponsible and poorly timed, and that it was not the first time he had been "rattling the nuclear saber."

Andreas Umland, an analyst at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, accused Putin of playing mind games.

"This is a psychological PR operation, by the Kremlin, without much substance. It is designed to scare leaders & voters of countries supporting Ukraine," he wrote.

Fabian Hoffmann, a doctoral research fellow and defense expert in Oslo, said he did not believe Putin's comments could be ignored, but that it was important not to overreact.

"Russian nuclear use is not imminent," he said on X. "Concern is warranted only when Russia signals actual preparations."

Hoffmann said next steps could be removing warheads from storage and pairing them with delivery vehicles for a tactical strike, before ratcheting up preparations for large-scale nuclear use by readying silos and putting bombers on alert – all of which U.S. intelligence agencies would detect.

And Russia security expert Mark Galeotti wrote: "Talk is easy and has political impact, but evidence of actual willingness to use nuclear weapons is both absent and something we can detect if it ever happens."

Lower threshold

Nevertheless, Putin was more specific than in the past about the circumstances that could prompt nuclear use. His spokesman said on Thursday that his comments were meant as a signal to Western countries that there would be serious consequences if they participated in attacks on Russia.

At the same time, the announced changes fell short of what some hawkish commentators have been calling for. The best-known of them, Sergei Karaganov, has argued for a limited nuclear strike in Europe that would "sober up" Russia's enemies and make them take its nuclear deterrent seriously.

In practical terms, the changes extend Russia's nuclear umbrella to cover neighboring Belarus, a close ally. They lower the threshold for nuclear use by stating, for example, that it could happen in response to a conventional strike that posed a "critical threat to our sovereignty."

Previously, the nuclear doctrine talked about a threat to "the very existence of the state."

Putin made the announcement in a four-minute video in which he was seen addressing the nine members of a security council that meets twice-yearly to discuss nuclear deterrence.

He said nuclear use was an extreme measure and Russia had always approached the issue responsibly.

Ministers and intelligence chiefs listened intently, occasionally fidgeting or shuffling papers. One participant – Alexei Likhachev, head of state nuclear corporation Rosatom – took detailed notes. But the real addressees of Putin's message were in Kyiv, Washington and London.

Yevgeny Minchenko, a Russian political consultant, said the thrust of the revised doctrine was a blunt message to Ukraine and the West not to escalate the war further into Russia.

"If you try to kill us with your proxy's hands, we will kill both your proxy and you," was the message, he said.

Sergei Markov, a former Kremlin adviser, said the changes opened the door to Russia using tactical nuclear battlefield weapons in certain scenarios, namely against Ukraine.

"The threshold for the use of nuclear weapons has been lowered. Now it will be easier for Russia to use nuclear weapons," Markov said on his official blog.

"The reason for changing the nuclear doctrine was the threat of a full escalation by the West. The West is sure that Russia will not use tactical nuclear weapons first. Russia is now saying it is ready to do so."

Markov suggested Russia could use tactical nuclear weapons against Ukraine, or air bases in Romania or Poland if Ukrainian warplanes flew sorties from there and if Kyiv – backed by U.S. or British satellite support – used the jets to strike Moscow itself or parts of central Russia.

'No respect'

Igor Korotchenko, a military analyst who often appears on state TV, said the changes were necessary because the West had ignored a slew of previous warning signals against further escalation, including Russian exercises in the summer rehearsing the use of tactical nuclear arms.

A Russian intercontinental ballistic missile system drives past an honor guard during a military parade in Moscow's Red Square in 2022. President Vladimir Putin said nuclear use was an extreme measure and Russia had always approached the issue responsibly. MAXIM SHEMETOV/REUTERS FILE

"We see that Western adversaries no longer respect any 'red lines,' believing that any acts to arm Ukraine and Western-assisted strikes against facilities deep inside Russian territory will not be met with nuclear escalation," Korotchenko told the daily Izvestia newspaper.

Vladimir Avatkov, who sits on an official body that offers advice to Putin on international relations, said announcing the changes to the doctrine had allowed Moscow to get ahead of any Western decision on missiles for Ukraine.

"Let them think now," he said on Telegram. "This is an attempt to not just warn them, but to give them back the fear that they have completely lost. And perhaps even some strategic thinking."

The changes were strongly welcomed by Russian nationalists and war bloggers, some of whom have long advocated Moscow use nuclear weapons to force a Ukrainian capitulation, and led to a discussion about what could trigger a nuclear response.

Dmitry Medvedev, deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council and a former president, warned that Putin's words should give Ukraine and the West pause for thought.

"The very change in the regulatory conditions for our country's use of nuclear components may cool the fervor of those opponents who have not yet lost their sense of self-preservation," he said in a statement.

Sokov, the former Russian diplomat, said there was a palpable sense of frustration in Moscow that the West appeared deaf to its many nuclear warnings.

He said that when Russia staged three rounds of exercises this year to simulate preparations for the launch of tactical nuclear missiles, there were complaints in the media and among experts that Western countries were not paying attention.

"So now they decided to strengthen the signal," Sokov said. "Putin decided the West is like small kids, and you have to explain every small thing because they just don't get it."

Sokov said he was concerned about "loose talk" among politicians and commentators who argue that the West has crossed a series of Russian red lines with impunity – by supplying Ukraine with tanks and F-16 fighter jets, for example – and that Moscow's warnings can therefore be ignored.

In fact, he said, the West had yet to breach two red lines that Russia had spelled out clearly: sending NATO troops to fight in Ukraine, and letting Ukraine fire Western long-range missiles into Russia.

"How can we say how (Putin) is going to react, if so far we have not actually crossed any Russian red lines?" he said in a phone interview, arguing that such an approach was based on guesswork, not data.

CRISIS IN MIDDLE EAST

Biden: Nasrallah's death is 'measure of justice'

Andrea Shalal
REUTERS

REHOBOTH BEACH, Del. – President Joe Biden on Saturday called Israel's killing of Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah "a measure of justice" for his many victims, and said Washington fully supported Israel's right to defend itself against Iran-supported groups.

In a statement released by the White House, Biden said he had directed Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to further enhance the defense posture of U.S. military forces in the Middle East to deter aggression and reduce the risk of a broader war.

Ultimately, Biden said, the U.S. aimed to deescalate ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon through diplomatic means. Israel on Thursday rejected global calls for a cease-fire with the Iran-backed Hezbollah movement, defying Washington and pressing ahead with strikes that have killed hundreds in Lebanon and heightened fears of an all-out regional war.

"It's time for a cease-fire," Biden said, when asked by reporters in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, on Saturday if an Israeli ground incursion into Lebanon was inevitable.

In the White House statement, Biden underscored his full-throated support for Israel's strike on Nasrallah, which occurred while Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was in New York for the United Nations General Assembly and Biden and others were trying to broker a cease-fire deal.

"Hassan Nasrallah and the terrorist group he led, Hezbollah, were responsible for killing hundreds of Americans over a four-decade reign of terror. His death from an Israeli airstrike is a measure of justice for his many victims, including thousands of Americans, Israelis, and Lebanese civilians," Biden said.

Biden

He noted that Nasrallah had also supported Hamas the day after its attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas gunmen killed some 1,200 people and abducted about 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies. Since then, Israel's military has leveled swaths of Gaza, driving nearly all of its 2.3 million people from their homes, giving rise to deadly hunger and disease and killing more than 41,000 people, according to Palestinian health authorities.

Biden administration officials have pushed unsuccessfully for months to end the Gaza war, and more recently, to halt the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, which flared after hand-held radios and pagers used by Hezbollah detonated, killing dozens and injuring nearly 3,000.

"The United States fully supports Israel's right to defend itself against Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis, and any other Iranian-supported terrorist groups," Biden said in the statement, issued as he spent the weekend at his vacation home.

"It is time for these deals to close, for the threats to Israel to be removed, and for the broader Middle East region to gain greater stability," he said.

Biden spoke briefly with reporters after convening a call with Vice President Kamala Harris and other top national security for an update on the situation in the Middle East and to review the status of U.S. military in the region.

He said the U.S. was seeking diplomatic solutions to end the conflicts, but stopped short of criticizing Israel's actions.

"It is time for these deals to close, for the threats to Israel to be removed, and for the broader Middle East region to gain greater stability," he said.

Biden also told reporters the U.S. was responding to missile attacks on U.S. warships in the Red Sea by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis, but gave no details.

The escalation has increased fears the conflict could spin out of control, potentially drawing in Iran, Hezbollah's principal backer, as well as the U.S.

Biden told reporters on Friday, before Hezbollah confirmed Nasrallah's death, that the U.S. had no knowledge of or participation in the Israeli military action that killed the militant leader.

Over 600 people have been killed in Lebanon since Monday.

Biden did not address the civilian deaths or comments from Iranian officials saying Nasrallah's death would be avenged.

The president's failure to condemn Israel's killing of hundreds of civilians in Lebanon could drive a further wedge between Democrats and the Arab American and Muslim communities, said Abbas Alawieh, co-founder of the Uncommitted National Movement that mobilized over 750,000 voters to protest Biden's handling of the Gaza war during the Democratic primaries.

Harris, who became the Democratic nominee after Biden stepped aside, is running neck-and-neck with former President Donald Trump and the election could be decided in a handful of states with large Arab American or Muslim communities.

"President Biden and Vice President Harris aren't just ignoring Arab, Muslim, and anti-war voters in Michigan – they're pushing them away," Alawieh said. "Every hour, I get messages from my family in Lebanon, asking when the American-funded bombs will stop."

Harris, in California for two campaign fundraisers, echoed Biden's support for Nasrallah's killing in a separate statement and reiterated her "unwavering" commitment to Israel's security.

"President Biden and I do not want to see conflict in the Middle East escalate into a broader regional war," the Democratic presidential candidate said. "Diplomacy remains the best path forward to protect civilians and achieve lasting stability in the region."

Hezbollah

Continued from Page 1NN

underground headquarters below a residential building in southern Beirut.

"This is a massive blow and intelligence failure for Hezbollah," Magnus Ranstorp, a veteran Hezbollah expert at the Swedish Defence University. "They knew that he was meeting. He was meeting with other commanders. And they just went for him."

Including Nasrallah, Israel's military says it has killed eight of Hezbollah's nine most senior military commanders this year, mostly in the past week. These commanders led units ranging from the rocket division to the elite Radwan force.

Around 1,500 Hezbollah fighters were maimed by the exploding pagers and walkie-talkies on Sept. 17 and Sept. 18.

On Saturday, Israel's military spokesperson Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani told reporters in a briefing that the military had "real-time" knowledge that Nasrallah and other leaders were gathering. Shoshani did not say how they knew, but said the leaders were meeting to plan attacks on Israel.

Brig. Gen. Amichai Levin, commander of Israel's Hatzerim Airbase, told reporters that dozens of munitions hit the target within seconds.

"The operation was complex and was planned for a long time," according to Levin.

Smoke billows over Beirut's southern suburbs on Saturday amid ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces.
MOHAMED AZAKIR/REUTERS

Depleted

Hezbollah has shown the ability to replace commanders quickly, and Nasrallah's cousin Hashem Safieddine, also a cleric who wears the black turban denoting descent from Islam's Prophet Mohammed, has long been tipped as his successor.

"You kill one, they get a new one," said a European diplomat of the group's approach. The group, whose name means Party of God, will fight on: by U.S. and Israeli estimates it had some 40,000 fighters ahead of the current escalation, along with large weapons stockpiles and an extensive tunnel network near Israel's border.

Founded in Tehran in 1982, the Shi'ite paramilitary outfit is the most formidable member of Iran's so-called Axis of Resistance of anti-Israel allied irregular forces, and a significant regional player in its own right.

But it has been materially and psychologically weakened over the past 10 days.

Thanks to decades of backing from Iran, prior to the current conflict Hezbollah was among the world's most well-armed non-conventional armies, with an arsenal of 150,000 rockets, missiles and drones, according to U.S. estimates.

That is ten times the size of the armory the group had in 2006, during its last war with Israel, according to Israeli estimates.

Over the past year, even more weapons have flowed into Lebanon from Iran, along with significant amounts of financial aid, a source familiar with Hezbollah's thinking said.

There have been few detailed public assessments of how much this arsenal has been damaged by Israel's offensive over the past week, which has hit Hezbollah strongholds in Bekka Valley, far from Lebanon's border with Israel.

One Western diplomat in the Middle East told Reuters prior to Friday's attack that Hezbollah had lost 20%-25% of its missile capacity in the ongoing conflict, including in hundreds of Israeli strikes this past week. The diplomat did not provide evidence or details of their assessment.

An Israeli security official said "a very respectable portion" of Hezbollah's missile stocks had been destroyed, without giving further specifics.

In recent days, Israel has struck more than 1,000 Hezbollah targets. The security official, when asked about the military's extensive target lists, said Israel had matched Hezbollah's two-decade build up with preparations to prevent it launching its rockets in the first place – a complement to the Iron Dome air defense system that often downs missiles fired at the Jewish state.

Israeli officials say the fact that Hezbollah has only been able to launch a couple of hundred missiles a day in the past week was evidence its capabilities had been diminished.

Iran connection

Before the strike on Nasrallah, three Iranian sources told Reuters Iran was planning to send additional missiles to Hezbollah to prepare for a prolonged war. The weapons that were to be provided included short-to-medium-range ballistic missiles including Iranian Zelzals and an upgraded precision version known as the Fateh 110, the first Iranian source said.

Reuters was unable to reach the sources after the Nasrallah assassination.

While Iran is willing to provide military support, the two Iranian sources said it does not want to be directly involved in a confrontation between Hezbollah and Israel. The rapid escalation in hostilities over the past week follows a year of skirmishes tied to the Gaza war.

Iranian Revolutionary Guards' deputy commander Abbas Nilforoushan was killed in the Israeli strikes on Beirut on Friday, Iranian media reported on Saturday, citing a state TV report.

Hezbollah may need certain warheads and missiles along with drones and missile parts to replenish those destroyed by Israeli strikes across Lebanon, a senior Syrian military intelligence source added. Iranian supplies have in the past reached Hezbollah by air and sea. On Saturday, Lebanon's transport ministry told an Iranian aircraft not to enter its airspace after Israel warned air traffic control at Beirut airport that it would use "force" if the plane landed, a source at the ministry told Reuters.

The source said it was not clear what was on the plane.

Land corridors are currently the best route for missiles, parts and drones, through Iraq and Syria, with the help of allied armed groups in those countries, an Iranian security official told Reuters last week. The Syrian military source, however, said Israeli drone surveillance and strikes targeting convoys of trucks had compromised that route. This year, Israel stepped up attacks on weapons depots and supply routes in Syria to weaken Hezbollah ahead of any war, Reuters reported in June.

As recently as August, an Israeli drone hit weapons concealed in commercial trailers in Syria, the source said. Last week, Israel's military said its warplanes bombed unspecified infrastructure used to transfer weapons to Hezbollah at the Syria-Lebanon border.

Joseph Votel, a former army general who led U.S. forces in the Middle East, said Israel and its allies could well intercept any missiles Iran sent by land to Hezbollah now.

"That might be a risk they're willing to take, frankly," he said.

SPORTS EXTRA

GOLF PRESIDENTS CUP

US heads into final day with an 11-7 lead

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

The Presidents Cup is tight going into the final day of competition after a long Saturday at Royal Montreal Golf Club.

The U.S. team regained the lead, holding an 11-7 margin on the International team.

The U.S. won the final three afternoon foursome matches. The first team to 15½ points wins.

The U.S. secured the day's final three points when par for Collin Morikawa and Sam Burns was enough on No. 18, so they won 1 up on the Canadian combination of Mackenzie Hughes and Corey Conners followed by victories for Scottie Scheffler / Russell Henley and Patrick Cantlay and Xander Schauffele.

Australia's Adam Scott and Canada's Taylor Pendrith bounced back from a rough morning session to win 2 up on Brian Harmon and Max Homa for the first point in the afternoon session.

Scheffler and Henley recovered from a 3-0 deficit through five holes to defeat Japan's Hideki Matsuyama and South Korea's Sungjae Im 3 & 2.

Scheffler struggled with the putter at times, missing from inside 6 feet on the fourth hole and from less than 4 feet on the fifth, with Matsuyama/Im winning both holes. He missed from less than 9 feet on a birdie attempt on No. 11, leaving the U.S. pair a hole behind. Scheffler and Henley won three of the next four holes, with Im's putt to extend the match lipping out.

See GOLF, Page 7NS

Collin Morikawa reacts after tossing a ball on the first green at the Presidents Cup on Saturday in Montreal. ERIC BOLTE/IMAGN IMAGES

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Alabama quarterback Jalen Milroe (4) rushes past Georgia's Malaki Starks during the second quarter of Saturday's game at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Ala. KEVIN C. COX/GETTY IMAGES

MILROE, ALABAMA HOLD OFF GEORGIA

Jalen Milroe passed for two touchdowns and rushed for two more and Zabien Brown made a game-saving interception as No. 4 Alabama recorded a wild 41-34 victory over No. 2 Georgia on Saturday night in a Southeastern Conference showdown at Tuscaloosa, Ala. Alabama blew a 28-point second-quarter lead and fell behind late before notching the winning points on Milroe's 75-yard touchdown pass to Ryan Williams with 2:18 remaining. **ROUNDUP, 3NS**

Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen scrambles against the Jacksonville Jaguars on Monday in Orchard Park, N.Y. MARK KONEZNY/IMAGN IMAGES

NFL

QB's fresh approach paying off in big way

Jarrett Bell
Columnist
USA TODAY

It's a bit early to hand over the hardware for MVP honors. But it's not too soon to declare that Buffalo Bills star Josh Allen is the leader in the clubhouse. Heading into the Sunday night showdown at the Big ATM that will feature last season's MVP, Lamar Jackson, there's no hotter quarterback in the NFL than Allen.

Again, it's early. Yet of the NFL's five remaining unbeaten teams, none have amassed the style points quite like the Bills (3-0), who are rolling into Baltimore on the heels of three consecutive blowouts and leading the NFL in averaging a whopping 37.3 points per game.

