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Guanacaste
Broken clouds
Sunrise: 05:29 AM
Sunset: 06:08 PM
Humidity: 68%

77-84 F

■ The property is minutes away from the Donald J. Trump International Airport

Trump wants to turn Florida golf course into presidential retreat



President Donald Trump

(Photo AFP)

Donald Trump wants to turn his luxury Florida golf course into retreat for future US presidents modeled on the historic Camp David getaway, the White House said Wednesday.

The plan would make the Trump International Club in West Palm Beach -- where the 80-year-old billionaire often spends weekends on the fairway -- into an official sanctuary for his successors.

“The United States government has asked to look into developing a Presidential retreat at Trump International Golf Course in Palm Beach for future presidents, so they can hold important meetings and utilize the amenities of a world-class property,” a White House official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The official stressed the security at Trump’s course, where gunman Ryan

Routh was convicted of trying to assassinate the then-presidential candidate in September 2024.

“The property is minutes away from the Donald J. Trump International Airport, does not have buildings looming, does not have houses along the course, has great security features, is close to law enforcement, and happens to be a highly-rated golf course.

“These are features that are necessary for any Presidential retreat.”

Palm Beach international airport was renamed after the city’s most famous resident earlier this year.

A lawyer representing the Trump course wrote to local officials in September comparing the proposed retreat to Camp David, Windsor Castle in Britain and France’s Elysee Palace, the Washington Post reported.

Trump is not a fan of Camp David, having visited the presidential bolthole in the scenic Maryland hills near Washington on only a handful of occasions during his two terms in office.

Where other presidents have made frequent journeys and hosted historic foreign summits there, Trump prefers to spend his downtime at his golf courses in Florida and New Jersey.

■ More than 20,000 of the 31,100 children

Most child migrants reaching Europe in 2025 travelled alone: UN

Most migrant children who reached Europe last year were travelling alone, the United Nations said Wednesday, warning about the abuse and violence they face en route.

More than 20,000 of the 31,100 children who reached Europe along migration routes last year arrived without a parent or guardian, the UN children, migration and refugee agencies said in a joint study.

“This report shows how exposed they are to violence and exploitation when safe pathways are limited and they have to rely on smugglers,” said Amy Pope, head of the UN’s International Organization for Migration (IOM).

“No child should have to face these risks alone.”

While the overall number of children arriving by sea and land in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain fell by 25 percent compared with 2024, the proportion of unaccompanied children rose from 51 percent to 67 percent.

More than 12,000 unaccompanied children arrived in Italy, with Egypt, Eritrea, Bangladesh, Somalia and Sudan being the main countries of origin.

And more than 4,700 unaccompanied minors arrived in Spain, chiefly from Algeria, Morocco, Mali and Senegal.

“The journeys are dangerous,” the IOM said.

Almost half of migrants aged 15 to 24 that the IOM interviewed said they had suffered physical violence on their journey, particularly in Libya.

“IOM urges European Union member states to put the best interests of the child at the centre of every decision, to guarantee timely access to services, and never to detain children for immigration purposes,” the statement said.

European agencies urged safer migration routes and stronger protection as unaccompanied children continue facing violence and exploitation.

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■ *Discovering how to manipulate forms of key molecules*

French-Japanese duo wins chemistry Nobel for solving molecular 'mystery'

France's Henri Kagan and Japan's Kenso Soai on Wednesday won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for discovering how to manipulate forms of key molecules, a crucial breakthrough for drug manufacturing.

Like hands, molecules such as amino acids exist as two mirrored variants, but only one of them is found in the proteins in the body's cells -- a phenomenon known as "homochirality".

"Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai have provided a solution to a chemical mystery that is over a century old: how homochirality can emerge spontaneously," Heiner Linke, chair of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry, told a press conference.

Kagan, 95, is professor emeritus at the Université Paris-Saclay in France while Soai, 76, is a professor at Tokyo University of Science.

Soai said he had received the call while out shopping for groceries.

He said he was "extremely happy" to be honoured together with Kagan.

French President Emmanuel Macron congratulated Kagan on his prize on X, calling his achievement "a tremendous source of pride for the country".

'Truly wonderful people'

The academy in a separate statement likened the chirality conundrum to a locksmith creating keys to order but whenever they produce them they get two mirrored variants.

