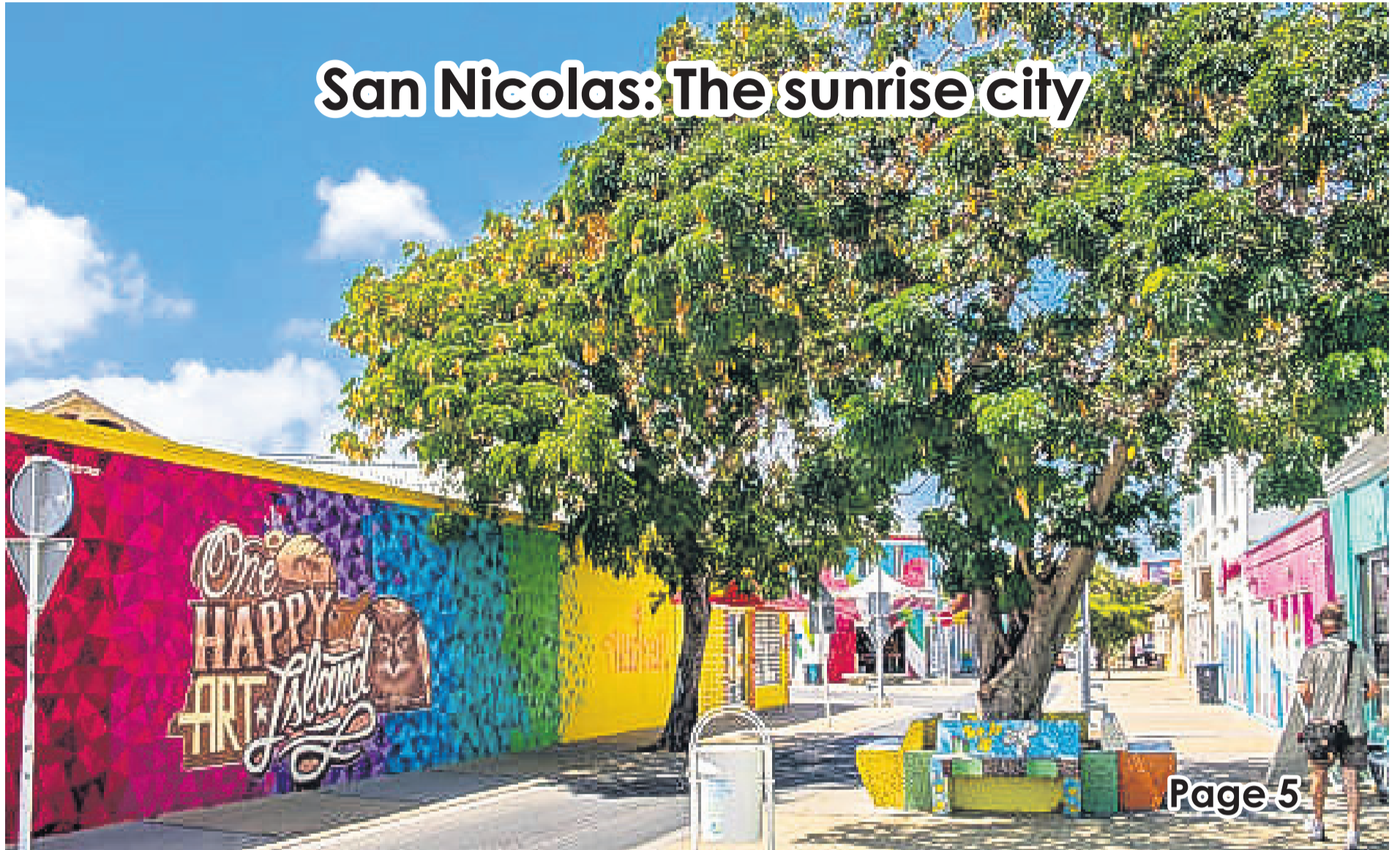


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# A federal judge temporarily blocks Trump's executive order redefining birthright citizenship

By **EUGENE JOHNSON** and **MIKE CATALINI**  
Associated Press

**SEATTLE (AP)** — A federal judge on Thursday temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's executive order redefining birthright citizenship, calling it "blatantly unconstitutional" during the first hearing in a multi-state effort challenging the order.