Naturally, that flow begins with one of the league's best players off to the best start of his career. Allen is the league's top-rated passer (133.7), connecting on 75% of his throws. With his dangerous dimension as a runner intact, he has an NFL-high nine total TDs. Those numbers, though, are only part of the story. Two other factors are screaming about now.

Whatever happened to the turnovers? Allen, who in his first six seasons brought additional drama by too often coughing up the football, has yet to throw an interception this season. After committing a career-high 22 turnovers in 2023, he's on the books for just one turnover (a lost fumble) for the current

See BELL, Page 2NS

NFL

NOTEBOOK

Reports: Packers' Love to start vs. Vikings

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Green Bay Packers quarterback Jordan Love is expected to start against the visiting Minnesota Vikings on Sunday, three-plus weeks after he sprained the MCL in his left knee, according to multiple reports.

Love practiced all week and was listed Friday as questionable on the injury report, the same status he had the previous two weeks but was inactive for both games.

Love, 25, said that he felt like he was "close" to being ready to start last week at Tennessee. He was limited in Friday's practice and wore a brace on his left knee.

He had four total touchdowns in his last start against the Vikings, including one on the ground.

"I'm trying to push it and I've been trying to get back as fast as I can no matter who the opponent was," Love said.

Love was 17-for-34 passing for 260 yards, two touchdowns and one interception in the season-opening 34-29 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles on Sept. 6 in Brazil. He was injured in the final seconds.

Malik Willis led the Packers to consecutive wins while Love was out, completing 73.5 percent of his passes for 324 yards with two touchdowns and no interceptions. Willis is also averaging 9.5 yards per carry, rushing for 114 yards on 12 carries.

Green Bay Packers quarterbacks Jordan Love and Malik Willis (2) watch pregame warmups last Sunday in Nashville. STEVE ROBERTS/IMAGN IMAGES

Reports: Chargers QB Herbert expected to start vs. Chiefs

Chargers quarterback Justin Herbert is preparing to play through a high-ankle sprain when the Kansas City Chiefs visit Los Angeles on Sunday, according to multiple reports.

Herbert was limited at practice for the third straight day on Friday, when the injury report listed him as questionable for the Chargers (2-1) in an AFC West Division matchup with the two-time defending Super Bowl champion Chiefs (3-0).

He also was questionable before last Sunday's game at the Pittsburgh Steelers, when he aggravated the right ankle sprain in the third quarter of the Chargers' 20-10 loss and didn't return.

Herbert, 26, sprained the ankle in a 26-3 victory over the Carolina Panthers in Week 2.

"I feel better than I did last Wednesday," Herbert said on Wednesday. "And so as long as we keep moving forward and we keep getting better, we're not taking those setbacks."

Dolphins QB Huntley to start Monday vs. Titans

Tyler "Snoop" Huntley will be the starting quarterback for the Miami Dolphins in Monday night's game against the visiting Tennessee Titans.

Huntley will make his Dolphins debut and veteran Tim Boyle will serve as his backup with Tua Tagovailoa still in the concussion protocol and Skylar Thompson dealing with a rib injury, coach Mike McDaniel confirmed.

"Snoop has started multiple and many big games," McDaniel said. "...As a quarterback, understanding exactly what is required to win over teammates to take the place of someone else and assert their own personality and skillset and traits within the offense and lead people."

Miami signed Huntley, 26, off Baltimore's practice squad on Sept. 17. He played in 20 games and made nine starts (3-6 record) for the Ravens from 2020-23.

Jaguars put standout LB Oluokun (foot) on IR

Jacksonville Jaguars star linebacker Foyesade Oluokun was placed on injured reserve due to his foot injury and will miss at least four games.

Oluokun is dealing with plantar fasciitis, an injury he aggravated during Monday's 47-10 loss to the Buffalo Bills. The earliest he can return is Week 8 when the Jaguars face the Green Bay Packers on Oct. 27.

Oluokun, 29, leads Jacksonville with 22 tackles and has been one of the top defensive players in the NFL over the past four-plus seasons. He led the NFL with 184 tackles in 2022 and racked up 173 last season.

Browns place OT Brown (knee) on IR, ending his season

The Cincinnati Bengals placed starting right tackle Trent Brown on injured reserve, and he will miss the rest of the season because of a torn patellar tendon in his right knee.

Brown was injured during the second quarter of Cincinnati's 38-33 loss to the Washington Commanders on Monday. He was replaced by Cincinnati's first-round pick, Amarius Mims, who made his NFL debut earlier in the game.

Mims, 21, is expected to start for the Bengals (0-3) in place of Brown, who missed practice all week and had been ruled out of Sunday's game against the host Carolina Panthers (1-2).

Bell

Continued from Page 1

campaign.

Also striking is that Allen, who fired four of his seven TDs passes during the first half against Jacksonville on Monday night, is off to his blazing start without having the presence of Stefon Diggs. The Bills traded their erstwhile No. 1 receiver to the Houston Texans in April, getting a 2025 second-round pick in return. While Diggs is off to a strong start with Houston, he hasn't been missed much in Buffalo. Allen completed passes to 10 different targets on Monday night – with four different players hauling in the scoring strikes.

The makeover of the Bills' receivers corps without Diggs and Gabe Davis, a free agency departure, has underscored Allen's growth in a diversified offense. Sure, third-year pro Khalil Shakir, a blazer who stretches the field, continues to step up. Shakir has been targeted 14 times and produced 14 catches. Yet balance has been the ticket for Allen.

"I think he's spreading the ball out more," Ravens defensive coordinator Zach Orr told reporters this week. "You really don't know where the ball is going to go. All of his receivers are liable to get the ball in any situation at any point in time – including the running backs and the tight ends."

And that's not all. The Bills, with one of the NFL's best offensive lines, have allowed the fewest sacks in the league (2). The rushing attack that once relied too much on Allen's legs has continued the expansion that took hold last season with the emergence of running back James Cook. Allen can still burn defenses with designed power runs or by bolting from the pocket to extend plays, but even as he possibly builds an MVP case, there seems to be better support. Maybe that will ultimately help the Bills graduate from Super Bowl contender to the championship unit that coach Sean McDermott has promised.

What a challenge the Ravens defense, which ranks No. 1 in the league against the run but is dead-last when it comes to defending the pass. No, Baltimore's defense is not as dominant as the tradition – especially when considering the Ravens' propensity for squandering big leads. Baltimore had to sweat in pulling out a win at Dallas last weekend and before that blew a 10-point, fourth-quarter lead in losing to the Raiders. The last time the Ravens and Bills met, in October 2022, Buffalo won after rallying from a 20-3 deficit.

This looks like a bad matchup for Baltimore (1-2). Then again, it's the NFL.

Eagles running back Saquon Barkley (26) tries to get way from Atlanta Falcons cornerback Dee Alford and linebacker Kaden Elliss on Sept. 16 in Philadelphia. Barkley leads the NFL with 351 yards rushing. ERIC HARTLINE/IMAGN IMAGES

And it's early. The chances for the Ravens to slow Allen's roll could be swung with pressure and turnovers. And maybe Jackson, the two-time MVP, can help his defense with a performance that, well, upstages the MVP front-runner.

In any event, after crushing Jacksonville and Miami, and storming back in Week 1 to finish off Arizona, the tests get tougher for Allen and Co., beginning with a swing of three consecutive road games. After Baltimore, they head to Houston (hello, Stefon) and will meet four-time MVP Aaron Rodgers and the Jets at the Meadowlands.

It's just the gauntlet for Allen to add layers to a case for MVP honors.

Giant miscalculation

With each passing day, the New York Giants' decision to let Saquon Barkley walk away as a free agent – to a division rival at that – looks that much more foolish.

During the prime-time loss against the Dallas Cowboys on Thursday night, Giants running back Devin Singletary rushed 14 times for 24 yards (1.7 per carry) and the team tallied a grand total of 26 yards on 24 rushes (1.1 yards per carry).

And that was against a Cowboys defense that was shredded four days earlier by the Ravens for 274 rushing yards and, before that, 190 yards on the ground by the New Orleans Saints.

Barkley, meanwhile, heads into Tampa Bay on Sunday with the Philadelphia Eagles as the NFL's leading rusher with 351 yards, averaging a robust 5.8 yards.

Barring some miracle, the decision by general manager Joe Schoen and coach Brian Daboll to devalue Barkley is the one that will cost them their jobs. And that the thinking was captured on the offseason edition of "Hard Knocks" makes it even more embarrassing – and more likely that pressure will intensify on Giants owner John Mara to start over.

Barkley landed in Philadelphia with a three-year deal that could be worth $46.75 million.

And now the cost in many ways will be even more significant for the Giants, who banked on an average quarterback, Daniel Jones, rather than an elite running back.

Quick slants

- Jayden Daniels heads into the game at Arizona on Sunday with the best completion percentage through three games for any rookie in NFL history (minimum 40 pass attempts) with his league-best 80.3% rate. Here's something else that illuminates the quick impact of the Washington Commanders quarterback: The Commanders have scored on every drive the last two games (except kneel downs), which no NFL unit has managed since 2000.
- The Vikings defense, leading the NFL with 16 sacks, takes a notable distinction with it to Lambeau Field for the NFC North clash against the Packers. The unit coordinated by Brian Flores is the first since the Los Angeles Rams in 1988 to post at least five sacks and an interception in each of its first three games.
- It still seems weird that as kickers nailed 42 of 55 field goal attempts from at least 50 yards (76.4%) through Week 3, the Ravens' Justin Tucker is 0-for-2 from 50 yards-plus. Tucker owns the record for the longest field goal in NFL history with a 66-yard strike and in his 13th season has connected on 58 treys from at least 50 yards. Then again, it may be just a matter of time before Brandon Aubrey breaks Tucker's distance record. The Dallas Cowboys phenom has connected on 6 of 7 tries from 50-plus yards this season and since entering the league in 2023, is 16 of 17 on kicks of 50 yards or more.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

TOP 25 ROUNDUP

No. 4 Alabama ends No. 2 Georgia's win streak

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Jalen Milroe passed for two touchdowns and rushed for two more and Zabien Brown made a game-saving interception as No. 4 Alabama recorded a wild 41-34 victory over No. 2 Georgia on Saturday night in a Southeastern Conference showdown at Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Alabama blew a 28-point second-quarter lead and fell behind late before notching the winning points on Milroe's 75-yard touchdown pass to Ryan Williams with 2:18 remaining. Brown's interception of Carson Beck in the end zone with 43 seconds left secured the Crimson Tide's ninth win in the past 10 meetings with the Bulldogs.

Milroe completed 27 of 33 passes for 374 yards and one interception and rushed for 117 yards on 16 attempts to fuel the Crimson Tide (4-0, 1-0 SEC), who led 28-0 before the game was 18 minutes old.

Williams caught six passes for 177 yards, Germie Bernard rushed for a touchdown and Jamarion Miller caught one for Alabama.

Beck threw three second-half touchdown passes and finished 27-of-50 passing for 439 yards and three interceptions to go along with a lost fumble for Georgia (3-1, 1-1), which had its 42-game regular-season winning streak halted.

Texas quarterback Arch Manning throws a pass in the first half of Saturday's game against Mississippi State in Austin, Texas. TIM WARNER/GETTY IMAGES

Michigan State's Ed Woods (4) tackles Ohio State's Jeremiah Smith during the first quarter on Saturday in East Lansing, Mich. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

No. 1 Texas 35, Mississippi State 13

Arch Manning passed for 324 yards and two touchdowns, both to DeAndre Moore Jr., and ran for another score as Texas (5-0, 1-0) defeated visiting Mississippi State (1-4, 0-2) 35-13 in the Longhorns' first Southeastern Conference game as a member of the league.

The Longhorns sputtered a bit in their second week as the nation's top-ranked team, but they turned it on late. Texas lost two fumbles, had a punt blocked and allowed the Bulldogs to stay in the game by dominating the time of possession until they ran out of gas.

Manning started for the second consecutive game after erstwhile starter Quinn Ewers, who is working his way back from a strained oblique, was designated as inactive about an hour and half before kickoff.

Manning finished 26-of-31 and connected with 10 different receivers. Moore Jr. had four of those receptions for 103 yards.

No. 3 Ohio State 38, Michigan State 7

Jeremiah Smith ran for a touchdown and made two spectacular catches in the first half as Ohio State (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) defeated Michigan State (3-2, 1-1) in East Lansing, Mich.

Quarterback Will Howard tossed two touchdowns and added a rushing score for the Buckeyes.

After his 19-yard rushing score midway through the second quarter, Smith, the No. 1 ranked recruit in the 2024 class, produced a pair of highlight-reel catches to help Ohio State take a 24-7 halftime lead.

With the Buckeyes driving in the final minute, Smith made a stellar one-handed grab between two defenders at the Michigan State 17. The freshman delivered another spectacular one-handed catch, this one for a 17-yard score with 29 seconds left in the first half.

Kentucky 20, No. 6 Ole Miss 17

Kentucky's Brock Vandagriff completed a 63-yard pass on fourth down, Josh Kattus scored the game-winner on a fumble recovery, and the Wildcats (3-2, 1-2) shocked Ole Miss (4-1, 0-1) in Southeastern Conference play in Oxford, Miss.

With Kentucky trailing 17-13 with 3:51 left and backed up at its own 20, Vandagriff heaved a 63-yarder to Barion Brown.

Gavin Wimsatt then fumbled on a keeper and tight end Kattus caught the ball and fell two yards for the winning TD with 2:25 left.

Ole Miss kicker Caden Davis hooked a 48-yard field goal with 48 seconds left that would have forced overtime.

No. 9 Penn State 21, No. 19 Illinois 7

Nicholas Singleton and Kaytron Allen each rushed for second-half touchdowns as Penn State toppled Illinois in State College, Pa. in a battle of Big Ten unbeatens.

Singleton snapped a 7-7 tie by rushing for a 4-yard score on the Nittany Lions' first drive of the second half, capping a 12-play march that lasted more than six minutes. Allen added the clinching touchdown on a 5-yard run up the middle with 1:55 left in the game.

That came eight plays after Fighting Illini quarterback Luke Altmyer's pass was picked off by A.J. Harris on fourth-and-6 from their 48 for Altmyer's first interception of the year. His 51-yard touchdown return was nullified by a penalty but Penn State (4-0, 1-0) tallied anyway after the turnover.

Altmyer completed 16 of 25 passes for 185 yards and a score while operating under increasing pressure as the game wore on. He was sacked seven times as Illinois fell to 4-1 overall and 1-1 in the conference.

No. 12 Michigan 27, Minnesota 24

Kalel Mullings rushed 24 times for 111 yards and two touchdowns as Michigan hung on for a win over Minnesota in Big Ten play in Ann Arbor, Mich.

The Wolverines (4-1, 2-0) led 24-3 after Dominic Zvada made a 53-yard field goal halfway through the third quarter but nearly blew the lead and the game.

The Golden Gophers (2-3, 0-2) rallied for three fourth quarter touchdowns, drawing within three points on Max Brosmer's 12-yard touchdown strike to Daniel Jackson with 1:37 left.

But Minnesota couldn't get the ball back after an initial recovery on an onside kick was ruled offsides. Mullings recovered a second onside kick at the Gophers' 38 yard-line and Michigan was able to run out the clock.

No. 13 USC 38, Wisconsin 21

Miller Moss threw three touchdown passes and ran for a fourth as Southern California (3-1, 1-1) stormed back from a 21-10 halftime deficit to record its first-ever Big Ten Conference win with a decision over visiting Wisconsin (2-2, 0-1).

USC trailed by two scores at intermission for the second time in as many weeks. Unlike its conference-opening loss at Michigan last Saturday, the Trojans successfully completed their second-half rally in the program's first home Big Ten game.

Moss ignited the comeback in the third quarter with a six-yard touchdown strike to Ja'Kobi Lane, the second scoring connection between the quarterback and receiver on the afternoon. They also hooked up less than three minutes into the game on a 32-yard pass play.

The Trojans took the lead later in the third when Moss hit Duce Robinson for an eight-yard score. Moss tacked on another score from seven yards out on a 4th-and-1 play to give USC a two-score lead.

No. 14 LSU 42, South Alabama 10

Garrett Nussmeier had two touchdown passes and a pair of touchdown runs as LSU defeated South Alabama in a nonconference game in Baton Rouge, La.

Nussmeier, who entered the game tied for second in the country with 13 touchdown passes and seventh in passing yards per game (311.75), completed 26 of 39 attempts for 409 yards with two interceptions. He added two rushes for 6 yards.

Freshman Caden Durham had 128 rushing yards and a touchdown on just seven carries and 89 receiving yards and a touchdown on three catches for the Tigers (4-1) before sitting out the second half with a foot injury.

The Jaguars (2-3), who came into the game averaging 504 yards and 48.3 points per game, finished with 333 total yards compared with 667 for LSU.

No. 16 Notre Dame 31, No. 15 Louisville 24

Riley Leonard passed for two touchdowns and ran for one more, and No. 16 Notre Dame held off No. 15 Louisville for a 31-24 win on Saturday afternoon in South Bend, Ind.

Leonard completed 17 of 23 passes for 163 yards for Notre Dame (4-1), which avenged a loss at Louisville one season ago. Leonard also rushed 13 times for 52 yards.

Tyler Shough completed 24 of 41 passes for 264 yards, three touchdowns and one interception for Louisville (3-1). Ja'Corey Brooks caught two touchdown passes and Isaac Brown hauled in the other one.

Louisville opened the scoring on its first possession of the game. The Cardinals capitalized on a fumble by Notre Dame on the opening kickoff, and four plays later Shough fired a pass to Isaac Brown for a 10-yard touchdown.

No. 17 Clemson 40, Stanford 14

Cade Klubnik threw touchdown passes to three different receivers over a 5:33 span bridging the third and fourth quarters, helping Clemson pull away from visiting Stanford.

Klubnik finished with four touchdown passes and a 34-yard TD run for the Tigers (3-1, 2-0 ACC), who have outscored opponents 165-69 since a 34-3 opening loss to Georgia.

Micah Ford rushed 15 times for a game-high 122 yards for Stanford (2-2, 1-1), which was playing on the East Coast for the second consecutive week in its first two ACC games.

Klubnik's TD run opened the scoring and came three plays after Stanford failed on a fourth-and-1 at its own 34 on the game's opening possession.