"Only one of them fits the lock -- and the lock can be damaged if your



Nobel Committee for Chemistry

(Photo AFP)

customers try to unlock it with the other key."

One example of the potential danger of using the wrong key, or version, was the thalidomide scandal in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when thousands of children were born with birth defects.

"When researchers analysed what had happened, they realised that it was the active substance's mirror image that caused the harm," the academy said.

Phillip Broadwith, an editor at the Royal Society of Chemistry's Chemistry World magazine, said the duo's work "goes to the very fundamental

level of understanding how we can control which 'hand' of a molecule we make".

Controlling "is crucial for making things like drugs or even flavours and fragrances", Broadwith said.

"It also helps to explain a possible way that all the chiral molecules on earth -- our proteins, sugars and biomolecules, settled into one specific handedness rather than the other," he said in an email sent to AFP by the society.

Manipulating reactions

In the 1980s, Kagan found a new way of manipulating chemical reactions to create an excess of one of the mirror-image forms.

Soai later took the next step and in 1995 published a key paper describing a chemical reaction that could create the chosen version of a molecule, the jury said.

In 2003, he succeeded.

"The Soai reaction is considered one of the most elegant chemical experiments ever conducted," the academy said.

Speaking to reporters in Tokyo, Soai said he was grateful for having had good science partners, both fellow researchers and students.

"Especially in experimental science, the combination between faculty and students is crucial. In that sense, I've been fortunate to meet truly wonderful people," he said.

"Looking back on my life from that perspective, I can say that there has been a deep, genuine sense of fulfillment and inspiration."

Earlier controversy

Kagan had previously missed out on the Nobel prize.

In 2001, the chemistry prize was awarded to William Knowles, Ryoji Noyori and Barry Sharpless for their pioneering work in "asymmetric catalysis".

Many French chemists were outraged by the absence of the man regarded internationally as the "father" of the technique.

The chemistry prize follows the physics prize, which on Tuesday honoured Belgian physicist Francis Halzen for using Antarctic ice to capture particles originating in the distant cosmos.

■ *"Deeply concerned and somewhat appalled"*

Germany's Merz shocked at AfD success in winning key post

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz expressed shock Wednesday that the far-right AfD had secured support from other parties to win a key post in a state parliament for the first time.

Merz also pushed back at speculation that members of his Christian Democrats (CDU) had been among those supporting the far right, accusing others of seeking to unfairly pin the blame on his party.

The chancellor told an event in Berlin that he was "deeply concerned and somewhat appalled" after the AfD's candidate for parliament speaker in Saxony-Anhalt state was elected with support from other parties.

Tobias Rausch was backed by local lawmakers for the post Tuesday as the parliament convened for the first time since the AfD's landslide victory in the state last month.

While this was expected after a small far-left party had agreed to support him, the results of a secret ballot also showed at least four lawmakers from other parties had given him their backing.

This prompted speculation that some CDU members could have backed Rausch.

This would have been a breach of the so-called "firewall" policy of

non-cooperation with the AfD, which is usually followed by Germany's mainstream parties.

However Merz said that "false flag operations do not exist solely in the military realm; they exist in politics, too".

A "false flag operation" is an action that is designed to appear as if it was carried out by someone other than the perpetrator.

Merz then attacked the far-left Die Linke, claiming the party, along with other fringe groups, "are doing everything they can to undermine the cohesion of our democracy".

Rausch's election potentially paves the way for the AfD's regional leader, 35-year-old Ulrich Siegmund, to become Saxony-Anhalt's state premier in December.

That would be the first time since the Nazi era that a far-right party has governed a German state.

The AfD has been steadily gaining in national polls, and scored several electoral successes this year, often at the expense of Merz's CDU.

Merz, meanwhile, has become the least popular chancellor in German post-war history after less than a year and a half in office while battling economic stagnation and political difficulties.

■ *Moscow ready to play a role and provide assistance in this regard*
Putin tells Tehran ready to help mediate Middle East war

Russian President Vladimir Putin told his Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian in a phone call that Moscow was ready to help efforts to mediate the Middle East war, Iranian state media reported on Wednesday, with the months-long conflict locked in a stalemate.

Russia and Iran -- two of the most sanctioned countries in the world -- have significantly deepened their military and trade ties during Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, becoming increasingly reliant on each other.