U.S. District Judge John Coughenour repeatedly interrupted a Justice Department lawyer during arguments to ask how he could consider the order constitutional. When the attorney, Brett Shumate, said he'd like a chance to explain it in a full briefing, Coughenour told him the hearing was his chance.

The temporary restraining order sought by Arizona, Illinois, Oregon and Washington was the first to get a hearing before a judge and applies nationally.

The case is one of five lawsuits being brought by 22 states and a number of immigrants rights groups



**Washington Attorney General Nick Brown speaks during a news conference announcing that Washington will join a federal lawsuit to challenge President Donald Trump's executive order to end birthright citizenship Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025, in Seattle.**

Associated Press

across the country. The suits include personal testimonies from attorneys general who are U.S. citizens by birthright, and names pregnant women who are afraid their children won't become U.S. citizens.

Coughenour, a Ronald Reagan appointee, began the hearing by grilling the administration's attorneys, saying the order "boggles the mind."  
"This is a blatantly unconstitutional order,"

Coughenour told Shumate. Coughenour said he's been on the bench for more than four decades, and he couldn't remember seeing another case where the action challenged was so clearly unconstitutional.

Shumate said he respectfully disagreed and asked the judge for an opportunity to have a full briefing on the merits of the case, rather than have a 14-day restraining order issued blocking its implementation. Arguing for the states, Washington assistant attorney general Lane Polozola labeled as "absurd" the government's argument that the children of parents living in the country illegally are not "subject to the jurisdiction" of the United States.

"Are they not subject to the decisions of the immigration courts?" he asked. "Must they not follow the law while they are here?" He also said the restraining order was warranted because, among other reasons, the executive order would immediately start requiring the states to spend millions to revamp health care and benefits systems to consider an applicant's citizenship status.

"The executive order will impact hundreds of thousands of citizens nationwide who will lose their citizenship under this new rule," Polozola said. "Births cannot be paused while the court considers this case." Trump's executive order, which he signed on Inauguration Day, is slated to take effect on Feb. 19. It could impact hundreds of thousands of people born in the country, according to one of the lawsuits. In 2022, there were about 255,000 births of citizen children to mothers living in the country illegally and about 153,000 births to two such parents, according to the four-state suit filed in Seattle. The Trump administration argued in papers filed Wednesday that the states don't have grounds to bring a suit against the order and that no damage has yet been done, so temporary relief isn't called for. The administration's attorneys also clarified that the executive order only applies to people born after Feb. 19, when it's set to take effect.

The U.S. is among about 30 countries where birthright citizenship the principle of jus soli or "right of the soil" is applied. Most are in the Americas, and Canada and Mexico are among them. The lawsuits argue that the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees citizenship for people born and naturalized in the U.S., and states have been interpreting the amendment that way for a century. Ratified in 1868 in the aftermath of the Civil War, the amendment says: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." Trump's order asserts that the children of noncitizens are not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and orders federal agencies to not recognize citizenship for children who don't have at least one parent who is a citizen. □

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# U.S. air force looks to upgrade Cyprus airbase as humanitarian staging post for the Middle East

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS

Associated Press

**NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)** — Experts from the U.S. Air Force are looking at ways to upgrade Cyprus' premier air base for use as a humanitarian staging post in future operations in the Middle East, a Cypriot official told The Associated Press Thursday.

Cyprus, which is only 184 kilometers (114 miles) from the Lebanese capital, Beirut, has acted as a transit point for the repatriation of foreign nationals fleeing conflict in the Middle East and beyond on numerous occasions in the past. It has also served as a transit point for humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Experts from the 435th Contingency Response Group based out of Ramstein, Germany will spend the next few days at Andreas Papandreou Air Force Base to assess the upgrade needed to accommodate a wide array of U.S. air assets and other forces.