No. 18 Iowa State 20, Houston 0

Rocco Becht completed 17 of 28 passes for 153 yards and a touchdown, and Iowa State earned a shutout on the road with a win over Houston.

Abu Sama III finished with 11 carries for 101 yards and a touchdown for Iowa State (4-0). The Cyclones' defense limited the Cougars to 241 total yards and stopped nine of 10 third-down attempts.

Stacy Sneed had 10 carries for 79 yards to lead Houston (1-4). Cougars quarterback Donovan Smith completed 8 of 12 passes for 71 yards and an interception.

The Cyclones finished with a 34:55 to 25:05 advantage in time of possession. They also had three penalties for 20 yards, compared with seven penalties for 77 yards for Houston.

No. 23 Kansas State 42, No. 20 Oklahoma State 20

Avery Johnson accounted for five touchdowns as Kansas State dismantled Oklahoma State in a pivotal Big 12 matchup in Manhattan, Kan.

Johnson was 19-of-31 for 259 yards and three touchdowns passing. He added two touchdowns on the ground.

DJ Giddens rushed for 187 yards on just 15 carries (12.5 yards per rush) for the Wildcats (4-1, 1-1). K-State outgained Oklahoma State 300-126 on the ground.

The Cowboys (3-2, 0-2) were hurt by three turnovers by Alan Bowman. Bowman threw for 364 yards, but he had two picks and lost a fumble.

No. 21 Oklahoma 27, Auburn 21

Kip Lewis returned an interception 63 yards for a touchdown late in the fourth quarter as Oklahoma (4-1, 1-1) rallied for a win over host Auburn (2-3, 0-2) in an SEC matchup.

With just over four minutes remaining and Auburn leading 21-16, Tigers quarterback Payton Thorne looked to Cam Coleman over the middle before throwing his only interception of the game.

Coleman nearly chased Lewis down, but the Sooners' linebacker dove for the end zone, giving Oklahoma its first lead since the second quarter.

Thorne finished 21 of 32 for 338 and three touchdowns. The interception was his sixth of the season.

No. 22 BYU 34, Baylor 28

BYU took an early three-touchdown lead before holding off Baylor to win and achieve its first road victory in the Big 12 in its second year in the conference.

The Cougars (5-0, 2-0) withstood a comeback try by Baylor (2-3, 0-2) after taking a 21-0 lead in the first quarter.

Baylor's Sawyer Robertson completed all six of his passes, including a 23-yard touchdown connection with Josh Cameron, in a drive that cut BYU's lead to 34-28 with 10:07 left.

With 4:01 remaining, BYU's Jake Retzlaff threw an interception that was tipped by Treven Ma'ae and caught by Elinus Noel III then returned 2 yards to the BYU 45.

No. 24 Texas A&M 21, Arkansas 17

Marcel Reed accounted for three scores Saturday and remained perfect as starting quarterback for Texas A&M, which improved to 2-0 in SEC play by topping Arkansas in the final Southwest Classic held in Arlington, Texas.

With top quarterback Conner Weigman (shoulder sprain) unavailable for a third straight game, the Aggies (4-1 overall) continued with backup Reed, who went 11-for-22 for 163 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for another score. He moved to 3-0 as a starter.

Le'Veon Moss carried 13 times for 102 yards, and Noah Thomas caught six passes for 109 yards and a score as the Aggies improved to 12-1 in the past 13 series meetings.

Taylen Green was 23 of 41 for 279 yards, with a touchdown and an interception for Arkansas (3-2, 1-1). The SEC's leading rusher at 118 yards per game, Ja'Quinden Jackson had just 37 yards on 10 carries and scored. Isaac TeSlaa had five catches for 120 yards and a TD.

MLB

SATURDAY'S ROUNDUP

Braves walk-off Royals, boost wild-card hopes

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Travis d'Arnaud hit a walk-off home run in the ninth inning to lift the Atlanta Braves to a 2-1 win against the visiting Kansas City Royals on Saturday.

With one out, d'Arnaud sent a fastball from Royals reliever Sam Long (3-3) 421 feet over the center field wall.

The Braves hold a one-game lead over the Arizona Diamondbacks and New York Mets for the second National League wild-card spot.

Closer Raisel Iglesias (6-2) worked a perfect ninth to earn the win for the Braves (88-71), who have won five straight.

Kansas City has (85-76) has dropped nine of 12.

The Royals struggled to get on base after opening the scoring early against Braves starter Reynaldo Lopez. Lopez worked six innings, striking out nine while holding Kansas City to one run on two hits with no walks.

With Braves reliever Pierce Johnson in for the seventh, Maikel Garcia drew a leadoff walk but was picked off with Salvador Perez at the plate. Perez then followed with a ground-rule double, but a pair of strikeouts ended the frame.

The Braves' Travis d'Arnaud hits a walk-off solo home run against the Kansas City Royals on Saturday in Atlanta. CASEY SYKES/GETTY IMAGES

Brewers 6, Mets 0

Joey Ortiz drove in three runs and six Milwaukee pitchers combined on a two-hitter for a victory over the visiting Mets, preventing New York from gaining ground in the tightly contested National League Wild Card race.

The Mets (87-72) are tied with the Arizona Diamondbacks (88-73), who lost to the Padres on Saturday, for the final NL wild-card spot.

After finishing the three-game series at Milwaukee on Sunday, the Mets will play a make-up doubleheader on Monday at Atlanta.

Ortiz put the Brewers in front 2-0 with a two-out, bases-loaded single against Jose Quintana in the fourth. Willy Adames singled with one out and Rhys Hoskins and Isaac Collins sandwiched walks around a strikeout to load the bases. Ortiz then punched a 3-2 curveball into shallow center.

Milwaukee added four runs in the eighth when Garrett Mitchell singled to open the frame and stole second. William Contreras walked and Adames followed with an RBI single. Jake Bauers' bloop single loaded the bases and Ortiz walked with two outs to make it 4-0. Andruw Monasterio followed with a two-run single to center.

Padres 5, Diamondbacks 0

Kyle Higashioka broke open a scoreless game in the top of the ninth with a two-run homer, Brandon Lockridge followed with a solo shot, and San Diego, playing mostly reserves, downed Arizona in the second meeting of a three-game series in Phoenix.

Donovan Solano finished 4-for-5 and added another two-run homer with two outs in a stunning five-run ninth inning, and San Diego (93-68) won despite starting only three regulars after it clinched the fourth seed in the National League postseason with a 5-3 win over Arizona on Friday night.

A.J. Puk (4-9) took the loss for Arizona after coming on with one out in the ninth, allowing three hits and two long balls for the first-time ever in his career as a reliever.

Meanwhile, Arizona (88-73) had only two hits as the Diamondbacks desperately seek to claim a National League wild-card berth.

The D-backs lost for the fifth time in six games and are on the outside looking in of a three-team race for the two final NL wild-card spots ahead of their regular-season finale Sunday in Arizona.

White Sox 4, Tigers 0

Andrew Benintendi blasted a two-run homer and visiting Chicago cooled off playoff-bound Detroit with a win.

Benintendi also doubled and scored two runs as the White Sox (40-121) won for the fourth time in five games. Bryan Ramos had a solo homer for the White Sox, who set the modern era record for most losses in a single season on Friday.

Sean Burke (2-0), making his fourth career appearance, limited Detroit to two hits in five innings while notching six strikeouts. Michael Soroka didn't allow a baserunner while recording five strikeouts in three innings. Gus Varland got the last three outs to complete the shutout.

Detroit (86-75), which secured an American League wild-card playoff berth with a 4-1 victory over the White Sox on Friday night, saw its six-game winning streak snapped.

Beau Brieske (4-5) pitched the first two innings and gave up one run. Jackson Jobe, the majors' top pitching prospect, didn't allow a hit in a three-inning relief stint. He also notched his first two career strikeouts.

Astros 4, Guardians 3

Justin Verlander allowed three early runs but grinded out six innings, and Houston used a three-run second to beat host Cleveland.

Looking to be a contributor for the Astros (88-73) in the postseason, Verlander (5-6) allowed a two-run, first-inning homer to Jose Ramirez, and another run in the third, but nothing else. He gave up seven hits, but no walks, and struck out five for Houston, which goes for the sweep of this three-game series in the regular-season finale Sunday.

Rookie Zach Dezenzo had two hits with an RBI for Houston, which did all its scoring in the first two innings. The Astros' Hector Neris, Ryan Pressly and Shawn Dubin (two saves) combined to hold Cleveland to two hits over the final three innings.

Houston made Cleveland's Ben Lively (13-10) throw 29 pitches in the first inning, but managed only one run. Back-to-back singles from Kyle Tucker and Victor Caratini put runners on the corners. With two outs, Dezenzo dropped an RBI single into left field.

Will Brennan led off Cleveland's first with a double into the right field corner. After Kyle Manzardo struck out, Brennan scored when Ramirez hit his 39th homer, which tied his career high.

Nationals 6, Phillies 3

James Wood homered and tripled and scored two runs and Joey Gallo hit a three-run homer to highlight a four-run eighth inning to lead host Washington to a victory over Philadelphia.

Keibert Ruiz also had two hits and an RBI and Dylan Crews went 2-for-3 with a stolen base and a run scored for Washington (71-90) which clinched the series victory with its second straight win. Jose A. Ferrer (1-0) picked up the win in relief.

Trea Turner homered and Nick Castellanos tripled and scored a run for Philadelphia (94-67). Jeff Hoffman (3-3) suffered the loss allowing four runs on four hits in one inning. The loss meant the National League East champion Phillies, who already had earned a bye into the National League Division Series, will finish as the No. 2 seed in the NL behind the Los Angeles Dodgers (96-64) in the battle for home field advantage.

Washington took a 2-0 lead in the sixth inning on Wood's ninth homer, a 385-foot opposite-field line drive to left that drove in Luis Garcia Jr., who had singled.

Philadelphia tied it, 2-2, in the eighth against reliever Jose A. Ferrer when pinch-hitter Edmundo Sosa was hit by a pitch and scored on Turner's 21st home run into the left field bullpen.

Pirates 9, Yankees 4

Yasmani Grandal hit the first of the Pittsburgh Pirates' five homers and they never trailed in a win over New York, which saw Aaron Judge strike out five times.

Jazz Chisholm Jr. homered in the fifth and laced an RBI double in the eighth for the American League East-winning Yankees (93-68), who missed a chance to clinch the top seed in the AL playoffs.

New York entered Saturday a game ahead of the AL Central champion Cleveland Guardians but has the tiebreaker by virtue of winning the season series 4-2.

Grandal went deep in the second inning off Luis Gil (15-7), who gave up a solo homer to Nick Gonzales in the fourth and two-run shots to Billy Cook and Jared Triolo in the fifth and sixth, respectively.

Nick Yorke added a two-run homer in the ninth for the Pirates (76-85), who clinched their first series win since a three-game sweep of the Miami Marlins from Sept. 9-11. Grandal had three hits, including an RBI single immediately before Yorke's homer.

Orioles 9, Twins 2

Emmanuel Rivera went 4-for-4 with two homers and four RBIs, and Baltimore cruised to a win over Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Ryan O'Hearn finished 2-for-5 with a homer and two RBIs for Baltimore (90-71). Adley Rutschman also drove in two runs for the Orioles, who achieved back-to-back 90-plus-win seasons for the first time since 1982-83.

Ryan Jeffers hit a two-run homer to account for the only scoring for Minnesota (82-79), which has lost six of its last seven. Carlos Santana and Brooks Lee joined Jeffers in finishing with two hits apiece.

Orioles left-hander Tucker Davidson (1-0) pitched 4⅔ innings to win his season debut. Davidson followed right-hander Matt Bowman, who made his first career start and opened with 1⅓ scoreless innings.

Twins right-hander Zebby Matthews (1-4) surrendered six runs on seven hits in three innings. He walked three and struck out five.

Dodgers 13, Rockies 2

Enrique Hernandez homered and singled twice, Teoscar Hernandez also went deep and Los Angeles beat Colorado in Denver.

Shohei Ohtani had two hits to raise his average to .310, four points behind San Diego's Luis Arraez with one game left in his bid to be the National League's first Triple Crown winner in 1937. Ohtani also stole his 58th base.

Arraez did not play in the Padres' 5-0 win at Arizona.

Yoshinobu Yamamoto (7-2), making his fourth start since missing three months with a torn rotator cuff, allowed two runs on four hits and struck out six in five innings. Chris Taylor and Gavin Lux had three hits each and Will Smith and Max Muncy contributed two each for Los Angeles (97-64), which totaled 18 hits.

Ezequiel Tovar homered among his three hits, Nolan Jones had two hits and Charlie Blackmon singled and scored a run for Colorado (61-100).

Giants 6, Cardinals 5

St. Louis reliever Matthew Liberatore fielded a Brett Wisely two-out bunt in the eighth inning and threw wildly past first base, allowing Tyler Fitzgerald to score from first with San Francisco's difference-making run in a home victory.

Entering a 5-5 game in the last of the eighth, Liberatore retired the first two men he faced before Fitzgerald nailed him in the left calf with a line drive that went for an infield hit.

After a brief delay to make sure the left-hander was OK, Wisely dropped down his bunt between the mound and third base. Liberatore (3-4) fielded it quickly and cleanly, but his off-balanced throw was wide right of its target, winding up in foul territory down the right-field line.

Fitzgerald raced around from first, barely beating a strong threw from Cardinals right fielder Jordan Walker.

Mariners 7, Athletics 6, 10 innings

Justin Turner's pinch-hit fielder's choice scored Leo Rivas from third base with one out in the bottom of the 10th inning, lifting Seattle over visiting Oakland in the penultimate game of the regular season.

Rivas, who started the inning at second base as the automatic runner, took third on J.P. Crawford's groundout to the right side of the infield. Following an intentional walk to Dylan Moore, Turner hit a slow grounder to second baseman Zack Gelof, who threw home but Rivas slid around the tag to score the winning run.

Seattle's Eduard Bazardo (2-0) pitched a 1-2-3 top of the 10th for the victory. Scott Alexander (1-3) took the loss.

The winning rally followed a wild ninth. The Mariners tied it off A's closer Mason Miller as Julio Rodriguez led off by lining a single to left and, an out later, Luke Raley went deep to right-center on a 99.7-mph fastball to make it 6-6.

Cubs 3, Reds 0

Kyle Hendricks threw 7⅓ shutout innings in what could be his final start for Chicago, and guided a win against visiting Cincinnati in the second game of a three-game series.

Hendricks, who has been with the Cubs since 2014 and helped them to a World Series title in 2016, struck out two and walked two on 81 pitches.

Hendricks got the first batter of the eighth inning before he was replaced by Tyson Miller (5-1), getting hugs from his teammates and a standing ovation from the crowd, as well as the Reds.

Porter Hodge pitched the ninth for his ninth save.

Rays 7, Red Sox 2

Junior Caminero collected three hits, including a home run, and drove in three runs to lead visiting Tampa Bay over Boston.

Caminero hit a two-run homer in the third – his sixth home run of the season – and collected his other RBI on an infield single in the fifth. Tampa Bay's Brandon Lowe also had three hits in the win.

The Rays (80-81) took control by scoring four runs on five hits in the fifth. That stretched their lead to 6-1.

Tampa Bay starting pitcher Shane Baz (4-3) limited the Red Sox to two runs on three hits in six innings. He recorded seven strikeouts and walked one. Trevor Story had two of Boston's five hits.

Marlins 8, Blue Jays 1

Dane Myers had a three-run homer and a two-run double and visiting Miami defeated Toronto.

Former Blue Jays minor-leaguer Griffin Conine had three hits and an RBI as the Marlins (61-100) clinched the season-ending three-game series.

Nathan Lukes hit his first career major league home run, a solo shot for the Blue Jays (74-87).

Miami right-hander Xzavion Curry (2-2) allowed one run, two hits and one walk with one strikeout in five innings.

Rangers 9, Angels 8

Pinch-hitter Jonathan Ornelas hit a game-tying two-run single and Nathaniel Lowe scored the tiebreaking run thanks to a throwing error with one out in the top of the ninth inning as Texas stormed back for a victory over Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif.

Texas entered the ninth facing an 8-5 deficit and loaded the bases against Jose Quijada (2-2) when Matt Duffy was grazed on the foot by a pitch. Lowe fouled off four straight pitches before working a walk to make it a two-run game.

Ryan Miller replaced Quijada on the mound, and Ornelas hit a sharp ground ball past first baseman Niko Kavadas. Right fielder Gustavo Campero was slow to retrieve the ball and overthrew shortstop Jack Lopez, allowing Lowe to score on the play.

MLB

SATURDAY'S ROUNDUP

Pittsburgh 9, N.Y. Yankees 4

PIT	010	122	003 –	9	8	1
NYY	000	011	110 –	4	7	0

Pittsburgh	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Kiner-Falefa 3b	5	0	0	0	0	3	.240
Reynolds dh	4	0	1	0	0	0	.276
Cruz cf	4	0	0	0	0	3	.260
Gonzales ss	4	1	1	1	0	0	.273
Palacios rf	2	2	0	0	2	0	.219
Triolo 1b	4	1	1	2	0	2	.217
Grandal c	4	3	3	2	0	1	.228
Yorke 2b	4	1	1	2	0	2	.229
Cook lf	4	1	1	2	0	1	.222
Totals	**35**	**9**	**8**	**9**	**2**	**12**	

N.Y. Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Dominguez lf	4	0	1	0	1	1	.189
Soto rf	3	0	1	1	2	1	.288
Judge cf	5	0	0	0	0	5	.322
Wells c	3	1	0	0	2	0	.229
Stanton dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.233
Chisholm Jr. 3b	4	1	2	2	0	2	.273
Rizzo 1b	2	0	1	0	0	0	.228
Volpe ss	1	0	0	0	0	0	.244
Cabrera ss-1b	4	1	1	0	0	1	.247
Berti 2b	3	1	1	0	1	0	.286
Totals	**33**	**4**	**7**	**3**	**6**	**11**	

E: Gonzales. **2B:** Chisholm Jr. (7). **HR:** Gonzales (7), Triolo (9), Grandal (9), Yorke (2), Cook (3), Chisholm Jr. (11). **RBI:** Gonzales (49), Triolo 2 (45), Grandal 2 (27), Yorke 2 (5), Cook 2 (8), Soto (109), Chisholm Jr. 2 (23). **SB:** Palacios (1). **Runners left in scoring position:** N.Y. Yankees 5 (Wells 2, Chisholm Jr. 2, Volpe). **RISP:** Pittsburgh 1 for 2, N.Y. Yankees 1 for 9.