The Russian leader and Pezeshkian in their call spoke of the "positive and expanding trajectory of relations" between the two allies, stressing the need to further deepen ties, state news agency IRNA reported.

On the war, Putin "referred to efforts by some countries to mediate and help reduce tensions, saying that Russia supports" them, the agency added.

Putin said that Iran "can be assured that Moscow is also ready to play a role and provide assistance in this regard", according to IRNA.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov last month said in a UN speech that Moscow was ready to help stabilise the situation in the Strait of Hormuz and the wider Gulf region as the war drags on.

The Middle East war began in late February with the US and Israeli attacks on Iran that killed its former supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

■ "Either we choose to act now, or lose the choice to act at all"

West must embrace 'national power' or face decline: Rubio



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio

(Photo AFP)

The western world must embrace "national power" and technological innovation or risk sliding into decline, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio was set to warn on Wednesday during a visit to Greece.

His speech, which will be packed with praise for ancient heroes such as Alexander the Great, follows an address in February where he argued that Europe was threatened by mass immigration and called for it to defend Christian civilisation.

This time he will say the West is "at a crossroads" that will determine whether it "maintains its place at the head of the world, or resigns itself to a future of atrophy, servitude, and decline".

"Either we choose to act now, or lose the choice to act at all," he was set to say, according to excerpts from a speech he is to deliver later near the Acropolis.

The US under President Donald Trump has made its choice, according to Rubio.

"We choose the unapologetic pursuit of national power: to take back control of our critical supply chains, to reindustrialise our economy, to rebuild our defence, to fight for dominance of the technologies and industries of the future," he is to say.

'Critical' alliance

Rubio will speak from the ancient site of the Pnyx, the hill facing the Acropolis in Athens and the birthplace of Western democracy.

Earlier on Wednesday, Rubio, who arrived in Greece the previous day from Iceland as part of a European tour, underlined the "critical" US alliance with Greece.

He flagged in particular the energy sector, and announced a joint agreement on information-sharing on drug trafficking and terrorism.

"As you see a world that faces... destabilising events, you recognise how important this alliance with Greece is to the United States," he said, referencing the conflicts in the

Middle East and between Ukraine and Russia.

Regarding Iran, he argued that Tehran had "lost complete control" of the Strait of Hormuz, seeking to offer reassurance at a time when the US is struggling to find a way out of the war just weeks before the midterm elections.

Rubio took part Wednesday in a "strategic dialogue" with Greece on regional and energy security amid high tensions triggered by the wars in Iran and Ukraine.

He is scheduled to meet conservative Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Wednesday evening.

US envoy controversy

The wars in Iran and Ukraine have highlighted the fragility of energy supply routes, and Greece is positioning itself as a key hub in southeastern Europe, particularly for the transport of natural gas.

Recently opened gas pipelines and port infrastructure have enabled Greece to contribute to the vertical corridor through eastern Europe to Ukraine.

Rubio's visit to Greece comes as the American press has in recent days reported on possible conflicts of interest involving the US ambassador to Greece, Kimberly Guilfoyle.

Several Democrats have accused Guilfoyle -- a former fiancée of US President Donald Trump's son, Donald Jr -- of promoting the commercial interests of a Greek construction and energy company during official diplomatic engagements.

She is also accused of repeatedly allowing a registered lobbyist for that foreign company to participate in meetings with senior US officials.

Asked about this, Rubio refused to answer, but reiterated his support for the former Fox News presenter.

Wall Street Indexes

Dow Jones		
Nasdaq	173.69	+ 0.04%
S&P		

International Stock Indexes

Australia		
Frankfurt	43.435	- -0.01%
Italy		
London		
Madrid	43.23	+ 0.00%
Paris	55.96	- -0.00%
Tokyo		
Toronto		

Latin-American Stock Indexes

Bogota		
Buenos Aires		
Lima		
Mexico		
Panama		
Santiago		
Sao Paulo		
Venezuela		