A key priority is to ensure air



In this image taken from video, a Greek Air Force F-16 aircraft lands at Cyprus' Andreas Papandreou Air Base near the southwestern coastal city of Paphos, Cyprus, Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020.

Associated Press

traffic safety in and around the base, which abuts the island's second-largest civilian airport, the official said. The base's location makes it easy to transfer evacuees onto civilian aircraft at the adjacent airport for their trip home.

The official spoke to the Associated Press on condi-

tion of anonymity because he's not authorized to speak publicly about the details of the experts' visit.

Air traffic safety would need to be enhanced through new high-tech installations, including state-of-the-art radar, to ensure the independent operation of civilian and military aircraft at safe distances.

"The Americans are very specific on safety issues and want to make some upgrades to further improve the base's safety," the official said.

Other essential upgrades include expanding both the base itself and the runway to accommodate more transport and fighter aircraft. □

## Top European rights court rules woman's refusal to have sex not a fault in divorce case

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN

Associated Press

**PARIS (AP)** — The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) sided Thursday with a French woman who had stopped having sex with her husband, saying she should not have been considered at fault on those grounds in their divorce.

The ruling concerned a fault-based case in which the blame was attributed solely to the applicant. Back in 2019, a French court of appeal ruled that her refusal to have sex was a breach of a marital duty and granted the couple a divorce to her detriment.

But the ECHR ruled that the French court was wrong, condemning France for a violation of the woman's right to respect for private and family life.

"The Court considered that the reaffirmation of the principle of marital duties and the fact that the divorce had been granted on the grounds that the applicant had ceased all sexual relations with her husband amounted to interferences with her right to respect for private life, her sexual freedom and her right to bodily autonomy," the court said in a news release. The applicant, identified as H.W., is a French national who was born in 1955. She had started divorce proceedings against her husband on the grounds of fault, alleging that he had prioritized his career over family life and that he had been bad-tempered, violent and abusive. □

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# Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations



Aruban backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.

### Casibari

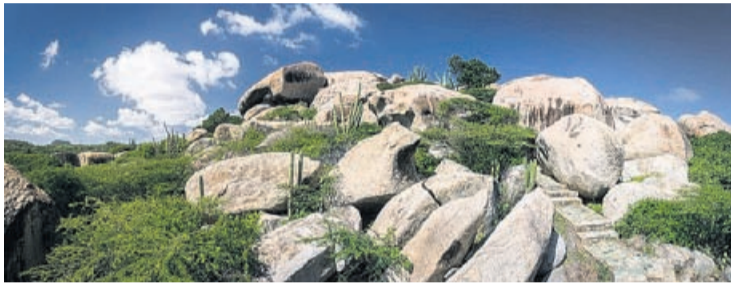
Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer—and more accessible—to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders that lay on top or lean on each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when you climb up the top of the round, flat bolder. For this position, you can see the majority of the island and the ocean in the south. Right in front of the entrance, there is the Casibari Café and Grill, a great place to get refreshments and snack before continuing your off-road adventure!



sional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats

you see along the way!

\*Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mondi! □



(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your “off-road” trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.

### Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation is located in the northern part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black

Stone Beach, and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding “mondi”\*. This is also one of the few sites to contain prehistoric markings of our indigenous ancestors. The Ayo Rock formation contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breath-taking view of the

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a profes-

## Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals



(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □

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**Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas**

**SAN NICOLAS**— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

**Flow of history**

if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within

walking distance from one another. The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history. Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment. Carnival Euphoria is showcasing Aruba's Carnival. See how are Carnival has developed over the past 65 years.

**The new San Nicolas**

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up SunriseCity.

**Must See, Do, Buy & Eat**

A little bit of everything can be found



in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer. □



**(Oranjestad)**—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Picuda", a very common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Picuda.

Let's talk about the names of fish. Do you know your fish? This is an informative article that illustrate some fish and their names in Papiamentu,

**Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Picuda!**

which the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, known as "Santa Rosa", wants to share and also obtain information from the public.