Pittsburgh	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Skenes	2.0	0	0	0	0	3	23	1.96
Burrows W, 1-0	3.1	2	2	1	3	2	68	2.70
Bednar	0.2	0	0	0	1	2	18	5.77
Borucki	1.0	2	1	1	0	0	14	7.36
Santana H, 11	1.0	1	1	1	1	2	21	2.44
Beeks	0.1	2	0	0	1	1	13	4.50
Chapman S, 14	0.2	0	0	0	0	1	9	3.79

N.Y. Yankees	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Gil L, 15-7	5.2	6	6	6	1	5	89	3.50
Beeter	1.1	0	0	0	0	3	18	4.91
Hill	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	12	3.36
Warren	1.0	2	3	3	1	3	22	10.32

Inherited runners: Bednar 2-1, Chapman 3-3. **HBP:** Rizzo. **Umpires:** HP-Cuzzi, 1B-Moscoso, 2B-Bellino, 3B-Randazzo. T: 2:49. A: 46,069 (46,537).

Chicago Cubs 3, Cincinnati 0

CIN	000	000	000 –	0	3	1
CHC	000	000	03x –	3	8	0

Cincinnati	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
India 2b	3	0	0	0	1	0	.247
De La Cruz ss	4	0	0	0	0	1	.259
Stephenson c	4	0	1	0	0	1	.258
Steer lf	3	0	0	0	1	1	.227
Friedl cf	3	0	1	0	0	0	.226
France 1b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.257
Fraley rf	3	0	0	0	0	0	.272
Espinal 3b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.246
Marte dh	3	0	1	0	0	0	.213
Totals	**29**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**2**	**3**	

Chicago	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Happ lf	5	0	1	0	0	0	.244
Swanson ss	3	1	1	0	1	0	.242
Bellinger rf-1b	3	0	1	0	1	0	.266
Suzuki dh	2	1	2	0	2	0	.283
Busch 1b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.248
b-Paredes ph-3b	1	1	1	1	0	0	.227
Hoerner 2b	4	0	0	0	0	0	.274
Crow-Armstrong cf	4	0	1	1	0	0	.238
Wisdom 3b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.171
a-Tauchman ph-rf	0	0	0	1	1	0	.249
Amaya c	4	0	1	0	0	0	.232
Totals	**32**	**3**	**8**	**3**	**5**	**1**	

a-walked for Wisdom in 8th. b-singled for Busch in 8th.

E: De La Cruz. **2B:** Swanson (27). **RBI:** Paredes (25), Crow-Armstrong (47), Tauchman (29). **CS:** Marte (3), Hoerner (6). **SB:** Swanson (19). **Runners left in scoring position:** Cincinnati 1 (Fraley), Chicago 6 (Happ 2, Bellinger, Busch 3). **RISP:** Chicago 3 for 9.

Cincinnati	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Lowder	5.0	3	0	0	3	1	91	1.17
Santillan	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	10	3.10
Farmer L, 3-2	1.0	1	1	1	0	0	8	3.09
Wilson	0.0	2	2	2	1	0	4	5.59
Diaz	1.0	1	0	0	1	0	15	3.99

Chicago	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Hendricks	7.1	2	0	0	2	2	81	5.92
Miller W, 5-1	0.2	1	0	0	0	0	8	2.15
Hodge S, 9	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	12	1.88

Farmer pitched to 1 batter in the 8th. Wilson pitched to 3 batters in the 8th.

Inherited runners: Wilson 1-0, Diaz 3-1. **IBB:** Wilson (1). **Umpires:** HP-Conroy, 1B-Livensparger, 2B-O'Nora, 3B-Miller. T: 2:13. A: 38,180 (41,649).

Chicago White Sox 4, Detroit 0

CHW	010	001	020 –	4	5	0
DET	000	000	000 –	0	3	2

Chicago	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Vargas 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.106
DeLoach rf	3	1	0	0	1	0	.206
Benintendi lf	4	2	2	2	0	1	.229
Vaughn 1b	4	0	1	1	0	0	.246
Sosa 2b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.248
Ramos dh	3	1	1	1	0	1	.189
Fletcher cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.205
Robinson c	3	0	0	0	1	1	.129
Amaya ss	4	0	0	0	0	2	.175
Totals	**33**	**4**	**5**	**4**	**2**	**6**	

Detroit	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Meadows cf	3	0	0	0	0	2	.241
a-Malloy ph-lf	1	0	0	0	0	1	.203
Carpenter rf	2	0	0	0	1	1	.286
Ibanez ss	1	0	0	0	0	0	.242
Perez lf-cf	3	0	1	0	1	1	.239
Greene dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.263
Keith 2b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.261
Torkelson 1b	3	0	0	0	0	2	.218
Jung 3b	2	0	0	0	1	0	.241
McKinstry ss-rf	3	0	0	0	0	0	.216
Dingler c	3	0	1	0	0	2	.167
Totals	**29**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**11**	

a-struck out for Meadows in 8th.

E: Dingler, Jung. **2B:** Benintendi (20), Dingler (5). **3B:** Perez (6). **HR:** Benintendi (20), Ramos (3). **RBI:** Benintendi 2 (64), Vaughn (70), Ramos (9). **Runners left in scoring position:** Chicago 2 (Benintendi, Fletcher), Detroit 4 (Meadows, Greene, Keith, Dingler). **RISP:** Chicago 1 for 5. **DP:** Chicago 1.

Chicago	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Burke W, 2-0	5.0	2	0	0	3	6	84	1.42
Soroka H, 2	3.0	0	0	0	0	5	43	4.74
Varland	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	14	3.72

Detroit	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Brieske L, 4-5	2.0	1	1	1	0	1	31	3.59
Jobe	3.0	0	0	0	1	2	39	0.00
Madden	3.0	4	3	3	1	2	60	4.30
Guenther	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	9	0.86

Umpires: HP-Tumpane, 1B-Hudson, 2B-Wendelstedt, 3B-Mahrley. T: 2:26. A: 41,933 (41,083).

Miami 8, Toronto 1

MIA	200	003	030 –	8	11	0
TOR	100	000	000 –	1	4	0

Miami	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Edwards ss	4	1	1	0	1	1	.326
Norby 3b	5	0	0	0	0	2	.254
Burger 1b	5	1	1	0	0	0	.250
Sanchez rf	3	3	2	0	1	0	.254
Bride dh	4	0	1	1	0	1	.271
Conine lf	4	2	3	1	0	0	.282
Myers cf	4	1	2	5	0	2	.264
Sanoja 2b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.229
Pereda c	4	0	1	1	0	1	.231
Totals	**37**	**8**	**11**	**8**	**2**	**8**	

Toronto	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Springer rf	3	0	1	0	1	0	.220
Lukes lf	4	1	1	1	0	1	.303
Guerrero Jr. dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.324
Horwitz 1b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.268
Kirk c	3	0	0	0	1	0	.253
Clement ss	3	0	1	0	0	0	.265
Barger 3b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.198
Schneider 2b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.193
Loperfido cf	3	0	0	0	0	2	.218
Totals	**30**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**5**	

2B: Edwards (12), Conine (4), Myers (6). **HR:** Myers (3), Lukes (1). **RBI:** Bride (37), Conine (12), Myers 5 (19), Pereda (4), Lukes (10). **SB:** Sanchez (16), Springer (16). **Runners left in scoring position:** Miami 3 (Norby, Myers 2), Toronto 2 (Lukes, Kirk). **RISP:** Miami 7 for 11. **GIDP:** Clement. **DP:** Miami 1.

Miami	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Curry W, 2-0	5.0	2	1	1	1	1	65	3.00
McCaughan S, 2	4.0	2	0	0	1	4	54	5.75

Toronto	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Rodriguez L, 1-8	5.0	4	3	3	2	5	82	4.47
Little	0.1	3	2	2	0	1	18	3.74
Swanson	1.2	1	0	0	0	2	14	5.03
Cabrera	1.0	3	3	3	0	0	19	3.59
Robertson	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0.00

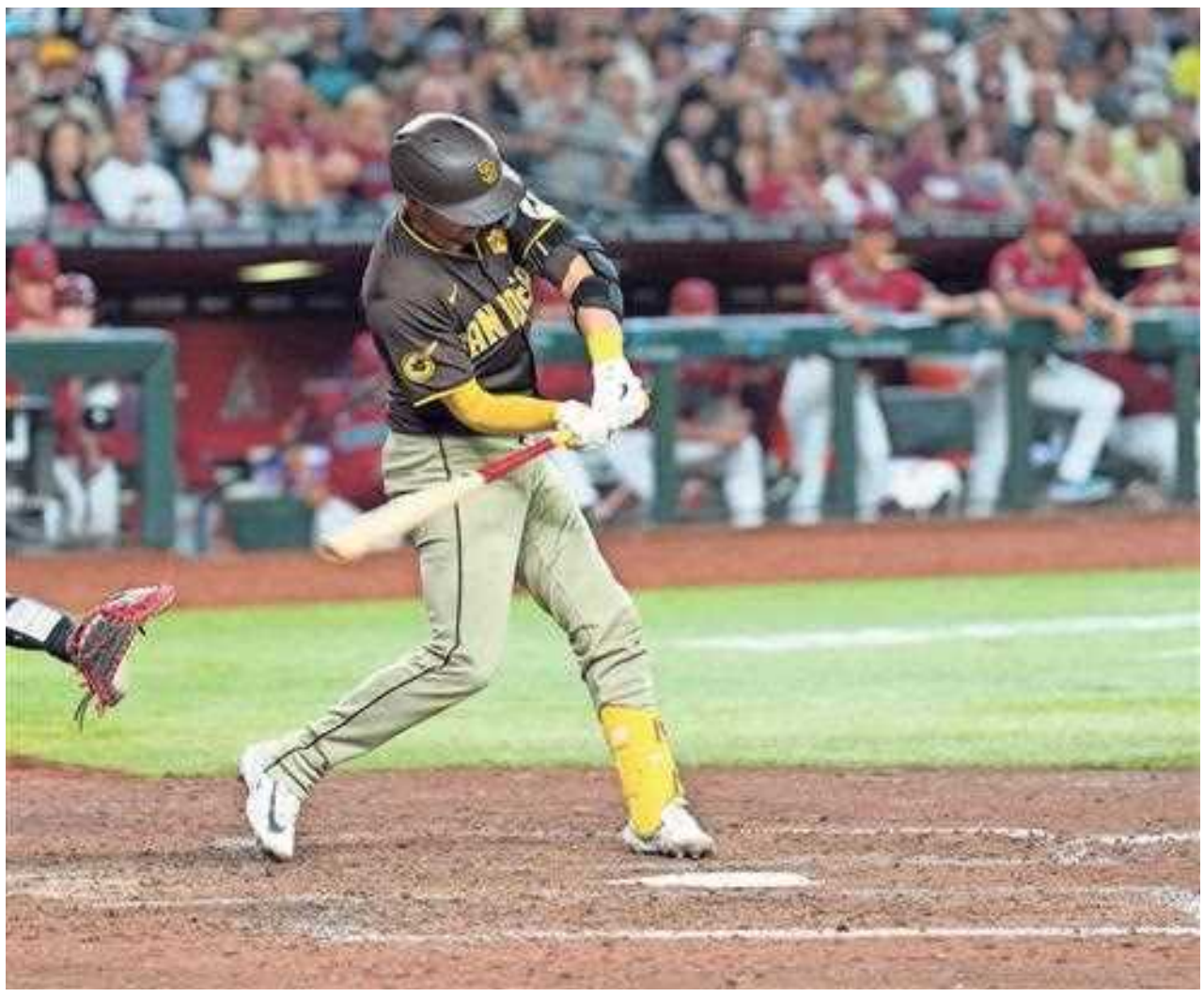
Rodriguez pitched to 1 batter in the 6th.

Inherited runners: Little 1-0, Swanson 2-1. **Umpires:** HP-Arrieta, 1B-Morales, 2B-Guccione, 3B-Additon. T: 2:33. A: 35,733 (49,286).

Tampa Bay 7, Boston 2

TB	002	040	100 –	7	10	0
BOS	100	001	000 –	2	5	1

Tampa Bay	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Diaz dh	3	2	1	0	2	1	.281
Lowe 2b	5	2	3	0	0	1	.244
Caminero 3b	5	2	3	3	0	0	.255
Aranda 1b	4	1	1	1	1	1	.240
Morel lf	5	0	1	1	0	0	.183
Lowe rf	4	0	1	2	1	3	.241
Siri cf	4	0	0	0	0	2	.187
Rortvedt c	3	0	0	0	0	1	.228



The San Diego Padres' Kyle Higashioka hits a solo home run against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the ninth inning of Saturday's game at Chase Field in Phoenix. JOE CAMPOREALE/IMAGN IMAGES

Walls ss	4	0	0	0	0	1	.183
Totals	**37**	**7**	**10**	**7**	**4**	**10**	

Boston	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Duran cf	3	1	0	0	0	0	.285
Story ss	3	0	2	0	1	1	.255
Casas 1b	4	1	1	1	0	1	.240
O'Neill lf	3	0	1	0	0	2	.241
Gasper dh	4	0	0	0	0	2	.000
Gonzalez 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.266
Abreu rf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.255
Jansen c	3	0	0	0	0	0	.205
Grissom 2b	3	0	0	0	0	2	.186
Totals	**31**	**2**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**9**	

E: Grissom. **2B:** Story (7). **HR:** Caminero (6), Casas (13). **RBI:** Caminero 3 (18), Aranda (14), Morel (9), Lowe 2 (34), Casas (31). **CS:** Story (3). **Runners left in scoring position:** Tampa Bay 4 (Caminero, Lowe 2, Siri), Boston 3 (Casas, Gasper, Abreu). **RISP:** Tampa Bay 5 for 13. **DP:** Boston 1.

Tampa Bay	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Baz W, 4-3	6.0	3	2	2	1	7	86	3.06
Kelly	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	12	2.67
Rasmussen	2.0	2	0	0	0	2	30	2.83

Boston	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Crawford L, 9-16	4.1	5	6	6	4	6	86	4.36
Weissert	1.2	1	0	0	0	2	20	3.13
Garcia	1.0	3	1	1	0	1	14	4.88
Sims	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	16	6.43
Shugart	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	7	4.15

Inherited runners: Weissert 2-0. **HBP:** Rortvedt, Duran, O'Neill. **WP:** Baz, Rasmussen. **Umpires:** HP-Miller, 1B-Eddings, 2B-Whitson, 3B-Walsh. T: 2:28. A: 35,333 (37,755).

Washington 6, Philadelphia 3

PHI	000	000	021 –	3	5	0
WAS	000	002	04x –	6	9	0

Philadelphia	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Schwarber dh	3	0	0	0	1	1	.248
Turner ss	4	1	1	2	0	2	.293
Harper 1b	4	0	1	0	0	3	.285
Castellanos rf	4	1	1	0	0	2	.254
Bohm 3b	4	0	0	1	0	0	.280
Realmuto c	3	0	1	0	1	2	.266
Stott 2b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.245
Wilson lf-cf	3	0	1	0	0	1	.282
Marsh cf	2	0	0	0	0	0	.251
a-Sosa ph	0	1	0	0	0	0	.257
Clemens lf	0	0	0	0	0	0	.214
Totals	**31**	**3**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**12**	

Washington	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Garcia Jr. 2b	4	1	1	0	0	2	.281
Wood lf	4	2	2	2	0	2	.269
Ruiz c	4	1	2	1	0	1	.229
Tena 3b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.281
Yepez dh	4	0	0	0	0	4	.285
Crews rf	3	1	2	0	1	0	.198
Gallo 1b	3	1	1	3	1	0	.164
Young cf	3	0	0	0	1	1	.256
Nunez ss	3	0	1	0	0	1	.241
Totals	**32**	**6**	**9**	**6**	**3**	**14**	

a-was hit by a pitch for Marsh in 8th.

3B: Castellanos (4), Wood (4). **HR:** Turner (21), Wood (9), Gallo (10). **RBI:** Turner 2 (62), Bohm (96), Wood 2 (41), Ruiz (57), Gallo 3 (27). **SB:** Crews (11), Young (33). **Runners left in scoring position:** Washington 2 (Garcia Jr. 2). **RISP:** Washington 3 for 5. **GIDP:** Young. **DP:** Philadelphia 1, Washington 1.

Philadelphia	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Wheeler	6.1	3	2	2	2	11	97	2.57
Kerkering	0.2	2	0	0	1	1	18	2.29
Hoffman L, 3-3	1.0	4	4	4	0	2	26	2.17

Washington	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Gore	6.0	3	0	0	1	9	91	3.90
Law H, 17	0.2	0	0	0	1	1	19	2.61
Ferrer W, 1-0 BS, 1	1.1	1	2	2	0	1	27	3.38
Finnegan	1.0	1	1	1	0	1	13	3.68

Inherited runners: Ferrer 1-1. **HBP:** Sosa. **Umpires:** HP-Lentz, 1B-Ballou, 2B-Barry, 3B-Barksdale. T: 2:35. A: 38,135 (41,380).