Most Active Stocks

3D Systems Corp	3.39	- -0.00%
3M Co	162.65	- -0.02%
Alcoa	42.21	- -0.01%
Amex	303.23	- -0.00%
AT&T	24.695	+ 0.01%
B. of America	53.48	- -0.00%
Boeing	188.21	- -0.01%
Caterpillar	812.565	- -0.07%
Chevron	205.25	- -0.05%
Cisco Systems	117.895	- -0.05%
Coca Cola	86.475	+ 0.01%
Exxon Mobil	163.805	- -0.04%
General Electric	306.19	- -0.04%
H.P.	32.15	+ 0.01%
Home Depot	285.045	- -0.01%
IBM	220.055	- -0.01%
Intel	113.275	+ 0.03%
Johnson & Johnson	260.1	+ 0.09%
JPMorgan	328.15	- -0.02%
Kraft Heinz Co	21.905	- -0.00%
McDonalds	232.48	+ 0.02%
Merck & Co	143.8	+ 0.04%
Microsoft	528.165	- -0.03%
Pfizer	28.105	+ 0.01%
Procter & Gamble	148.845	+ 0.03%
Travelers Cos	362.05	+ 0.03%
United Tech.	86.01	- -0.07%
Verizon	46.235	+ 0.01%
Wal-Mart	108.515	+ 0.04%
Walt Disney	104.15	+ 0.01%

■ Fuel prices at the pump have surged in recent months, particularly for diesel, which is hitting record highs.

Shell refining margins reach record highs as wars hit supply

British energy giant Shell said Wednesday that its refining margins surged 75 percent in the third quarter compared with the second, as the Middle East and Ukraine wars hit supplies.

These margins -- reflecting the spread between the price of crude oil and the fuels derived from it -- reached \$42 per barrel in the July-September period, up from \$24 per barrel between April and June, Shell said in a trading statement ahead of full third-quarter earnings.

At \$42, the level is far above the previous record set in 2022 following the invasion of Ukraine by key energy producer Russia, according to Bloomberg.

Shell and other oil majors are seeing "an unprecedented widening of the refining spread", said Kathleen

Brooks, research director at trading group XTB.

Fuel prices at the pump have surged in recent months, particularly for diesel, which is hitting record highs.

While crude oil volumes from the Middle East have recently risen, the production and export of refined products in the region remain heavily disrupted.

Logistical constraints have complicated re-routing of fuel supplies, widening the gap between crude oil prices and refined products.

At the same time, Ukrainian drone strikes on Russian energy infrastructure has prompted Russia -- a major player in the oil market -- to ban the export of certain products, notably gasoline and diesel.

Refineries unaffected by the conflict are thus benefiting from the

tightening global supply of such products.

"If oil flows from the Middle East are disrupted once more, or if there are more attacks on refineries or more refineries shut down, refining margins could move higher," Brooks forecast. Shell's share price was up 0.6 percent in Lon-

don midday deals, outperforming the capital's benchmark FTSE 100 stocks index, which was down 0.6 percent.

The outlook for refiners remains favorable as ongoing geopolitical tensions threaten to further tighten global fuel supplies in coming months.

Foreign Exchange

	EURO	USA	CAN	UK	AUS	SWISS	H.KONG	JAP
EURO	-	1.12	1.59	.85	1.61	.93	8.80	177.00
USA	.89	-	1.43	.76	1.43	.83	7.87	158.73
CAN	.63	.70	-	.53	1.01	.60	5.50	111.00
UK	1.18	1.32	1.89	-	1.89	1.10	10.40	209.00
AUS	.62	.70	.99	.53	-	.60	5.50	110.00
SWISS	1.07	1.20	1.67	.91	1.67	-	9.40	190.00
H.KONG	.11	.13	.18	.10	.18	.11	-	20.20
JAP	.01	.01	.01	.00	.01	.01	.05	-

■ *"Oil prices remain above \$100 a barrel and the inflation risks are clear to see"*

Stocks slide as oil climbs on Mideast flareup

Oil prices rose Wednesday on fresh concerns about Middle East supplies following a warning that Iran appeared to be stepping up attacks in the Strait of Hormuz, weighing on stock markets.

Crude futures had steadied Tuesday, helping Wall Street to fresh highs, with a large amount of the support coming from a rush back into the AI trade that saw chip titan Nvidia push towards a \$6-trillion market value.

But Wall Street stocks pulled back at the opening bell, with a rise in bond yields on US government bonds to fresh 24-year highs as investors worried about inflation and interest rates.

"Rising Treasury yields and oil prices are creating renewed pressure after stocks received some relief from both fronts to start the week," said analysts at Briefing.com.