**Picuda, Sphyaena barracuda, Greater Barracuda**

Well known is the Picuda on the island—Barracuda in English. Its scientific name is Sphyaena barracuda. It is a widely caught fish. It is found throughout the year in our waters, where it is a so-called "ambush predator" that stays still or floats in the water waiting for its prey to approach so it can attack it with lightning speed. It is well known for fishermen, especially for its white

flesh in fish soup. In fishing culture, there are many other names, such as Pecho blanco, Blekito, Banana, or Bleki. The names vary according to size.

**Description**

The Picuda is a long fish, with a round body like a torpedo and silver in color with shiny black stripes. Below, that is, the belly, is whiter, while the top part is darker. Its snout is very pointed, and the lower jaw is longer than the upper one. Its peduncle, where the body meets the tail, is thick, while the tail also forms a crescent but in this case one more "full" than that of mullet or cone fish. This reflects the hunting style of the Picuda. It needs to

be able to accelerate quickly when the prey gets close.

**In Aruba:**

Picuda can be found in our waters around our island throughout the year. Picuda, in our waters, is edible without any problem. Picuda is also a highly sought-after fish by sports fishermen or recreational fishermen because it puts up a good fight once hooked. It can be caught via trolling from a boat, casting from shore with a line or rod, or by jiggging, casting the lure (artificial bait) and moving it with certain rod motions. □

Picture courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.



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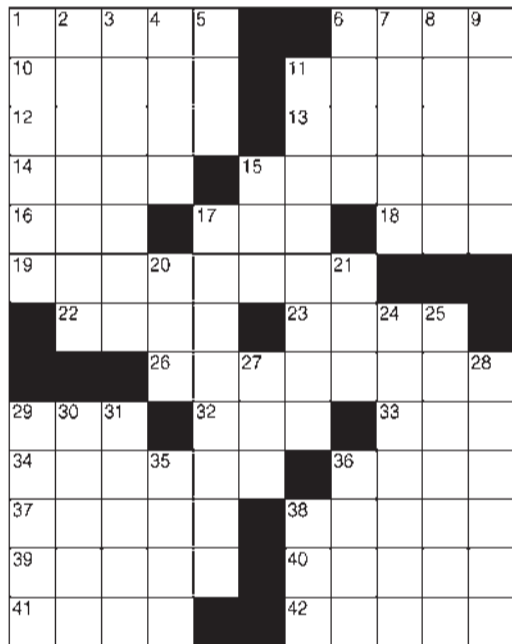
**CROSSWORD**

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Traction aid
  - 6 Hip-hop songs
  - 10 Sponsorship
  - 11 Syrup choice
  - 12 Molten rock
  - 13 Holiday visitor
  - 14 Blunders
  - 15 Shrewd
  - 16 One, for Juan
  - 17 What's more
  - 18 Lawn material
  - 19 EPA target
  - 22 Sharp's counter-part
  - 23 First person
  - 26 Roper, for one
  - 29 Upper limit
  - 32 Diamond club
  - 33 Floral garland
  - 34 Overseas
  - 36 Rocky
  - 37 Diner seating choice
  - 38 Word of German gratitude
  - 39 Ice cream shop extra

**DOWN**

- 1 Arose
- 2 Find out about
- 3 Chinese dinner extra
- 4 Goals
- 5 Screening org.
- 6 Crazy talk
- 7 Top grade
- 8 "Republic" writer
- 9 Did some tailoring
- 11 Flubbed at the poker table
- 15 Small worker
- 17 German express-way
- 20 Pet perch
- 21 Hwys.
- 24 Hawks' home
- 25 Mongoose cousin
- 27 Young fellow
- 28 Pony Express workers
- 29 Group of plotters
- 30 Dwelling
- 31 Eggs on
- 35 Singer Redding
- 36 Head light?
- 38 Block



1-24

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

**1-24 CRYPTOQUOTE**

AZ IHQ`UB PAKBV PAZXJ HU  
TEBJJAVPJ AV IHQU EAZB, AX`J  
QD XH IHQ XH NBED XNB PQI  
YHS AV P QD TBN AVR IHQ.