San Francisco 6, St. Louis 5

STL	100	010	300 –	5	13	2
SF	200	201	01x –	6	11	0

St. Louis	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Winn ss	5	2	1	0	1	0	.266
Burleson dh	4	1	2	0	1	0	.267
Goldschmidt 1b	4	1	3	2	0	0	.245
Donovan 2b	5	1	3	2	0	0	.276
Nootbaar lf	3	0	0	0	2	1	.247
Walker rf	5	0	1	1	0	2	.200
Saggese 3b	5	0	1	0	0	1	.217
Pages c	4	0	2	0	1	1	.241
Siani cf	3	0	0	0	1	3	.230
b-Carpenter ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	.228
Totals	**39**	**5**	**13**	**5**	**6**	**9**	

San Francisco	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Canha lf	1	1	1	0	0	0	.288
c-Yastrzemski ph-rf	3	0	0	0	0	0	.232
Ramos rf-lf	4	1	1	0	0	0	.269
Wade Jr. 1b	4	0	1	1	0	1	.261
Chapman 3b	4	2	2	0	0	1	.247
Encarnacion dh	4	0	1	0	0	0	.257
Bailey c	3	1	1	2	0	1	.234
Fitzgerald ss	3	1	1	0	1	1	.284
Schmitt 2b	2	0	1	1	0	0	.240
a-Wisely ph-2b	1	0	1	0	1	0	.237
McCray cf	4	0	1	0	0	3	.198
Totals	**33**	**6**	**11**	**4**	**2**	**7**	

a-walked for Schmitt in 6th. b-struck out for Siani in 9th. c-flied out for Canha in 3rd.

E: Liberatore, Winn. **2B:** Goldschmidt 2 (32), Donovan (34), Pages (3), Canha (3), Chapman 2 (39), Schmitt (3). **RBI:** Goldschmidt 2 (64), Donovan 2 (71), Walker (20), Wade Jr. (34), Bailey 2 (46), Schmitt (16). **SB:** Bailey (4). **SF:** Goldschmidt, Bailey. **Runners left in scoring position:** St. Louis 8 (Winn 2, Nootbaar, Walker 4, Siani), San Francisco 5 (Yastrzemski 2, Bailey, McCray 2). **RISP:** St. Louis 4 for 16, San Francisco 6 for 13. **GIDP:** Bailey. **DP:** St. Louis 1.

St. Louis	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Pallante	5.0	7	4	3	0	4	74	3.78
Roycroft	0.2	2	1	1	2	0	27	4.19
Leahy	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	13	4.07
Liberatore L, 3-4	1.0	2	1	0	0	2	14	4.40

San Francisco	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Beck	4.0	4	1	1	2	3	72	1.69
Hjelle	1.0	3	1	1	0	1	23	3.90
Doval H, 5	1.0	1	0	0	0	2	22	4.88
Miller	0.0	2	3	3	2	0	24	3.88
Rogers BS, 2	1.0	1	0	0	1	1	17	2.82
Walker W, 10-4	1.0	1	0	0	1	0	29	1.91
Bivens S, 1	1.0	1	0	0	0	2	18	3.14

Miller pitched to 4 batters in the 7th.

Inherited runners: Leahy 3-3, Rogers 2-1. **WP:** Walker. **Umpires:** HP-Hamari, 1B-Carapazza, 2B-MacKay, 3B-Metz. T: 2:51. A: 36,328 (41,331).

Houston 4, Cleveland 3

HOU	130	000	000 –	4	9	0
CLE	201	000	000 –	3	9	1

Houston	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Pena ss	5	0	0	0	0	2	.266
Tucker rf	5	1	2	0	0	0	.289
Caratini c	4	1	1	0	1	2	.269
Singleton 1b	3	0	0	1	2	1	.234
Dezenzo dh	5	0	2	1	0	1	.242
Heyward lf	4	0	1	0	1	1	.218
Dubon 2b	4	0	2	0	0	0	.269
Meyers cf	4	1	1	0	0	0	.219
Kessinger 3b	2	1	0	0	1	1	.000
Totals	**36**	**4**	**9**	**2**	**5**	**8**	

Cleveland	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Brennan lf	4	2	3	0	0	0	.264
Manzardo 1b	4	0	0	0	0	2	.234
Ramirez 3b	3	1	2	3	0	0	.279
Naylor dh	4	0	2	0	0	0	.243
Thomas cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.209
Gimenez 2b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.252
Naylor c	4	0	0	0	0	2	.201
Noel rf	4	0	1	0	0	1	.218
Rocchio ss	4	0	0	0	0	3	.206
Totals	**35**	**3**	**9**	**3**	**0**	**9**	

E: Rocchio. **2B:** Heyward (2), Dubon 2 (25), Brennan 2 (13), Ramirez (39). **HR:** Ramirez (39). **RBI:** Singleton (42), Dezenzo (8), Ramirez 3 (118). **SF:** Ramirez. **Runners left in scoring position:** Houston 7 (Pena 2, Heyward 2, Dubon 2, Kessinger), Cleveland 1 (Gimenez). **RISP:** Houston 1 for 15, Cleveland 1 for 6. **DP:** Cleveland 1.

Houston	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Verlander W, 5-6	6.0	7	3	3	0	5	95	5.48
Neris H, 5	1.0	1	0	0	0	2	13	4.70
Pressly H, 25	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	23	3.49
Dubin S, 2	1.0	0	0	0	0	2	14	4.17

Cleveland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Lively L, 13-10	4.0	5	4	2	4	4	92	3.81
Walters	1.0	1	0	0	1	0	21	0.00
Herrin	1.0	1	0	0	0	2	15	1.92
Smith	1.0	1	0	0	0	1	14	1.91
Gaddis	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	13	1.57
Clase	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	11	0.61

HBP: Kessinger. **Umpires:** HP-Wolf, 1B-Dreckman, 2B-Rehak, 3B-Wegner. T: 2:46. A: 33,609 (34,830).

Atlanta 2, Kansas City 1

KC	001	000	000 –	1	3	2
ATL	000	100	001 –	2	5	0

Kansas City	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Frazier 2b-1b	4	0	0	0	0	2	.202
Garcia ss	3	0	0	0	1	1	.232
Perez dh	4	0	1	0	0	1	.271
Melendez lf	4	0	0	0	0	3	.208
DeJong 3b	3	0	0	0	0	2	.227
Grossman rf	3	0	0	0	0	2	.212
Fermin c	3	1	1	0	0	1	.271
Hampson 1b-cf	2	0	1	0	1	1	.230
Blanco cf	2	0	0	0	0	0	.258
a-Massey ph-2b	0	0	0	0	1	0	.259
Totals	**28**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**13**	

Atlanta	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Harris II cf	3	0	0	0	1	1	.262
Albies 2b	3	0	0	0	1	0	.251
Ozuna dh	3	0	0	0	1	2	.306
Olson 1b	4	0	2	0	0	1	.247
Soler rf	3	1	1	0	1	1	.241
Laureano lf	4	0	0	0	0	3	.294
d'Arnaud c	4	1	1	1	0	2	.236
Urshela 3b	3	0	0	0	0	1	.256
Arcia ss	3	0	1	0	0	1	.219
Totals	**30**	**2**	**5**	**1**	**4**	**12**	

a-walked for Blanco in 8th.

E: Lorenzen, Blanco. **2B:** Perez (28), Soler (32), Arcia (24). **HR:** d'Arnaud (15). **RBI:** d'Arnaud (48). **Runners left in scoring position:** Kansas City 2 (Frazier, DeJong), Atlanta 5 (Albies, Soler 2, d'Arnaud 2). **GIDP:** Blanco, Albies. **DP:** Kansas City 1, Atlanta 1.

Kansas City	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Lugo	2.0	1	0	0	1	3

NASCAR CUP SERIES

Bell speeds to 3rd consecutive Kansas pole

Reid Spencer
SPECIAL TO FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Christopher Bell poses on a toy car for photos after winning the pole award during Saturday's qualifying for Sunday's NASCAR Cup Series Hollywood Casino 400 at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kan. SEAN GARDNER/GETTY IMAGES

KANSAS CITY, Kan.–For once, Christopher Bell thinks he has a car that's race-worthy as well as lightning fast in qualifying at Kansas Speedway.

Navigating the 1.5-mile track in 30.111 seconds (179.336 mph) in the final round of Saturday's time trials, Bell edged Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Ty Gibbs (179.099 mph) by 0.040 seconds for the top starting spot in Sunday's Hollywood Casino 400 Presented by ESPN BET (3 p.m. ET on USA, MRN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).

Bell will start the first race of the Round of 12 in the NASCAR Cup Series playoffs from a familiar spot. He earned the Busch Light Pole Award at the track for the third consecutive race and fourth time overall.

"I'll tell you what, it's the people that work on this race car that made the statement," said Bell, who claimed his second pole position this season and the 12th of his career. "We showed up with probably the best Kansas car we've ever had.

"It's always been a great track for us to qualify, and it seems like whenever we go race, we're always in the third-to-seventh range. Today it was different. It felt really, really good in practice. I felt really comfortable driving the car."

Bell has never converted a pole into a victory at Kansas Speedway, a situation he hopes to correct on Sunday as the second round of the playoffs begins.

"The tough thing about Kansas is maintaining the balance," Bell said. "This place, with these (Gen 7) cars, it swings really, really bad. You'll start off really comfortable, and depending on how your car is, you might go really tight, you might go really loose.

"Typically, the fast lane is up top, but then you have to really adjust your line to what your balance is doing. I've got to drive a little bit better here (Sunday) than I have in the previous Kansas races, but I definitely have the car to do it."

Bell enters the Round of 12 second in the standings, 24 points above the current cut line for the Round of 8. Coming off his dominating victory at Bristol, top-seeded Kyle Larson will start 11th on Sunday.

Gibbs and third-place starter Kyle Busch (178.643 mph) were the only two non-playoff drivers to advance to the final round during Saturday's time trials.

Tyler Reddick, third in the standings, will occupy the fourth spot on the grid, followed by Joey Logano, William Byron, defending series champion Ryan Blaney, four-time Kansas winner Denny Hamlin, Chase Briscoe and Daniel Suarez.

Larson won the 2024 spring race at Kansas, while Reddick is the defending winner of this event.

Playoff drivers Alex Bowman, Austin Cindric and Chase Elliott will start 12th, 17th and 38th, respectively. Elliott was down a cylinder in practice and qualifying, necessitating an engine change.

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES

Almirola beats playoff drivers for Kansas win

Reid Spencer
SPECIAL TO FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

NASCAR Xfinity Series driver Aric Almirola after winning Saturday's Kansas Lottery 300 at Kansas Speedway. AMY KONTRAS/IMAGN IMAGES

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – Part-time NASCAR Xfinity Series driver Aric Almirola ran down playoff leader Cole Custer in the closing laps of Saturday's Kansas Lottery 300 at Kansas Speedway and pulled away for his second victory of the season in the No. 20 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota.

In a Round of 12 playoff opener that ended with several unhappy drivers and a handful of post-race conversations between playoff contenders, Almirola picked up his first win at the 1.5-mile track and the sixth of his career.

Almirola beat Custer to the finish line by 0.660 seconds, with Chandler Smith trailing in third after raising Custer's ire by squeezing the No. 00 Ford into the outside wall as Custer chased Smith for the lead – before Almirola made his late-race run.

To seal the win, Almirola had to overcome a brush with the outside wall on Lap 124 and a resulting cut tire that forced him to the pits. An opportune caution that interrupted a cycle of green flag stops on Lap 145 was all Almirola needed to get back on equal footing with the other contenders.

Almirola is the fourth driver to win two races this season in the No. 20 JGR Toyota, joining Christopher Bell, John Hunter Nemechek and Ryan Truex.

"I'm wore out," said Almirola, who passed Custer for the lead on Lap 197 of 200. "That was a hard day at the office for a guy that's been sitting on the couch. I just pushed too hard there when we had the issue on pit road (a slow stop), and I got in the fence and cut the right-rear tire down.

"I knew I had to put my head down and go to work after that. We got lucky to get the caution when we did, and we were out of tires, so the fact that it went green there to the end (for the final 49 laps) ... that's where we were strong. We were really strong on the long runs."

After the race, Custer had a brief conversation with Smith and vowed revenge.

"Everybody wants to try and talk afterwards," Custer said. "At the end of the day, he put me in the fence, and he's going to pay for it."

Smith countered that he didn't believe Custer ever had position to his outside.

"We're racing for the win and five extra playoff points," said Smith, who led 114 laps. "You've got a very, very valid statement, I understand, but I also wouldn't change what I did, because I was giving myself the best shot to win."

Non-playoff driver Connor Zilisch finished fourth, followed by Sheldon Creed, who improved his position in the playoff standings by four spots with his seventh top five in the last nine races.

Pole winner Brandon Jones, who didn't make the postseason, was fifth, followed by playoff drivers Austin Hill, Shane van Gisbergen, Jesse Love and Riley Herbst.

In another post-race conversation, Hill apologized to Herbst for Lap 90 contact that sent Herbst's Ford spinning through the infield grass at the end of the second stage. In yet another tete-a-tete between playoff drivers, Sammy Smith took AJ Allmendinger to task for early contact that damaged Smith's Chevrolet.

GOLF LPGA TOUR

Ashleigh Buhai plays a shot on the 18th hole during the second round of the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship on Saturday. ALEX SLITZ/GETTY IMAGES

Buhai emerges from 4-way tie to grab lead

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

South Africa's Ashleigh Buhai carded a 4-under 67 on Saturday to break out of a four-way tie for second and grab the lead after two rounds of action at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship in Rogers, Ark.

Buhai entered the day tied with China's Liqi Zeng, Spain's Carlota Ciganda and Mexico's Maria Fassi on the leaderboard, with all four golfers sitting one shot behind first-round leader Jasmine Suwannapura of Thailand.

It was Buhai who emerged from the pack, carding seven birdies against one bogey and one double bogey. She now sits at 11-under 131 for the tournament, one stroke ahead of the Philippines' Dottie Ardina (67 on Saturday).

"It was good. I felt I played just as well as yesterday," Buhai said. "Obviously the winds were a little trickier than yesterday morning for us, so kind of faded out for everybody. I did start to get a little frustrated, but I was hitting a lot of good shots."

After her double bogey at the par-4 eighth, Buhai collected six birdies over the final 10 holes, including four from Nos. 14-18.

"Made a silly double bogey, but at least I kept calm and just reminded myself to keep doing what I was doing," Buhai said. "Finally got rewarded down the last few holes."

Ardina got off to a roaring start, carding birdie or better on four of her first six holes. She had an eagle at the par-4 fifth and hit 13 of 13 fairways for her round.

"I had a great start, great front nine," Ardina said. "Started with a birdie. Birdied (No. 4) and had eagle on (No. 5), good hole-out, and a birdie after that. ... Had two bogeys on 11 and 12. Had a little shaky start on the back, but managed to birdie 14 and just tried to play the wind until the end."

A pair of Thais – Arpichaya Yubol (65) and Pajaree Anannarukarn (67) – are T3 with Japan's Nasa Hataoka (66) and Mexican Gaby Lopez (67).

Jennifer Kupcho and Lauren Hartlage shared low-round honors with matching 64s. They are part of a massive eight-way tie for seventh that also includes South Korean Sei Young Kim (65), Linnea Strom of Sweden (66) and Japan's Minami Katsu (67).

Suwannapura struggled to a 1-over 72 to drop into a tie for 15th.

WADA seeking ban of No. 1 Sinner for doping

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

The World Anti-Doping Agency is seeking a ban of World No. 1 Jannik Sinner for one to two years, contending the Italian tennis star is negligent in a doping case.

WADA confirmed Saturday that it has appealed the Sinner case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Sinner twice tested positive for a banned substance in March but was not suspended because he was not at fault, the International Tennis Integrity Agency announced on Aug. 20.

Samples the Italian submitted at the ATP Masters 1000 event in Indian Wells on March 10 and March 18 contained low levels of the prohibited substance clostebol, violating anti-doping rules, according to an independent tribunal appointed by Sport Resolutions.

However, it was found that clostebol, a steroid, entered Sinner's system via a third party. A support team member who had been using an over-the-counter spray that contained the substance to treat his own wound passed it on to Sinner through therapy performed without gloves.

WADA disagrees.

"It is WADA's view that the finding of 'no fault or negligence' was not correct under the applicable rules," the agency said in a news release. "WADA is seeking a period of ineligibility of between one and two years. WADA is not seeking a disqualification of any results, save that which has already been imposed by the tribunal of first instance.

"As this matter is now pending before CAS, WADA will make no further comment at this time."

Sinner, 23, has had a spectacular 2024, going 57-5 in his matches and winning six of his 16 career titles, including the U.S. Open, the Australian Open, and the ATP Masters 1000 events in Cincinnati and Miami.

Sinner reached the quarterfinals at the China Open on Saturday.

In August, some of his fellow players spoke out against the lack of a punishment for Sinner, however.

Australia's Nick Kyrgios blasted Sinner's explanation.

"Ridiculous – whether it was accidental or planned. You get tested twice with a banned (steroid) substance... you should be gone for 2 years. Your performance was enhanced. Massage cream.... Yeah nice," Kyrgios posted on X.

"Different rules for different players," Canadian Denis Shapovalov posted on X. "Can't imagine what every other player that got banned for contaminated substances is feeling right now."

Jannik Sinner reacts during his match against Roman Safiullin at the China Open on Saturday in Beijing. JADE GAO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

TENNIS ROUNDUP

Sabalenka continues quest of 1st Beijing title

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Top seed Aryna Sabalenka overcame a sluggish start to defeat Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew 6-4, 6-1 and move to the third round of the China Open in Beijing on Saturday.

Sabalenka won her 13th straight WTA Tour match in 76 minutes, but she wasn't completely pleased by her play.

"In the first set, I was struggling a little bit with the rhythm," Sabalenka said. "In the second set, seems like everything started working much better. ... I think that's why it was more smooth and better quality."

The numbers of the match show Sawangkaew, who made her tour debut last week at the Thailand Open, was unable to stay with the World No. 2. Sabalenka won 75 percent of her points on first serve, compared to just 48 percent for her opponent. Sabalenka won 52 percent of return points.

Sabalenka, of Belarus, has a record of success in China, winning four of her 16 career tour singles titles in the country. She has yet to win the Beijing tournament, however.

"It's always great to come back and feel the atmosphere, feel the vibe, knowing that I kind of gain my fan club here," said Sabalenka, who won the U.S. Open and the Australian Open this year. "It gives me more motivation to go there and compete and bring my best tennis and make sure I stay till the last stages of the tournament, so I can enjoy this atmosphere as much as possible."

Seeking to interrupt that vibe in the next round will be American Ashlyn Krueger, a 6-1, 7-6 (4) winner over Lulu Sun of New Zealand.