"In Europe, where there is a lower representation of AI-related names, investors are taking a more cautious

stance," noted Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

"Oil prices remain above \$100 a barrel and the inflation risks are clear to see," he added.

Figures have shown Tehran increasing strikes on tankers in the crucial Strait of Hormuz.

UK Maritime Trade Operations on Tuesday said there had been nine attacks this month, representing half of the September total in the waterway and the Gulf combined.

However US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Wednesday that Iran has "lost complete control" of the Strait of Hormuz.

"There's almost as much oil flowing out now as there was before this conflict began," he told reporters during a visit to Athens.

Chris Weston, head of research at broker Pepperstone, said "reports of increased flows across the (Mideast) region have offered some downside pressure on crude, but this has been offset by varying reports around the

scale of attacks on vessels moving through the Strait".

"For now, the market remains highly sensitive to headlines and geopolitical risk," he added.

Indian stocks slipped and the rupee steadied Wednesday as the Indian central bank hiked interest rates for the first time in more than three years.

The euro fell heavily versus the dollar for a second time this week as worries about France's high debt levels spooked bond markets.

Marine Le Pen, frontrunner in the race to be France's next president, said Tuesday she would implement 140 billion euros (\$157 billion) in cost savings by 2032 if elected next year, warning that without change France was "heading towards default" on its debt.

The pledge "has helped ease bond yields" in France even if "pushing through that level of cuts... would be a hugely difficult task", said Susanah Streeter, chief investment strategist at Wealth Club.

■ *Trump has pushed to block state AI laws, but Congress has repeatedly refused to override them* US, China, EU: three paths to regulating AI

The United States, China and the European Union are taking different paths to govern artificial intelligence, as calls grow worldwide to rein in its most powerful systems.

Here is how they are going about it:

United States

Nearly two years into his second term, President Donald Trump has built his AI policy almost entirely from voluntary industry pledges and executive orders intended to sustain an AI boom that is powering the US economy.

On his first day back in office, Trump scrapped his predecessor Joe Biden's 2023 order requiring developers of the most powerful AI systems to share safety test results with the government.

In July 2025, the White House unveiled an "AI Action Plan" listing more than 90 measures to speed up development.

An accompanying order titled "Preventing Woke AI in the Federal Government" requires federal agencies to buy only models deemed ideologically neutral.

Congress, politically divided and heavily lobbied by Big Tech, has yet to pass a federal AI law, and is out of session until after the midterm elections.

Trump has pushed to block state AI laws, but Congress has repeatedly refused to override them, and state laws are taking effect nationwide.

This year, the release of AI models capable of powerful cyberattacks shifted the focus to security. A June order set up a voluntary system for developers to give the government up to 30 days of early access to their most powerful models.

With voter anxiety growing, the heads of major AI companies signed

a White House accord on September 29 pledging independent audits and board-level oversight of cutting-edge models.

The pact carries no penalties for companies that fall short, though Trump called it "morally binding."

The same day, Trump ordered federal agencies to replace the term "artificial intelligence" with "super intelligence" in official communications.

China

China already has a complex, evolving set of rules on how AI is used, including by children.

Regulations on AI companion bots took effect in July, aiming to curb emotional dependency and banning the creation of digital clones of real people without their consent.

President Xi Jinping said this summer that AI should be "always under human control," calling for more "laws and regulations, technological monitoring, early warning, and emergency response systems."

Premier Li Qiang has also warned that the world risks "losing control" of frontier technologies such as AI if governments are too slow to regulate them.

However, "a general pause or deliberate slowdown in AI development remains outside the mainstream Chinese policy posture," Oxford China Policy Lab analysts wrote in September.

Some in China see calls to slow progress as hard to justify, "particularly given their perception that US measures such as export controls have already constrained China's AI development for years," they said.

China censors and controls AI-generated content much as it does other online information -- and last

month, its spy chief warned that AI could endanger national security.

"Hostile forces" are abusing generative AI to "fabricate political rumors and spread harmful information," Minister of State Security Chen Yixin said.

Europe

The European Union rushed to adopt its AI Act in 2024, which Brussels touts as the world's most comprehensive rules on the technology.

But European companies, fearing the rules would stifle innovation as they race to catch up with US and Chinese rivals, later won a delay on rules covering high-risk systems.