— WASSI JSAXJ

**Cryptoquote:** AT A DINNER PARTY ONE SHOULD EAT WISELY BUT NOT TOO WELL, AND TALK WELL BUT NOT TOO WISELY.  
— W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM



This image released by GKIDS shows animated character Kimi Sakunaga in a scene from the film "The Colors Within." Associated Press

**Movie Review: 'The Colors Within' is a gentle stunner**

By JAKE COYLE  
AP Film Writer

Kids movies so often bear little of the actual lived-in experience of growing up, but Yamada Naoko's luminous anime "The Colors Within" gently reverberates with the doubts and yearnings of young life. Totsuko (voiced by Suzukawa Sayu) is a student at an all-girls Catholic boarding school. In the movie's opening, she explains how she experiences colors differently. She feels colors more than sees them, like an aura she senses from another person. "When I see a pretty color, my heart quickens," she says.

Totsuko, an exuberant, uncensored soul, has the tendency to blurt things out before she quite intends to. She accidentally tells a nun that her color is beautiful. In the midst of a dodgeball game, she's transfixed by the purple and yellow blur of a volleyball hurtling toward her so much so that she's happily dazed when it smacks her in the head. Like Totsuko, "The Colors Within" (in theaters Friday) wears its heart on its sleeve. Painted with a light, watercolor-y brush, the movie is softly impressionistic. In one typically poetic touch, a slinky brush stroke shapes the contours of a hillside horizon. That evocative sensibility connects with the movie's spiritual underpinnings. Totsuko prays "to have the serenity to accept the things she can't change." In "The Colors Within," a trio of young loners bond over what makes them uniquely themselves, while finding the courage to change, together.

The ball that knocks down Totsuko is thrown by a classmate named Kimi (Akari Takaishi), who not long after that gym class drops out of school hounded, we're told, by rumors of a boyfriend. (Boys are off-limits for the boarding school.) Totsuko, curious what's happened to Kimi, sets out to find her, and eventually does. At a local used bookstore, she sits working behind a desk, strumming her electric guitar.

To speak to Kimi, Totsuko grabs a piano book for an excuse. When a bespectacled boy named Rui (Kido Taisei) approaches and says he plays the theremin, Totsuko blurts out that they should start a band. They aren't much more than strangers to each other, but they do a group urged together by Totsuko's earnest positivity and her instinct that they are suited to one another. (Totsuko sees blue for Kimi, green for Rui.)

Despite their relatively scant experience (none in the case of Totsuko), the trio begin making music together. They practice in an old church near Rui's home that Kimi and Totsuko take a ferry to get to. They don't share much about their lives, but enough to know, roughly, what each is wrestling with. Kimi hasn't yet told her grandmother, who raised her, that she's out of school. Rui, headed next year to college, loves music but has parents who expect a different professional path. But much goes unspoken in "The Colors Within." If there's a character who voices what isn't articulated, it's the kindly Sister Hiyoshiko (Yui Aragaki), the nun with the "beautiful" color. □

# Australian Open: Madison Keys upsets Iga Swiatek and will face Aryna Sabalenka in the final

By HOWARD FENDRICH  
AP Tennis Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— When Madison Keys finally finished off her 5-7, 6-1, 7-6 (10-8) upset of No. 2 Iga Swiatek in a high-intensity, high-quality Australian Open semifinal on Thursday night, saving a match point along the way, the 29-year-old American crouched on the court and placed a hand on her white hat.

She had a hard time believing it all. The comeback. What Keys called an “extra dramatic finish.” The victory over five-time Grand Slam champion Swiatek, who’d been on the most dominant run at Melbourne Park in a dozen years. And now a chance for Keys to play in her second Grand Slam final, a long wait after being the 2017 U.S. Open runner-up.