Home-country favorite Qinwen Zheng, who won the Olympic gold medal, played a quick match, defeating Kamilla Rakhimova of Russia 6-1, 6-1 in front of a cheering crowd of about 15,000.

"Atmosphere was insane," Zheng, the fifth seed, said.

"I never thought it will be so full in the center court. They put on my (favorite Chinese pop song). They just did everything for me.

"Honestly when I played last year in China Open, I remember it wasn't that full. Today I see there's nearly no empty seat."

She will aim to maintain the momentum in the third round against Nadia Podoroska of Argentina, who defeated Russian Dayana Yastremska 7-5, 6-7 (4), 6-2.

Other winners Saturday included Jaqueline Cristian of Romania, who upset seventh-seeded Czech Barbora Krejcikova 1-6, 6-4, 7-5; 13th seed Beatriz Haddad Maia of Brazil; 16th seed Donna Vekic of Croatia; 17th seed Mirra Andreeva of Russia; and 18th seed Madison Keys.

Aryna Sabalenka hits a return to Mananchaya Sawangkaew during their singles match at the China Open on Saturday. JADE GAO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Men
China Open

Top-seeded Italian Jannik Sinner kept his quarterfinals streak alive by rallying past Russia's Roman Safiullin 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 in Beijing.

The World No. 1 has reached at least the quarterfinals in every tour-level event he has played in 2024. Sinner had 25 winners and converted four of 13 break chances to set up a clash with Czech Jiri Lehecka, a 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 winner against Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut.

No. 3 seed Daniil Medvedev of Russia ousted France's Adrian Mannarino 7-6 (6), 6-2, offsetting his six double faults with eight aces. Medvedev next faces Italian Flavio Cobolli, a 6-4, 6-2 winner against Russian Pavel Kotov.

Japan Open

Two-time champion and home favorite Kei Nishikori breezed into the quarterfinals with a 6-2, 6-3 victory against Australia's Jordan Thompson in Tokyo.

Nishikori, who lifted the trophy in 2012 and 2014, broke Thompson's serve five times in the 83-minute match. His next opponent will be No. 6 seed Holger Rune of Denmark, who eliminated Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-2, 6-4 in just 67 minutes.

Chile's Tomas Machac upended fifth-seeded Tommy Paul 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (4) in two hours and 35 minutes to reach the final eight. Machac saved 11 of 15 break points and next faces another American, Alex Michelsen. Michelsen took down Australia's Christopher O'Connell 6-1, 6-4 in 79 minutes.

Golf

Continued from Page 1

Cantlay and Schauffele won 1 up on South Korea's Si Woo Kim and Tom Kim.

Tom Kim's 38-foot putt on the ninth hole pulled the International team within 3-2 in that matchup.

The match was all even after Si Woo Kim chipped in from the rough with a difficult stance after his ball was finally located on No. 16.

The U.S. team won three of four matches in four-ball to regain the lead in the morning. The U.S. led 8-6 on the International team going into afternoon foursomes.

Play Saturday was behind schedule due to a weather-related delay of 1 hour, 37 minutes. After the first group completed the first hole and the next group teed off, there was an extended break at 7:23 a.m. because of fog.

Scheffler and Morikawa assured the U.S. would go back ahead by winning 2 & 1 against Scott and Pendrith. Scheffler's birdies on Nos. 16 and 17 sealed the point. Scott had tied the match with a 26-foot birdie putt on No. 14 after Pendrith's tee shot was in the water.

That helped offset a strong stretch for Tom Kim and Si Woo Kim, who won 4 & 3 against Keegan Bradley and Wyndham Clark. Tom Kim had a strong outing when the International duo claimed three of four holes to lead 5-2 through 10 holes. Si Woo Kim's 17-foot birdie putt on No. 15 clinched the point.

Earlier, Tony Finau and Schauffele collected momentum for the U.S. side with a 3 & 2 triumph on Canadians Mackenzie Hughes and Conners.

Just as they did on Thursday, Cantlay and Burns wrapped up the final point of four-ball by winning 2 & 1, this time against Matsuyama and Im. Cantlay had one of the highlights with a 49-foot, chip-in eagle on the par-5 12th, putting the U.S. ahead 4-2, and the sides halved the rest of the holes.

The first two days were marked by sweeps. The U.S. went up 5-0 with Thursday's four-ball matches before the International team pulled even with Friday's domination in foursomes.

Team USA's Patrick Cantlay, left, and Xander Schauffele celebrate during Saturday afternoon's foursomes on Day 3 of the Presidents Cup at the Royal Montreal Golf Club. JARED C. TILTON/GETTY IMAGES

WNBA PLAYOFFS LYNX VS. SUN

Teams' season-long duel continues in semifinals

REUTERS FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

After the Minnesota Lynx held off the Connecticut Sun to earn the No. 2 seed in the playoffs, they will take their earned home-court advantage into a matchup of the teams in a best-of-five WNBA semifinal series.

Minnesota will play host to Game 1 on Sunday at Minneapolis after it advanced in the opening round with a two-game sweep of the Phoenix Mercury. Third-seeded Connecticut reached the semifinals after sweeping the Indiana Fever.

The Lynx were powered in their opening playoff series by the continues superb play of Napheesa Collier, who scored 80 combined points in the pair of wins over the Mercury on 25-of-39 shooting (64.1 percent) from the floor.

Collier, a member of the gold medal-winning U.S. Olympic team this past summer and recently voted as the AP Defensive Player of the Year, has delivered some of her best basketball in a crucial part of the season.

The Sun made it out of the first round after using a total team effort and smothering defense. Led by DeWanna Bonner – who had 22 points in Game 1 and 15 points in Game 2 - the Sun stifled WNBA Rookie of the Year Caitlin Clark, holding her to a combined 14-of-40 shooting (35 percent).

Alyssa Thomas – who was on the Olympic team with Collier - also was a big reason why the Sun won their opening series, dropping a 13-assist triple-double in Game 1, then piling up 19 points with 13 assists in Game 2.

"A.T. is a monster," Lynx forward Bridget Carleton said. "They pressure the ball. They make things hard on you offensively, just trying to take care of the ball. They feed off that."

DiJonai Carrington also has provided a big boost for the Sun and was voted the most improved player in the WNBA this season. The Baylor product averaged career-bests in points (12.7), rebounds (5.0), assists (1.6) and steals (1.6) while starting in the 39 games she played.

The Minnesota Lynx's Napheesa Collier dribbles against the Phoenix Mercury on Wednesday. STEPHEN MATUREN/GETTY IMAGES

Carrington's tenacity on defense has been key too, posting a top-40 defensive rating of 94.7 this season after a top-10 mark of 92.6 last season.

"She has elevated her game in every way," Sun coach Stephanie White said of Carrington. "She's been consistent, she's been productive. She's been instrumental in every one of our wins. Whether she's scoring the basketball or whether she's defending the best perimeter player, her ability to make plays for us has been huge."

The Lynx went 1-2 against the Sun in the regular season, with those competitive games decided by an average of just 2.7 points. In a July 4 home loss to Connecticut, Collier played only 24 minutes. In their most recent meeting, a 78-76 win for the Lynx on Sept. 17 in Connecticut, Collier had 25 points and the Lynx forced the Sun into 16 turnovers.

WNBA PLAYOFFS ACES VS. LIBERTY

Rematch of 2023 finals awaits in the semifinals

REUTERS

A rematch of the 2023 WNBA Finals will determine one of the participants in this year's championship round, as the No. 1-seeded New York Liberty host the fourth-seeded Las Vegas Aces in Game 1 of their best-of-five semifinal series on Sunday in Brooklyn.

In the opening round of the playoffs, Las Vegas advanced past Seattle in its quest to become the WNBA's first three-peat champion since the Houston Comets claimed the league's first four championships from 1997 through 2000.

This season's unanimous MVP, A'ja Wilson, scored 24 points and grabbed 13 rebounds in Tuesday's series-clinching win over the Storm.

With Wilson on one end and Breanna Stewart leading New York on the other, a clash of three- and two-time MVPs headlines this series. The duo has combined to claim the last three MVP awards, and five of the last seven.

Wilson garnered her third MVP on the strength of a league-leading 26.9 points per game and 11.9 rebounds, second-most in the WNBA. Stewart, who finished third in MVP voting, averaged 20.4 points, 8.5 rebounds and 3.5 assists per game in the regular season while helping New York to the league's best record at 32-8.

The Liberty dispatched Atlanta in the first round in 83-69 and 91-82 wins last Sunday and Tuesday. Stewart had a modest 13-point, six-rebound performance in the decisive game, while Sabrina Ionescu went off for 36 points and nine assists to set the pace.

The dynamic Ionescu could prove pivotal in this series. Last year against Las Vegas in the Finals, the Aces held Ionescu to 39 total points in four games. She had 11 assists in Game 3 – New York's only win in the best-of-five showdown – matching her total from the other three games combined.

"Throw (the game film) out. I'm not even watching it," Liberty coach Sandy Brondello said, according to the New York Post, about last year's Finals. "It doesn't mean anything to me. This is this year. We're a different team. We've learned from our things, but we know it's going to be a tough series."

The Las Vegas Aces' A'ja Wilson holds the WNBA MVP award before last Sunday's game vs. the Seattle Storm. ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Wilson expressed the same sentiment, according to the Las Vegas Sun: "I feel like we're two completely different teams. We're not the same team as last year or two years before."

The Aces will be a different team than the version that saw the Liberty just three weeks ago. Wilson did not play in a 75-71 New York win on Sept. 8, which completed a 3-0 regular-season sweep of the two-time reigning champions..

Kelsey Plum scored 25 points in that loss. Plum was integral to Las Vegas' Finals win a year ago, posting at least 23 points in three of four contests. She's coming off a 29-point effort in the Aces' clinching win over Seattle after scoring just two in the series opener.

NBA

Minnesota Timberwolves center Karl-Anthony Towns (32) controls the ball against the Mavericks on May 28 in Dallas. KEVIN JAIRAJ/USA TODAY SPORTS

Reports: Knicks acquire Towns from T-wolves

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

In a major offseason NBA blockbuster deal, the New York Knicks acquired All-Star forward Karl-Anthony Towns from the Minnesota Timberwolves, multiple media outlets reported Friday night.

The Timberwolves reportedly will receive All-Star forward Julius Randle, guard Donte DiVincenzo and a first-round pick. According to ESPN, the draft pick will be a 2025 first-rounder, top-13 protected, that previously belonged to the Detroit Pistons.

The trade will require the involvement of a third team to balance the exchange of salaries, per ESPN, with the Charlotte Hornets set to fill that role.

Towns, 28, is heading into the first year of a four-year, $220 million contract extension. Randle, 29, is due to make $28.9 million in the 2024-25 season, and he has a $30.9 million player option for the following season. DiVincenzo, 27, has three years remaining on his contract for a total of almost $36 million.

The swap continues an offseason that saw the Knicks acquire Mikal Bridges from the Brooklyn Nets. New York is looking to improve on a season in which it went 50-32 and reached the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Minnesota went 56-26 last season, one game off the best record in the Western Conference, then advanced to the conference finals.

Towns was an All-Star for the fourth time last season, when he averaged 21.8 points and 8.3 rebounds. In his nine-season career, all with the Timberwolves, he has career averages of 22.9 points and 10.8 boards.

Randle was limited to 46 games last season due to a right shoulder injury. He last played in January, then had the shoulder surgically repaired in April.

The three-time All-Star put up 24 points, 9.2 rebounds and 5.0 assists in 2023-24. He has averaged 19.1 points, 9.4 boards and 3.7 assists in his career with the Los Angeles Lakers (2014-15 to 2017-18), New Orleans Pelicans (2018-19) and Knicks (2019-20 to 2023-24).

DiVincenzo produced a career-high 15.5 points per game last season while adding 3.7 rebounds and 2.7 assists.

NWSL ROUNDUP

Pride extend unbeaten streak to 23 matches

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Carson Pickett, Angelina and Marta scored to help host Orlando remain unbeaten with the victory over Houston.

The Pride (16-0-6, 54 points) haven't lost in a league-record 23 consecutive matches, beginning with last year's season finale.

Yuki Nagasato scored for Houston (4-13-5, 17 points), which fell into last place in the 14-team league.

Pickett scored in the 29th minute on a goal set up by a long cross from Cori Dyke. Orlando made it 2-0 in the 51st minute when Angelina sent a right-footed shot from outside the box into the top left-hand corner of the net. It was her second goal of the season.

Houston cut its deficit in half two minutes later when Nagasato's left-footer went into the right corner. It was her second goal of the season.

Utah 1, Louisville 0

Ana Tejada scored on a booming kick in the 78th minute to lift the Royals past Racing Louisville in Sandy, Utah.

Tejada was well beyond the box when she sent a short pass to Claudia Zornoza, who immediately tapped it back. Tejada wound up and booted a long-range right-footed rocket into the left corner of the net as the Royals (5-14-3, 18 points) halted a three-match losing streak and moved out of the NWSL basement.

Katie Lund had four saves for Louisville (6-9-7, 25 points), which had a two-match winning streak snapped.

NJ/NY Gotham 1, Kansas City 1

Temwa Chawinga scored just after halftime to allow the host Current to come away with a draw against NJ/NY Gotham.

Chawinga got free for a breakaway that ended with her dribbling past NJ/NY goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger in the 52nd minute. She effortlessly tapped a wide-open right-footed shot into the back of the net for her league-leading 17th goal of the season.

Kansas City (12-3-7, 43 points) extended its unbeaten streak to four matches (2-0-2).

NJ/NY (13-4-5, 44 points) went up 1-0 in the 23rd when a cross that got sent into the box got a piece of Current defender Alana Cook for an own goal.

Orlando Pride defender Carson Pickett kicks the ball against the Houston Dash on Saturday in Orlando. RUSSELL LANSFORD/IMAGN IMAGES

SOCCER

MLS ROUNDUP

Historic 1st half propels NYCFC to a rout

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

New York City FC forward Alonso Martinez (16) celebrates after scoring a goal during the first half of Saturday's match against the New York Red Bulls in Harrison, N.J. DENNIS SCHNEIDLER/IMAGN IMAGES

Alonso Martinez scored twice in the first half as New York City FC snapped a nine-game winless stretch with a 5-1 rout of the host New York Red Bulls in the "Hudson River Derby" Saturday night in Harrison, N.J.

NYCFC (12-11-8, 44 points) went from seventh to fifth in the Eastern Conference by ending a 0-3-6 slump with its first win since July 3.

Martinez notched his fourth career multi-goal game – all since May 31 - and upped his season total to 14.

He scored in the seventh minute and again the fifth minute of first-half stoppage time to give NYCFC a 4-1 lead. It marked the first time in series history one team scored four times in the first half against the other.

Martinez's first goal came two minutes after Maxi Moralez opened the scoring following a careless giveaway by Red Bulls goalkeeper Carlos Coronel.

St. Louis 3, Kansas City 1

Cedric Teuchert had one goal and two assists to help St. Louis City SC earn a victory over visiting Sporting Kansas City on a night the hosts were officially eliminated from playoff contention.

Rasmus Alm and Eduard Lowen also scored for St. Louis (7-11-13, 34 points), which can no longer catch Minnesota United (13-12-6, 45 points) for the final Western Conference playoff place after the Loons beat visiting Colorado on Saturday.

Teuchert now has five goals and three assists in the league since the 27-year-old German joined St. Louis as its highest-profile signing of the secondary transfer window.

Stephen Afrifa scored for Kansas City (8-17-7, 31 points), which made eight changes to its starting lineup in a match played less than 72 hours after it suffered a 3-1 extra time defeat at LAFC in the U.S. Open Cup final.

The visitors began the night already eliminated from the playoff race.

Montreal 3, San Jose 0

Josef Martinez scored twice early in the second half as CF Montreal continued their MLS playoff push with a victory against the visiting Earthquakes.

Caden Clark added a goal and an assist and Bryce Duke had two helpers for Montreal (9-12-10, 37 points), which extended its unbeaten run to four matches (3-0-1).

Goalkeeper Jonathan Sirios made one save in posting the shutout.

Daniel made seven saves for the Earthquakes (5-23-3, 18 points), who assured themselves of finishing with the fewest points in the league.

The opening goal came in the 51st minute off Duke's corner kick from the right wing. The 5-foot-8 Martinez boxed out San Jose defender Rodrigues, who is 6-2, just inside the top of the 6-yard box and, with his back practically toward the goalmouth, leaped and put a powerful downward header into the right side of the net.

Minnesota 3, Colorado 0

Kelvin Yeboah scored two goals and Hassani Dotson also scored to lead Minnesota United to a victory over the Rapids in Saint Paul, Minn.

It was the second brace in six matches for Yeboah, who signed a three-and-a-half-year contract with the Loons in July as a designated player. Yeboah has now scored seven goals in six matches with Minnesota and has a four-match goal streak.

Robin Lod had his 15th assist of the year on Yeboah's first goal of the night to tie Minnesota's single-season assist record. Dayne St. Clair finished with one save for his fifth clean sheet of 2024 for the Loons (13-12-6, 45 points), who moved into eighth place in the Western Conference with their fourth win in five matches.

Zack Steffen made seven saves for Colorado (15-11-5, 50 points).

Minnesota dominated the first half while taking a 1-0 lead, finishing with a 6-1 advantage in shots on goal. Yeboah scored his first goal at the 16-minute mark when he redirected Lod's bouncing shot from the right side of the box into the right corner of the net.

LAFC 2, Cincinnati 1

Denis Bouanga's second-half goal led Los Angeles FC to a victory over FC Cincinnati, securing an MLS Cup playoff berth for the Black and Gold.

David Martinez had the other goal for LAFC (15-8-7, 52 points), which won in MLS play for the first time since a 3-0 victory in Seattle on July 20. The win snapped a stretch of five matches without a victory.

Luca Orellano had the lone goal for Cincinnati (17-9-5, 56 points), which saw its unbeaten streak halted at four (2-0-2).

Bouanga gave LAFC a 2-1 lead in the 73rd minute, putting his right-footed strike from a tough angle short-side past keeper Roman Celentano for his 18th goal of the season.

The French forward remains second in the race for the MLS Golden Boot, trailing only Christian Benteke of D.C. United.

New England 1, Nashville 0

Brandon Bye's late header gave the Revolution a win over visiting Nashville SC in Foxborough, Mass.