Amid growing global calls for control, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said last month that the AI rules put "Europe in the position to shape global efforts."

She also said she would invite the main frontier labs "for a discussion on how we can support ongoing industry efforts to pace the frontier."

European firms have been more wary of slowing down, fearing it could be an attempt by US giants to lock in their dominance.

The EU has other tools to regulate AI.

In August, ChatGPT became the first AI chatbot added to the EU's list of digital services subject to greater legal scrutiny under its online content rules.

Brussels last month also proposed forcing companies to make AI companions and chatbots safe before children use them.

AI chatbots must not "simulate interpersonal relationships in ways that create emotional dependency," the EU said, following a spate of suicides worldwide linked to children's interactions with such assistants.

■ *"It's a level of heterogeneity"*

French wine harvest set to hit historic low

With its wine industry hit by a swathe of summer heatwaves, France is set to see this year's harvest hit a historic low.

At around 35 million hectolitres the total harvest would be down two percent on a mediocre 2025 yield and 14 percent below the 2021-2025 average, according to estimates published Wednesday by the ministry of agriculture.

According to the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), which tracks global statistics on wine production and consumption, France had already recorded last year its lowest production since 1957.

This latest decline is down not just to hot weather, which has been slightly mitigated by recent rainfall, but also a reduction in cultivated areas -- pared back 1.9 percent in the past year.

Some southern areas, already battered by the heat in 2025, have nonetheless seen production rise this year, notably Bordeaux.

There, despite a five percent decrease in cultivated areas production is set to come in up 10 percent on 2025, albeit still 11 percent below the 2021-2025 average.

For the southwest the rise is around 12 percent, essentially a return to the previous four-year average.

The Champagne region fared less well as growers had to harvest exceptionally early after the extreme heat sped sugar buildup -- and hence natural alcohol production.

The harvest there wrapped up in September for the first time with production down by half on last year and the five-year average.

In Champagne, producer Claude Mandois reported harvesting three-quarters of an average yield in terms of volume although "in terms of quality visually and in terms of taste we had an exceptional harvest."

In Burgundy and the Beaujolais region, production is projected to be 30 percent lower than the five-year average.

"It's a level of heterogeneity I've never experienced before," said Jerome Despey, chairman of the wine advisory board at the public agency FranceAgriMer and a winegrower in the southern Herault department.

In the south, "we've seen that vines have been more resilient to the climate," he said, with previous intense heat spells causing growers to adapt vineyard management practices such as largely leaving leaves to protect the grapes.

Southern regions also benefited from May rainfall.

The ministry and the industry emphasised overall the "excellent health" of the harvest, free of fungi and other moisture-related diseases.

■ Yoshinobu Yamamoto pitched seven superb innings Tuesday

Dodgers beat Braves and Padres avoid sweep in MLB playoffs



(FILES) Los Angeles Dodgers' pitcher Yoshinobu Yamamoto

(Photo AFP)

Yoshinobu Yamamoto pitched seven superb innings Tuesday to lift the Los Angeles Dodgers within one victory of advancing in the Major League Baseball playoffs, while San Diego avoided being swept by Milwaukee.

Enrique Hernandez belted a two-run homer and Freddie Freeman smashed a solo homer in the fourth inning to power the Dodgers' 3-1 triumph in Atlanta, putting Los Angeles ahead 2-1 in the best-of-five National League division series.

Yamamoto, a 28-year-old Japanese right-hander, struck out 10 to match his MLB career high while surrendering only one run on four hits over seven innings in a masterful performance.

"I was feeling really good. I was able to control my pitches," said Yamamoto through a translator. "That's why I got the swings and misses."

"My fastball was coming out of my hand pretty good so naturally I ended up relying on it."

The Dodgers, who can advance to the NL Championship Series with a victory in Atlanta on Wednesday, seek a third consecutive World Series

crown, something no NL club has ever achieved.

San Diego's Jake Cronenworth, who had been 1-for-13 in the playoffs, hit the go-ahead homer and the Padres avoided a playoff exit with a 4-3 home victory over Milwaukee.

Pitcher Michael King got the last six outs and the Padres pulled within 2-1 of the Brewers in the division series with game four to come on Wednesday in San Diego.