“I’m still trying to catch up to everything that’s happening,” said the 19th-seeded Keys, who will face No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, the two-time defending champion, for the trophy Saturday. “I felt like I was just fighting to stay in it. ... It was so up and down and



Madison Keys of the U.S. celebrates after defeating Iga Swiatek of Poland in their semifinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, early Friday, Jan. 24, 2025.  
Associated Press

so many big points.” Just to be sure, Keys asked whether Swiatek was, indeed, one point from victory, acknowledging she really had no idea. Yes, Madison, Swiatek was that close to ending things while serving at 6-5, 40-30, but missed a backhand into the net, then eventually getting broken by double-

faulting, sending the contest to a first-to-10, win-by-two tiebreaker. “I felt like I blacked out there at some point,” Keys said, “and was out there running around.” Whatever she was doing, it worked. Keys claimed more games in the semifinal than the 14 total that Swiatek dropped in her five

previous matches over the past two weeks. “It was a matter of one or two balls,” said Swiatek, who lost in the Australian Open semifinals two years ago, too. “Madison was kind of brave.” Sabalenka beat good friend Paula Badosa 6-4, 6-2 earlier Thursday. Sabalenka, a 26-year-old

from Belarus, can become the first woman since 1999 to complete a threepeat. “If she plays like this,” the 11th-seeded Badosa said, “I mean, we can already give her the trophy.” Keys might have something to say about that. Still, Sabalenka won her first major championship at Melbourne Park in 2023, and she since has added two more in Australia a year ago and at the U.S. Open last September. The last woman to reach three finals in a row at the year’s first Grand Slam tournament was Serena Williams, who won two from 2015-17. Martina Hingis was the most recent woman to win three titles in a row in Melbourne, doing it from 1997-99.

“I have goosebumps. I’m so proud of myself,” said Sabalenka, whose 4-1 head-to-head record against Keys includes a win in the 2023 U.S. Open semifinals. Swiatek had not lost a single service game since the first round, but was broken three times by Keys in the first set alone and eight times in all. □

# F1 drivers could be suspended for swearing or political statements under new rules

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH  
AP Sports Writer

Formula 1 drivers could be suspended from racing or lose championship points for swearing or making political statements under new rules from series governing body the FIA.

That could deepen a rift with the drivers, who criticized the FIA last year after Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc were punished for swearing in FIA news conferences.

The FIA is seeking “to further enhance transparency and consistency in decision-making,” the organization said in an emailed statement on Thursday.

These measures published by the FIA on Wednesday apply to “misconduct,” which is defined by the FIA

as including both offensive language and physical assault, or for acts deemed to cause “moral injury or loss” to the FIA and auto racing in general.

Similar punishments also apply for “political, religious and personal statements or comments notably in violation of the general principle of neutrality promoted by the FIA” without written approval in advance.

The new regulations are labeled as a “guideline to assist stewards” on punishments and fines starting from 40,000 euros (\$41,600) for an F1 driver’s first offense. The standard fine is 10,000 euros but punishments for F1 drivers are multiplied by four.

The suggested fine doubles for a second offense, along

with a suspended one-month ban. A third offense within a two-year period carries a proposed fine of 120,000 euros (\$125,000) for an F1 driver, a one-month ban and the loss of an unspecified number of championship points.

In cases involving political, religious or personal statements, the FIA regulations also specify the stewards should demand a “public apology and repudiation of comments.”

Asked about the changes, the FIA said other sports bodies including the NFL and FIFA “have similar rules/fines to protect the integrity of the sport. The FIA is not alone in fining competitors for misconduct.”

The governing body said stewards will still have dis-

cretion to enforce a particular penalty, especially if there are mitigating or aggravating circumstances. “The aim of this new appendix is to provide clear guidance to stewards regarding the penalties for violations of specific (in-

ternational sporting code) articles,” the FIA said. “By establishing a more structured framework, the FIA seeks to ensure that penalties are applied uniformly and transparently, benefiting both stewards and drivers/competitors.” □



Drivers with their F1 cars start for the Hungarian Formula One Grand Prix race at the Hungaroring racetrack in Mogyorod, Hungary, Sunday, July 21, 2024.  
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## Best rookie year of all time?' Jayden Daniels has the Commanders a win away from the Super Bowl

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**

AP Sports Writer

ASHBURN, Va. (AP) —

Jayden Daniels has the Washington Commanders in the NFC championship game, and his list of admirers around the league continues to grow.