The scoreless match was finally broken open in the 86th minute when Luca Langoni sent a cross into the box. Bye was in position to head the ball into the net for the first goal of the defender's injury-plagued season.

The victory snapped New England's five-match (0-3-2) winless streak and kept the team's faint playoff hopes alive. The Revolution (9-17-4, 31 points) entered Saturday in last place in the Eastern Conference and likely will need to win their remaining four matches to squeak into the postseason.

Nashville SC (8-14-9, 33 points) face a similarly steep climb with three matches remaining on their schedule. Saturday's loss ended a three-match (2-0-1) unbeaten run for Nashville.

Goalkeeper Aljaz Ivacic made four saves for his fourth shutout of the season. Ivacic saved the victory for New England with a huge stop on Hany Mukhtar three minutes into second-half stoppage time.

Seattle 1, Houston 0

Paul Rothrock led the Sounders with the lone goal in a home victory over the Dynamo.

Both sides clinched a playoff berth before the match started after FC Dallas' loss and Austin FC's draw.

Seattle (14-9-8, 50 points) broke through in the 22nd minute following a heads-up play by Rothrock on a rebound off an Albert Rusnak attack on goal. Rusnak went up against two defenders on the left side of the 18-yard box, but lost the ball.

The ball didn't stay loose long, with Rothrock sprinting toward it, hitting it one-time with a curling effort around the outstretched arms of Steve Clark and into the bottom right hand corner of the net. It was Rothrock's fourth goal this season.

D.C. United 2, Columbus 2

Christian Benteke scored two goals, including one in the 81st minute, as D.C. United pulled out a draw with the visiting Crew in Washington.

Benteke reached the 21-goal mark for the season, notching his second goal of the match off a pass from Gabriel Pirani.

Cucho Hernandez provided a goal and an assist and Jacen Russell-Rowe also scored as both goals for the Crew came less than three minutes apart early in the second half. Columbus (16-5-9, 57 points), which has gone through a grueling recent schedule, was thwarted in an attempt to win its third consecutive match.

D.C. United (8-13-10, 34 points) has at least one point in four of its last five matches, but it will still be an uphill climb for the team to reach the MLS postseason with just three matches remaining.

The Crew have scored at least two goals in their last three MLS matches, but defensive breakdowns proved costly. Columbus applied regular pressure on D.C. United, but the home team ended up with a 5-3 advantage on corner kicks.

Austin 2, Salt Lake 2

Guilherme Biro poured in the equalizer in the 89th minute as host Austin FC roared from behind to split the points via a draw with playoff-bound Real Salt Lake in a late-season Western Conference match.

Biro's match-tying tally lifted Austin (9-13-9, 36 points) to the draw but could do little to help the Verde's hopes for the postseason. Austin remains in 11th place in the West, two spots and now eight points under the playoff line with three matches remaining.

Real Salt Lake (14-7-10, 52 points), who have already secured a spot in the postseason for the fourth straight year, fell from second to third place in the West with three contests to play.

The Verde dominated the first half but never found the net. Austin started the half with a shot on goal by Jon Gallagher in the 11th minute that was stopped by RSL goalkeeper Zac MacMath and ended it with a shot on target with low probability from Alexander Ring in the third minute of added time.

In between, Austin's Julio Cascante had the half's best scoring chance but completely missed the target with his header after a corner kick from Ring.

Atlanta 1, Philadelphia 1

Saba Lobjanidze scored his team-leading eighth goal in the 72nd minute to lift visiting Atlanta United to a draw at the Union in a match pivotal to the playoff chase.

Lobjanidze's header leveled the game 11 minutes after Nathan Harriel scored for Philadelphia (9-12-10, 37 points), which began the night in the ninth and final Eastern Conference playoff place and two spots above Atlanta (8-13-10, 34 points).

United plays two of its final three at home and will continue to have a match in hand on Toronto, which began Saturday in eighth above Philadelphia on the first tiebreak of total wins. Toronto played later at Chicago.

Brad Guzan made six saves for the visitors, who scored on their only effort on target but offered more of a threat than that number suggested.

Miami 1, Charlotte 1

Lionel Messi scored a second-half equalizer and Inter Miami claimed a draw against Charlotte FC in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Miami (19-4-8, 65 points) played to a draw for the third straight time following a five-match winning streak from July 17-Sept. 14.

Charlotte (11-11-9, 42 points) was denied back-to-back victories, which would have marked the club's first winning streak since mid-June. Still, Charlotte FC are unbeaten over their past two matches on the heels of a three-match skid.

Messi tied Saturday's match in the 67th minute when he lasered a shot from beyond the box that evaded diving Charlotte goalkeeper Kristijan Kahlina to make it 1-1. It was Messi's 15th goal of the season, and he now trails Luis Suarez by a pair of tallies for the team lead. It was also Messi's third goal in four matches since his return from a two-month layoff stemming from an ankle injury.

Miami then appeared to win a penalty in the 75th minute as it looked to take the lead, but the call – and a subsequent second yellow card to Charlotte FC's Adilson Malanda – was overturned after further review.

Chicago 1, Toronto 1

Jonathan Dean's late goal for Chicago cancelled Prince Owusu's first-half penalty strike as the Fire and visiting Toronto FC played to a draw in Bridgeview, Ill.

In the 84th minute, Dean chipped in Ariel Lassiter's brilliant cross into the box to level the match for Chicago (7-16-9, 30 points), which will miss the playoffs for a seventh straight season.

Toronto (11-17-4, 37 points), meanwhile, could feel it let two extra points slip away, but managed to remain in playoff position in the Eastern Conference with the result.

After VAR determined Toronto star Federico Bernardeschi was fouled in the box, Owusu stepped to the spot, deked Chicago goalkeeper Chris Brady and found the corner of the fourth extra minute of the opening half.

Vancouver 1, Portland 1

Brian White and Jonathan Rodriguez each scored in the first half as the Whitecaps and visiting Timbers recorded a draw.

The draw was enough to clinch Vancouver (13-9-8, 47 points) a spot in the MLS Cup playoffs for the second consecutive season. The Whitecaps have surged to the postseason with a 6-2-4 record over their past 12 regular-season matches.

Portland (12-10-9, 45 points) would've clinched a playoff berth with a win, but the Timbers are still in good shape to reach the postseason. The Timbers are in ninth place in the Western Conference, eight points ahead of 10th-place FC Dallas.

Just three minutes into the match, Sebastian Berhalter's cross found White open in the box. White converted the chance for his 15th goal of the season.

SCOREBOARD

BETMGM

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NFL

Sunday

FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG
ATLANTA	2.5	42	New Orleans
Cincinnati	4.5	47	CAROLINA
CHICAGO	3	40.5	LA Rams
GREEN BAY	2.5	43.5	Minnesota
HOUSTON	6	44.5	Jacksonville
Pittsburgh	1.5	40	INDIANAPOLIS
NY JETS	7.5	39.5	Denver
Philadelphia	1.5	42.5	TAMPA BAY
ARIZONA	3.5	50	Washington
SAN FRAN.	10.5	40.5	New England
Kansas City	7	40	LA CHARGERS
LAS VEGAS	1.5	37	Cleveland
BALTIMORE	2.5	46.5	Buffalo

Monday

FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG
MIAMI	1	36.5	Tennessee
DETROIT	3.5	46.5	Seattle

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All times Eastern

MLB

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
N.Y. Yankees	93	68	.578	–
Baltimore	90	71	.559	3
Tampa Bay	80	81	.497	13
Boston	80	81	.497	13
Toronto	74	87	.460	19

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	92	69	.571	–
Detroit	86	75	.534	6
Kansas City	85	76	.528	7
Minnesota	82	79	.509	10
Chicago	40	121	.248	52

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	88	73	.547	–
Seattle	84	77	.522	4
Texas	77	84	.478	11
Oakland	69	92	.429	19
L.A. Angels	63	98	.391	25

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	94	67	.584	–
Atlanta	88	71	.553	5
N.Y. Mets	87	72	.547	6
Washington	71	90	.441	23
Miami	61	100	.379	33

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	93	68	.578	–
Chicago	83	78	.516	10
St. Louis	82	79	.509	11
Pittsburgh	76	85	.472	17
Cincinnati	76	85	.472	17

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Dodgers	97	64	.602	–
San Diego	93	68	.578	4
Arizona	88	73	.547	9
San Francisco	80	81	.497	17
Colorado	61	100	.379	36

Friday's Scores

Chicago 1, Cincinnati 0
Detroit 4, Chicago 1
Washington 9, Philadelphia 1
Pittsburgh 4, N.Y. Yankees 2
Miami 15, Toronto 5
Tampa Bay 2, Boston 1
Houston 5, Cleveland 2
Atlanta 3, Kansas City 0
L.A. Dodgers 11, Colorado 4
Baltimore 7, Minnesota 2
Milwaukee 8, N.Y. Mets 4
Texas 5, L.A. Angels 2
San Diego 5, Arizona 3
Seattle 2, Oakland 0
St. Louis 6, San Francisco 3

Saturday's Scores

Pittsburgh 9, N.Y. Yankees 4
Chicago 4, Detroit 0
Chicago 3, Cincinnati 0
Miami 8, Toronto 1
Washington 6, Philadelphia 3
San Francisco 6, St. Louis 5
Tampa Bay 7, Boston 2
Houston 4, Cleveland 3
Baltimore 9, Minnesota 2
Milwaukee 6, N.Y. Mets 0
Atlanta 2, Kansas City 1
San Diego 5, Arizona 0
L.A. Dodgers 13, Colorado 2
Texas 9, L.A. Angels 8
Seattle 7, Oakland 6

Sunday's Games

Tampa Bay (Pepiot 8-7) at Boston (Houck 9-10), 3:05 p.m.
Philadelphia (Nola 13-8) at Washington (Irvin 10-13), 3:05 p.m.
Pittsburgh (Falter 8-9) at N.Y. Yankees (Schmidt 5-5), 3:05 p.m.
St. Louis (TBD) at San Francisco (Birdsong 5-5), 3:05 p.m.
Miami (Weathers 4-6) at Toronto (Bassitt 10-14), 3:07 p.m.
Texas (Heaney 5-14) at L.A. Angels (Kochanowicz 2-5), 3:07 p.m.
San Diego (King 13-9) at Arizona (Pfaadt 10-10), 3:10 p.m.
Houston (Arrighetti 7-13) at Cleveland (Williams 3-10), 3:10 p.m.
Chicago White Sox (Cannon 4-10) at Detroit (Skubal 18-4), 3:10 p.m.
L.A. Dodgers (TBD) at Colorado (Feltner 3-10), 3:10 p.m.
Baltimore (Kremer 8-10) at Minnesota (Ober 12-8), 3:10 p.m.
N.Y. Mets (Megill 4-5) at Milwaukee (TBD), 3:10 p.m.
Oakland (Spence 8-9) at Seattle (Miller 12-8), 3:10 p.m.
Cincinnati (Greene 9-5) at Chicago Cubs (TBD), 3:20 p.m.
Kansas City (Ragans 11-9) at Atlanta (Morton 8-9), 3:20 p.m.

Monday's Games

N.Y. Mets (TBD) at Atlanta (TBD), 1:10 p.m.
N.Y. Mets (TBD) at Atlanta (TBD), 4:40 p.m.

League Leaders

American League

Batting Average – Witt Jr., Kansas City .332; Guerrero Jr., Toronto .326; Judge, New York .325; Alvarez, Houston .308; Diaz, Houston .299; Rooker, Oakland .296; Altuve, Houston .295; Kwan, Cleveland .292; Soto, New York .288; Duran, Boston .286.

Home Runs – Judge, New York 58; Santander, Baltimore 44; Soto, New York 41; Ramirez, Cleveland 38; Rooker, Oakland 38; Henderson, Baltimore 37; Alvarez, Houston 35; Raleigh, Seattle 32; Witt Jr., Kansas City 32; O'Neill, Boston 31.

RBI – Judge, New York 144; Ramirez, Cleveland 115; Rooker, Oakland 110; Witt Jr., Kansas City 109; Naylor, Cleveland 108; Soto, New York 108; Perez, Kansas City 104; Guerrero Jr., Toronto 103; Santander, Baltimore 102; Raleigh, Seattle 97.

Stolen Bases – Caballero, Tampa Bay 44; Ramirez, Cleveland 41; Chisholm Jr., New York 40; Garcia, Kansas City 37; Duran, Boston 34; Hamilton, Boston 33; Robles, Seattle 33; Thomas, Cleveland 32; Mullins, Baltimore 32; Moore, Seattle 31.

Wins – Skubal, Detroit 18; Rodon, New York 16; Lugo, Kansas City 16; Berrios, Toronto 16; Gil, New York 15; Lopez, Minnesota 15; Valdez, Houston 15; Burnes, Baltimore 15; Gausman, Toronto 14; Kirby, Seattle 14.

ERA – Skubal, Detroit 2.39; Blanco, Houston 2.80; Valdez, Houston 2.91; Burnes, Baltimore 2.92; Miller, Seattle 2.94; Lugo, Kansas City 3.03; Houck, Boston 3.12; Ragans, Kansas City 3.14; Gilbert, Seattle 3.33; Wacha, Kansas City 3.35.

Strikeouts – Skubal, Detroit 228; Ragans, Kansas City 223; Gilbert, Seattle 213; Crochet, Chicago 209; Kikuchi, Houston 206; Lopez, Minnesota 198; Rodon, New York 195; Ober, Minnesota 187; Bibee, Cleveland 187; Burnes, Baltimore 181.

Saves – Clase, Cleveland 47; Hader, Houston 34; Yates, Texas 32; Holmes, New York 29; Foley, Detroit 28; Miller, Oakland 28; Jansen, Boston 27; Kimbrel, Baltimore 23; Fairbanks, Tampa Bay 23; Duran, Minnesota 23.

National League

Batting Average – Arraez, San Diego .314; Ohtani, Los Angeles .309; Ozuna, Atlanta .308; Turner, Philadelphia .294; Marte, Arizona .292; Merrill, San Diego .292; Betts, Los Angeles .290; Harper, Philadelphia .286; Freeman, Los Angeles .282; Contreras, Milwaukee .282.

Home Runs – Ohtani, Los Angeles 54; Ozuna, Atlanta 39; Schwarber, Philadelphia 38; Marte, Arizona 35; Alonso, New York 34; Hernandez, Los Angeles 32; Adames, Milwaukee 32; Lindor, New York 31; Harper, Philadelphia 30; Suarez, Arizona 29.

RBI – Ohtani, Los Angeles 130; Adames, Milwaukee 111; Machado, San Diego 105; Ozuna, Atlanta 102; Schwarber, Philadelphia 102; Suarez, Arizona 99; Olson, Atlanta 98; Hernandez, Los Angeles 96; Bohm, Philadelphia 95; Marte, Arizona 93.

Stolen Bases – De La Cruz, Cincinnati 65; Ohtani, Los Angeles 57; Turang, Milwaukee 50; Carroll, Arizona 33; Stott, Philadelphia 32; Young, Washington 32; Edwards, Miami 31; Abrams, Washington 31; Hoerner, Chicago 30; Doyle, Colorado 30.

Wins – Sale, Atlanta 18; Wheeler, Philadelphia 16; Imanaga, Chicago 15; Cease, San Diego 14; Gallen, Arizona 14; Gray, St. Louis 13; Nola, Philadelphia 13; Flaherty, Los Angeles 13; Webb, San Francisco 13; King, San Diego 13.

ERA – Sale, Atlanta 2.38; Wheeler, Philadelphia 2.56; Imanaga, Chicago 2.91; King, San Diego 2.95; Flaherty, Los Angeles 3.17; Fried, Atlanta 3.25; Taillon, Chicago 3.27; Fedde, St. Louis 3.30; Sanchez, Philadelphia 3.32; Manaea, New York 3.47.

Strikeouts – Sale, Atlanta 225; Cease, San Diego 224; Wheeler, Philadelphia 213; Gray, St. Louis 203; King, San Diego 201; Peralta, Milwaukee 200; Flaherty, Los Angeles 194; Nola, Philadelphia 190; Manaea, New York 184; Pfaadt, Arizona 176.

Saves – Helsley, St. Louis 49; Finnegan, Washington 38; Suarez, San Diego 36; Iglesias, Atlanta 33; Diaz, Cincinnati 28; Estevez, Philadelphia 26; Bednar, Pittsburgh 23; Doval, San Francisco 23; Scott, San Diego 22; Megill, Milwaukee 21.

NFL

American Conference

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	3	0	0	1.000	112	48
N.Y. Jets	2	1	0	.667	67	52
Miami	1	2	0	.333	33	72
New England	1	2	0	.333	39	57

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	3	0	0	1.000	51	26
Baltimore	1	2	0	.333	71	78
Cleveland	1	2	0	.333	50	67
Cincinnati	0	3	0	.000	68	80

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	2	1	0	.667	55	74
Indianapolis	1	2	0	.333	58	61
Tennessee	0	3	0	.000	48	78
Jacksonville	0	3	0	.000	40	85

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	3	0	0	1.000	75	62
L.A. Chargers	2	1	0	.667	58	33
Denver	1	2	0	.333	52	46
Las Vegas	1	2	0	.333	58	81

National Conference

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Washington	2	1	0	.667	79	88
Philadelphia	2	1	0	.667	70	63
Dallas	2	2	0	.500	97	104
N.Y. Giants	1	3	0	.250	60	84

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Minnesota	3	0	0	1.000	85	30
Detroit	2	1	0	.667	62	53
Green Bay	2	1	0	.667	75	58
Chicago	1	2	0	.333	53	57

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	2	1	0	.667	103	44
Tampa Bay	2	1	0	.667	64	62
Atlanta	1	2	0	.333	49	61
Carolina	1	2	0	.333	49	95

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Seattle	3	0	0	1.000	73	43
Arizona	1	2	0	.333	82	64
L.A. Rams	1	2	0	.333	57	91
San Francisco	1	2	0	.333	73	69

Thursday's Game

Dallas 20, N.Y. Giants 15

Sunday's Games

New Orleans at Atlanta, 1 p.m.
Cincinnati at Carolina, 1 p.m.
L.A. Rams at Chicago, 1 p.m.
Minnesota at Green Bay, 1 p.m.
Jacksonville at Houston, 1 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.
Denver at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Washington at Arizona, 4:05 p.m.
New England at San Francisco, 4:05 p.m.
Kansas City at L.A. Chargers, 4:25 p.m.
Cleveland at Las Vegas, 4:25 p.m.
Buffalo at Baltimore, 8:20 p.m.