"It was win or go home, backs against the wall," Padres slugger Manny Machado said. "We had nothing to lose but go out there and play our baseball. This group of guys stepped up like they have all year."

"We're going to keep fighting until the end. These guys in here got a lot of fight left in them."

The Dodgers' Yamamoto, last year's World Series Most Valuable Player, improved to 8-1 in his MLB playoff career.

"He can pinpoint five or six different pitches. It's just incredible to see how he pitches and sets up hitters," Freeman said of Yamamoto. "He kind of just leaves you speechless."

Atlanta ace Chris Sale started against Yamamoto. It was only the third game in MLB playoff history, the first since 1938, with rival starters who both had closed out a World Series-clinching contest.

Sale, a 37-year-old left-hander who shut out the Dodgers in August, struck out seven while allowing three runs on seven hits over five innings.

"We didn't score a lot of runs against him but getting him out after five was huge for us," Freeman said of Sale.

With Hernandez and Freeman producing at the plate, the Dodgers scored their first 10 runs of the playoffs off homers, the longest such streak to start a post-season in MLB history.

The Braves' lone run came in the fifth when Mauricio Dubon scored from third off Drake Baldwin's ground out.

Dodgers designated hitter Shohei Ohtani -- a four-time MVP dropped to fifth in the batting order, his lowest spot in six years -- went 0-for-2 with a walk and strikeout.

At San Diego, the Padres grabbed the lead in the third on Fernando Tatis's run-scoring ground out and Machado's run-scoring single.

Milwaukee's William Contreras answered with a solo homer in the fourth and the Brewers equalized 2-2 in the fifth when Cooper Pratt scored from third on Jackson Chourio's sacrifice fly.

San Diego reclaimed the lead in the fifth on Cronenworth's solo homer and the hosts padded their lead to 4-2 in the sixth when Xander Bogaerts singled, advanced on a wild pitch and scored from second on a throwing error by Milwaukee shortstop Pratt.

Consecutive singles by Contreras, Brice Turang and Christian Yelich drove in a run for Milwaukee in the seventh and the Brewers made it dramatic in the ninth inning.

King walked Contreras and Turang but Yelich grounded into a game-ending double play.

■ The 1-0 win lacked the dynamism, fluidity and multiple goals of wins against Mexico, Chile and Peru US beat Canada 1-0 to wrap up four-win international break

Head coach Mauricio Pochettino expressed optimism for the United States's future as a soccer powerhouse after teen Justin Ellis scored the only goal against Canada on Tuesday to cap a flawless international window with four wins from four friendships.

The 1-0 win lacked the dynamism, fluidity and multiple goals of wins against Mexico, Chile and Peru, but was another vindication for Pochettino's policy of bleeding fresh talent in the post-World Cup window.

Nineteen-year-old Ellis, who had scored on debut against Peru, bundled in an Alex Freeman strike midway through the first half, while Luc de Fougerolles came closest for Canada by hitting the crossbar after the break.



(FILES) Mauricio Pochettino (Photo AFP)

Across four games, seven of 12 US goals were scored by teenagers, with debuts for 13 new players as Pochettino eyes the future following a disappointing last-16 exit at this summer's home World Cup.

"For sure, the future with these young talented players, plus the se-

nior players that we have, I think we have a very good mix," said Pochettino, describing a burgeoning US pool of desirable talent as "deep".

"I hope we can guide this group of players to reach our best level, and compete in our best way, trying to be with the big national teams in the future."

Pochettino had made six changes to his starting line-up. Ellis's goal was the only US shot on target, with a high-pressing Canada spending most of the game on the front foot but unable to break through.

"It was a really difficult opponent... We made changes, we kept the level. I think we managed really well, we competed really well," said Pochettino.

■ Over 'Spygate'

Southampton boss Eckert given suspended ban

Southampton boss Tonda Eckert on Wednesday escaped major punishment for his role in the so-called "Spygate" scandal after the Football Association announced a suspended ban.

Eckert has also been fined £28,000 (\$37,000) and given a reprimand but avoided a lengthy ban and is free to continue in his role at the Championship club.

Saints were kicked out of last season's Championship play-off final and docked four points in the current campaign, having admitted three breaches of English Football League regulations after being caught snooping on semi-final opponents Middlesbrough and two other teams.

An EFL independent disciplinary commission ruled in May that Eckert had "specifically authorised" the spying, throwing his future at the English second-tier club into doubt.