Monday's Games

Tennessee at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Seattle at Detroit, 8:15 p.m.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Thursday's Score

East

Army West Point 42, Temple 14

Friday's Scores

East

Rutgers 21, Washington 18

Southeast

Miami (FL) 38, Virginia Tech 34

Saturday's Games

East

North Carolina State 24, Northern Illinois 17
Boston College 21, Western Kentucky 20
Syracuse 42, Holy Cross 14
Brown 31, Harvard 28
Dayton 47, Marist 14
Bucknell 38, Lehigh 35, OT
Georgetown 20, Columbia 17
Dartmouth 16, Merrimack 14
Monmouth 63, Fordham 21
Penn 27, Colgate 17
Frostburg State 25, Mercyhurst 24
James Madison 63, Ball State 7
Campbell 44, Delaware State 41
Richmond 27, Elon 17
Tennessee Tech 52, Gardner-Webb 21
Cornell 47, Yale 23
North Carolina Central 37, Norfolk State 10
Princeton 30, Howard 13
Marshall 27, Western Michigan 20
Louisiana 41, Wake Forest 38
Maine 34, Albany 20
Stony Brook 22, Morgan State 3
Delaware 49, Sacred Heart 0
East Carolina 30, UTSA 20
Duke 21, North Carolina 20
Villanova 24, LIU 10
William & Mary 49, Hampton 7
Penn State 21, Illinois 7

Southeast

Navy 41, UAB 18
Tulane 45, South Florida 10
Kentucky 20, Ole Miss 17
Morehead State 17, Valparaiso 5
North Alabama 25, West Georgia 16
Eastern Kentucky 31, Robert Morris 7
Southern Utah 28, Austin Peay 17
Mercer 22, Wofford 3
Alabama State 26, Bethune-Cookman 21
Georgia Southern 38, Georgia State 21
Colorado 48, UCF 21
Oklahoma 27, Auburn 21
ETSU 34, Citadel 17
Florida Atlantic 41, Wagner 10
FIU 17, Louisiana Tech 10
UT Martin 24, Kennesaw State 13
South Carolina State 45, North Carolina A&T 25
Tennessee State 13, Charleston Southern 9
Louisiana-Monroe 13, Troy 9
Clemson 40, Stanford 14
Alcorn State 42, Mississippi Valley State 21
Prairie View A&M 36, Grambling State 34, OT
Chattanooga 45, Portland State 30
Central Arkansas 34, Lamar 14
Memphis 24, Middle Tennessee 7
Alabama 41, Georgia 34
LSU 42, South Alabama 10

Midwest

Kansas State 42, Oklahoma State 20
Indiana 42, Maryland 28
Michigan 27, Minnesota 24
Nebraska 28, Purdue 10
Drake 30, San Diego 28
Houston Christian 27, Indiana State 24
Butler 63, Virginia-Lynchburg 0
South Dakota 42, Southern Illinois 13
North Dakota 72, Murray State 35
Lindenwood 28, Eastern Illinois 25
Missouri State 38, Youngstown State 31
North Dakota State 42, Illinois State 10
Central Michigan 22, San Diego State 21
TCU 38, Kansas 27
Ohio 30, Akron 10
Eastern Michigan 52, Kent State 33
Miami (OH) 23, Massachusetts 20, OT
Notre Dame 31, Louisville 24
Southeast Missouri State 19, Northwestern State 0
Old Dominion 30, Bowling Green 27
Western Illinois 49, McKendree 32
Ohio State 38, Michigan State 7

West

BYU 34, Baylor 28
Connecticut 47, Buffalo 3
Sam Houston 40, Texas State 39
Cal Poly 28, Northern Colorado 7
UNLV 59, Fresno State 14
Texas A&M 21, Arkansas 17
USC 38, Wisconsin 21
Northern Arizona 34, Sacramento State 16
Texas 35, Mississippi State 13
Montana State 37, Idaho State 17
Charlotte 21, Rice 20
North Texas 52, Tulsa 20
Iowa State 20, Houston 0
Jackson State 43, Texas Southern 14
Wyoming 31, Air Force 19
New Mexico 50, New Mexico State 40
Texas Tech 44, Cincinnati 41
SMU 42, Florida State 16
Montana 52, Eastern Washington 49
McNeese 28, Weber State 26
Abilene Christian 55, Utah Tech 30

SOCCER

MLS

Eastern Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Inter Miami CF	19	4	8	65	69	45
Columbus	16	5	9	57	60	33
Cincinnati	17	9	5	56	53	41
Orlando City	13	11	7	46	53	46
NY City FC	12	11	8	44	48	44
NY Red Bulls	10	7	14	44	48	44
Charlotte FC	11	11	9	42	37	34
Toronto FC	11	17	4	37	39	56
Philadelphia	9	12	10	37	58	48
CF Montreal	9	12	10	37	44	61
Atlanta	8	13	10	34	41	45
D.C. United	8	13	10	34	46	63
Nashville	8	14	9	33	31	47
New England	9	17	4	31	33	60
Chicago	7	16	9	30	37	55

Western Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LA Galaxy	17	7	7	58	63	46
Los Angeles FC	15	8	7	52	54	41
Real Salt Lake	14	7	10	52	62	47
Colorado	15	11	5	50	58	53
Seattle	14	9	8	50	46	34
Houston	13	9	9	48	43	34
Vancouver	13	9	8	47	50	41
Minnesota	13	12	6	45	53	48
Portland	12	10	9	45	64	54
FC Dallas	10	14	7	37	50	52
Austin FC	9	13	9	36	34	44
Saint Louis	7	11	13	34	46	58
Sporting KC	8	17	7	31	50	61
San Jose	5	23	3	18	37	72

Saturday, Sept. 28

D.C. United 2, Columbus 2
Inter Miami CF 1, Charlotte FC 1
CF Montreal 3, San Jose 0
New England 1, Nashville 0
NY City FC 5, NY Red Bulls 1
Los Angeles FC 2, Cincinnati 1
Philadelphia 1, Atlanta 1
Orlando City 3, FC Dallas 1
Minnesota 3, Colorado 0
Saint Louis 3, Sporting KC 1
Austin FC 2, Real Salt Lake 2
Chicago 1, Toronto FC 1
Vancouver 1, Portland 1
Seattle 1, Houston 0

Wednesday, Oct. 2

Inter Miami CF at Columbus, 7:30 p.m.
Cincinnati vs NY City FC at Harrison, 7:30 p.m.
NY Red Bulls at Toronto FC, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Charlotte FC, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Orlando City, 7:30 p.m.
CF Montreal at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
New England at Houston, 8:30 p.m.
D.C. United at Nashville, 8:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Real Salt Lake, 9:30 p.m.
LA Galaxy at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.
Saint Louis at Los Angeles FC, 10:30 p.m.
FC Dallas at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.
Austin FC at Portland, 10:30 p.m.
Seattle at Vancouver, 10:30 p.m.

NWSL

	W	L	D	Pts	GF	GA
Orlando	16	0	6	54	40	13
Washington	15	5	2	47	44	25
NJ/NY Gotham	13	4	5	44	27	17
Kansas City	12	3	7	43	47	29
North Carolina	10	9	2	32	28	23
Portland	8	10	5	28	31	32
Chicago	9	10	2	29	27	28
Louisville	6	9	7	25	30	30
Bay	8	12	1	25	25	33
Angel City	6	12	4	22	26	37
San Diego	5	10	8	22	19	26
Seattle	5	11	5	20	23	35
Utah	5	14	3	18	15	34
Houston	4	13	5	17	15	35

Friday's Game

Washington 2, Angel City 1

Saturday's Games

Kansas City 1, NJ/NY Gotham 1
Utah 1, Louisville 0
Orlando 3, Houston 1
San Diego 2, Portland 0

Oct. 4 Games

Chicago at Houston, 7 p.m.
Angel City at Seattle, 7 p.m.

Oct. 5 Games

San Diego at North Carolina, 7 p.m.
Bay at NJ/NY Gotham, 7:30 p.m.
Kansas City at Louisville, 7:30 p.m.

GOLF

Walmart NW Arkansas Championship Presented by P&G
Saturday
Rogers, Ark.
Pinnacle Country Club
Purse: $3 million
Yardage: 6,438; Par: 71
Second Round

Ashleigh Buhai	64-67–131 (-11)
Dottie Ardina	65-67–132 (-10)
Pajaree Anannarukarn	66-67–133 (-9)
Nasa Hataoka	67-66–133 (-9)
Gaby Lopez	66-67–133 (-9)
Arpichaya Yubol	68-61–129 (-9)
Olivia Cowan	67-67–134 (-8)
Lauren Hartlage	70-64–134 (-8)
Minami Katsu	67-67–134 (-8)
Sei Young Kim	69-65–134 (-8)
Jennifer Kupcho	70-64–134 (-8)
Mao Saigo	67-67–134 (-8)
Linnea Strom	68-66–134 (-8)
Atthaya Thitikul	67-67–134 (-8)
Maria Fassi	64-71–135 (-7)
Kristen Gillman	68-67–135 (-7)
Cheyenne Knight	69-66–135 (-7)
Maria Marin	65-70–135 (-7)
Yuna Nishimura	67-68–135 (-7)
Paula Reto	69-66–135 (-7)
Emma Talley	69-66–135 (-7)
Lexi Thompson	68-67–135 (-7)
Liqi Zeng	64-71–135 (-7)
Jasmine Suwannapura	63-68–131 (-7)
Robyn Choi	68-68–136 (-6)
Gemma Dryburgh	67-69–136 (-6)
Wei-Ling Hsu	68-68–136 (-6)
Gurleen Kaur	69-67–136 (-6)
Megan Khang	66-70–136 (-6)
A Lim Kim	68-68–136 (-6)
Grace Kim	69-67–136 (-6)
Stephanie Kyriacou	67-69–136 (-6)
Lucy Li	71-65–136 (-6)
Pernilla Lindberg	69-67–136 (-6)
Yu Liu	65-71–136 (-6)
Polly Mack	67-69–136 (-6)
Jenny Shin	66-70–136 (-6)
Celine Boutier	69-68–137 (-5)
Nicole Broch Estrup	72-65–137 (-5)
Carlota Ciganda	64-73–137 (-5)
Jodi Ewart Shadoff	67-70–137 (-5)
Jin Hee Im	68-69–137 (-5)
Benedetta Moresco	70-67–137 (-5)
Yealimi Noh	70-67–137 (-5)
Gabriela Ruffels	71-66–137 (-5)
Jing Yan	68-69–137 (-5)
Maude-Aimee Leblanc	71-67–138 (-4)
Madelene Sagstrom	72-66–138 (-4)
Maja Stark	67-71–138 (-4)
Amy Yang	69-69–138 (-4)
Weiwei Zhang	67-71–138 (-4)
Auston Kim	69-64–133 (-4)
Laura Wearn	72-62–134 (-4)
Sandra Gal	70-60–130 (-4)
Peiyun Chien	71-68–139 (-3)
Lindy Duncan	71-68–139 (-3)
Ally Ewing	70-69–139 (-3)
Aline Krauter	68-71–139 (-3)
Stacy Lewis	69-70–139 (-3)
Mina Harigae	73-62–135 (-3)
Celine Borge	69-71–140 (-2)
Jennifer Chang	71-69–140 (-2)
Amanda Doherty	72-68–140 (-2)
Savannah Grewal	68-72–140 (-2)
Georgia Hall	69-71–140 (-2)
MinJi Kang	68-72–140 (-2)
Gina Kim	70-70–140 (-2)
Nanna Koerstz Madsen	72-68–140 (-2)
Mi Hyang Lee	69-71–140 (-2)
Leona Maguire	69-71–140 (-2)
Kaitlyn Papp	68-72–140 (-2)
Hee Young Park	70-70–140 (-2)
Emily Pedersen	68-72–140 (-2)
Lilia Vu	71-69–140 (-2)
Lindsey Weaver	71-69–140 (-2)
Alena Sharp	66-70–136 (-2)
Min Lee	69-63–132 (-2)
Kiira Riihijarvi	71-61–132 (-2)
Cydney Clanton	72-69–141 (-1)
Lauren Coughlin	71-70–141 (-1)
Isabella Fierro	72-69–141 (-1)
Mone Inami	71-70–141 (-1)
Caroline Inglis	72-69–141 (-1)
Eun-Hee Ji	67-74–141 (-1)
So Mi Lee	70-71–141 (-1)
Jeongeun Lee5	72-69–141 (-1)
Roberta Liti	69-72–141 (-1)
Ruixin Liu	71-70–141 (-1)
Caroline Masson	71-70–141 (-1)
Ryann O'Toole	70-71–141 (-1)
Bianca Pagdanganan	69-72–141 (-1)
Hae-Ran Ryu	69-72–141 (-1)
Angela Stanford	72-69–141 (-1)
Yuri Yoshida	71-70–141 (-1)
Pavarisa Yoktuan	69-67–136 (-1)
Matilda Castren	72-70–142 (0)
Frida Kinhult	70-72–142 (0)
Brittany Lincicome	71-71–142 (0)
Yan Liu	74-68–142 (0)
Morgane Metraux	71-71–142 (0)
Laetitia Beck	70-67–137 (0)
Perrine Delacour	70-67–137 (0)
Yu-Sang Hou	76-67–143 (1)
Jeongeun Lee6	71-72–143 (1)
Sophia Popov	73-70–143 (1)
Hinako Shibuno	72-71–143 (1)
Jennifer Song	71-72–143 (1)
Dewi Weber	69-74–143 (1)
Soo Bin Joo	71-67–138 (1)
Marina Alex	73-71–144 (2)
Na Rin An	74-70–144 (2)
Aditi Ashok	73-71–144 (2)
Allisen Corpuz	75-69–144 (2)
Jiwon Jeon	72-72–144 (2)
Danielle Kang	72-72–144 (2)
Haeji Kang	71-73–144 (2)
Elizabeth Szokol	74-70–144 (2)
Muni He	75-61–136 (2)
Ssu-Chia Cheng	72-73–145 (3)
Daniela Darquea	73-72–145 (3)
Nataliya Guseva	74-71–145 (3)
Mary Liu	71-74–145 (3)
Kaitlin Milligan	71-74–145 (3)
Azahara Munoz	68-77–145 (3)
Annie Park	79-66–145 (3)
Ana Pelaez Trivino	70-75–145 (3)
Brittany Lang	76-70–146 (4)
Pornanong Phatlum	75-71–146 (4)
Yue Ren	74-72–146 (4)
Bailey Tardy	73-73–146 (4)
Gabriella Then	76-70–146 (4)
Hira Naveed	72-75–147 (5)
Yuka Saso	75-72–147 (5)
Sofia Garcia	72-70–142 (5)
Agathe Laisne	73-69–142 (5)
Malia Nam	74-74–148 (6)
Gigi Stoll	72-76–148 (6)
Xiaowen Yin	76-72–148 (6)
Christina Kim	74-70–144 (6)
Shyla Brown	75-65–140 (6)
Hyo Joon Jang	72-77–149 (7)
Natthakritta Vongtaveelap	74-75–149 (7)
Lilly Russell	77-79–156 (14)
Alexandra Forsterling	76–76 (0) WD

PGA Tour Statistics
Through Sept. 25
Season Points

1, Scottie Scheffler, 5,993. 2, Xander Schauffele, 4,057. 3, Rory McIlroy, 2,545. 4, Collin Morikawa, 2,456. 5, Wyndham Clark, 2,154. 6, Ludvig Aberg, 2,092. 7, Sahith Theegala, 2,037. 8, Hideki Matsuyama, 1,899. 9, Sungjae Im, 1,896. 10, Shane Lowry, 1,867.

Scoring Average

1, Scottie Scheffler, 68.66. 2, Xander Schauffele, 69.00. 3, Billy Horschel, 69.75. 4, Collin Morikawa, 69.86. 5, Rory McIlroy, 69.89. 6, Ludvig Aberg, 69.94. 7, Aaron Rai, 69.94. 8, Adam Scott, 70.00. 9, Alex Noren, 70.00. 10, Keith Mitchell, 70.01.

Driving Distance

1, Cameron Champ, 320.70. 2, Rory McIlroy, 319.20. 3, Kevin Dougherty, 316.80. 4, Byeong Hun An, 316.30. 5, Min Woo Lee, 315.00. 6, Wyndham Clark, 314.20. 7, Chris Gotterup, 313.80. 8, Alejandro Tosti, 312.30. 9, Max Greyserman, 312.20. 10, Jhonattan Vegas, 312.10.

Driving Accuracy Percentage

1, Aaron Rai, 72.31%. 2, Ben Kohles, 71.78%. 3, Sepp Straka, 71.13%. 4, Collin Morikawa, 70.12%. 5, Tommy Fleetwood, 70.04%. 6, Ryan Moore, 69.95%. 7, Daniel Berger, 69.88%. 8, Russell Henley, 69.69%. 9, Brendon Todd, 69.60%. 10, Carson Young, 69.58%.

Greens in Regulation Percentage

1, Scottie Scheffler, 73.05%. 2, Jhonattan Vegas, 72.78%. 3, Aaron Rai, 71.88%. 4, Patton Kizzire, 71.83%. 5, Patrick Fishburn, 71.59%. 6, Lanto Griffin, 71.18%. 7, Henrik Norlander, 70.83%. 8, Keith Mitchell, 70.68%. 9 (tie), Joel Dahmen and Kevin Yu, 70.57%.

Total Driving

1, Rory McIlroy, 41. 2, Ryan Palmer, 60. 3, Carl Yuan, 64. 4, Rafael Campos, 69. 5 (tie), Patton Kizzire and , 71. 6, Austin Eckroat, 67. 7, Hayden Springer, 72. 8, Taiga Semikawa, 82. 9, Harrison Endycott, 83.

Total Putts Per Round

1, Aaron Baddeley,