The 33-year-old accepted full responsibility and was charged by the FA with misconduct.

The German coach attended an FA hearing at the start of the current international break and the outcome means he is able to continue his role against rivals Portsmouth on Sunday.

"Tonda Eckert subsequently admitted the charges, and an independent regulatory commission imposed a six-week suspension from all football and football-related activity, which is suspended until the end of the 2027/28 season, a £28,000 fine and a reprimand following a hearing," the FA said in a statement on Wednesday.

"The suspended sanction will come into effect in the event he is found to have committed a breach of rules or regulations by requesting, authorising, taking, or using information from any observation of the training of another club, in whatever guise that observation may take."

Southampton said in a statement it brings to a "conclusion to a regrettable period of our history".

The club, who sit 13th in the Championship, said "measures have been put in place to ensure that such errors in judgement never happen again at our club".

Owner Dragan Solak said: "I'm pleased that the independent panel has come to a decision and that we have an outcome."

"We have already suffered enough, and we appreciate the panel's recognition of that."

"We are confident the manager has learned from this matter, and a suspended sentence allows him to continue in his role."

Eckert was appointed permanent Southampton boss in December 2025, leading the club to fourth spot in the Championship table after a poor start to the season.

Challenge your brain and have fun!

Sudokumania

The aim of the game is to fill a 9x9 grid (81 squares) that is subdivided into 3x3 "sub-squares, with each of the numbers one through nine, besides the ones that are already filled with numbers. The rule is that each number appear only once per row, once per column, and only once per sub-square. It is rather easy to solve. In fact, no mathematical knowledge is required. The solutions are indicated below.

Beginners

9		5				2	3	
3	4		2	9			7	
6	2	7	8	3		1		9
					1		6	5
	6	9		8		7	4	
1	7		5					
2		3		5	8	4	1	7
	5			2	7		9	6
	1	6				5		2

Advanced

	9	6	8	1			4	
8	7	3			4	1		
4		2		9				
2								1
				7				
6								3
				4		5		8
		5	2			3	1	6
	6			3	5	9	2	

Crossword

1	2			3	4	5	6	7	
8		9	10		11				12
13				14		15			
		16			17				
18	19					20	21		
22				23		24			
				25					
26	27	28	29		30			31	
32				33		34			
	35							36	

ACROSS

- 1 Like
3 Country house
8 Nobleman
11 Idiot
13 Disinterested
15 Ammunition
16 Played in the water
18 Street
20 Tell
22 Bro.'s sibling
23 Seize quickly
25 Band instrument
26 Shine
30 Fish
32 Rustic
34 Toss
35 Cope (2 wds.)
36 Baton Rouge locale

DOWN

- 1 Translucent gypsum
2 Sun's name
4 By
5 Communication Workers of America (abbr.)
6 Dress edge
7 Fortify
9 Flowers of love
10 Low
12 Polygon surrounded solid
14 Book by Goethe
17 Meal listings
19 Caesar's six
20 Launch
21 Actinium (abbr.)
24 The alphabet
27 Stein
28 Anger
29 Make lace
31 Fat
33 Pound (abbr.)

A	L			Y	B	T	E	G	
R	I		S		R	A	L		R
O	R		S		C	R	O		D
E			S		T	U	B		A
H	C		A		T	C	H		S
Y			S		N	E			A
L			S		A	V	E		N
			S		A	M			W
O			A		M				F
P			W		E	R			D
			H		A				S

4	2	9	5	3	7	8	9	1
9	1	3	6	8	2	5	4	7
8	7	5	9	4	1	6	2	3
3	6	7	2	5	4	1	8	9
2	8	9	1	7	3	4	5	6
1	5	4	8	9	6	7	3	2
5	3	8	7	6	9	2	1	4
6	9	1	4	2	5	3	7	8
7	4	2	3	1	8	9	6	5

2	8	5	3	4	6	9	1	7
9	6	3	7	2	1	8	5	4
7	1	4	8	5	9	3	6	2
3	2	8	6	9	5	4	7	1
1	4	7	2	8	3	6	9	5
5	9	6	1	7	4	2	3	8
6	5	1	4	3	8	7	2	9
8	7	9	5	6	2	1	4	3
4	3	2	9	1	7	5	8	6

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