Just this week, Philadelphia Eagles defensive coordinator Vic Fangio called Daniels "a young quarterback by birth certificate, not by the tape." C.J. Stroud of the Houston Texans believes Daniels has "had the best rookie year of all time." If he and the Commanders beat the Eagles on Sunday, Daniels would become the first rookie quarterback to lead his team to the Super Bowl.

And even as the hype train picks up speed, Daniels remains the same laser-focused competitor and down-to-earth person he was when he walked through the door as the second pick in the draft.

"He stays as even-keeled as any player I've ever been around," top receiver Terry McLaurin said Wednesday. "We've played in some of the most hostile environments, we've been playing on some of the biggest stages and he's treating it the same each and every week. I love that about him."

Daniels is making a strong case to back up Stroud's opinion. The 24-year-old out of LSU is the first player in franchise history to throw for 25 touchdown passes with fewer than 10 interceptions, and his 891 yards rushing are the most of any rookie QB in NFL history.

After winning the Heisman Trophy in college and becoming the overwhelming favorite to win AP Offensive Rookie of the Year, Dan-



Washington Commanders quarterback Jayden Daniels (5) throws against the Detroit Lions during the first half of an NFL football divisional playoff game, Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, in Detroit.

Associated Press

iels said he was "not even thinking that far" about making the Super Bowl and the trail he would be blazing by facing the Buffalo Bills or Kansas City Chiefs in New Orleans on Feb. 9.

"It would obviously be a blessing, but I'm just focused on how can I be better day by day," Daniels said.

"There's countless teams that want to be in this position. You can't really take it for granted, but you also just got to be in the moment."

No problem there. Coach Dan Quinn likens Daniels on the sideline to "The Terminator" because of his steely-eyed demeanor and avoidance of distractions. On the field, Daniels has led the Commanders to six consecutive victories win-

ning the first five on the final play of scrimmage and beating the 15-win Lions 45-31 in Detroit. He has thrown for 17 TDs during this stretch, and while Washington is an underdog at Philadelphia, Daniels' magic is the biggest reason to think the Commanders could pull off another upset.

"He's got rare, in-the-moment skills that have allowed us to be into this spot," Quinn said. "When it's mental chaos going down and two minutes (left) and these tight moments where it can feel that tight, he's got the experience of somebody that's played a lot more football than a first-year player."

Daniels isn't sure when teammates stopped treating him like a rookie. It was Week 8 after his Hail Mary

pass to Noah Brown when veteran tight end Zach Ertz asked that everyone outside the organization stop acting like Daniels is a rookie because he had seen signs of it for months.

"He was very proactive in his approach to being great," said Ertz, who helped the Eagles win the Super Bowl seven years ago.

"A lot of times when you're young in the league, it's a lot of trial and error to see what works for you. And, oftentimes, you're reactionary in terms of how your process is.

And it's like, 'Oh, after I failed a couple times, maybe I'll do X, Y and Z a little more.' Whereas Jayden, the moment he first got here, he was the first one in the building studying as

much as possible."

Daniels, who still warms up with a basketball and loves that sport, too, earned the reputation of being a gym rat during offseason practices.

He showed up early to take part in walkthroughs before others and stayed late to make sure he got the playbook down pat.

Quinn, himself one win from returning to the Super Bowl eight years since he and the Atlanta Falcons lost to New England, appreciates Daniels' competitiveness but respects even more how much stems from the rookie's preparation.

"There's a feeling of being a leg up, and doing that type of extra work sometimes just also provides the right motivation for yourself: 'I've seen that look. I'm ready,'" Quinn said. "You've done the work at it, so when the moment comes, you're ready to deliver."

Daniels has delivered Washington's best season-to-season win improvement from 4-13 to 12-5, and he has been the centerpiece of an offense that has 10 games with zero turnovers the most for the franchise since at least 1940, according to Sportradar.

Each step along the way, Daniels has shown that no situation is too much pressure for him, something he credits to football being a fun escape for him.

"I'm not really going out there and stressing about the moment because at the end of the day I get to do what I love each and every week win, lose or draw," Daniels said. "It's just a blessing to be one of those kids that are able to fulfill their dream and live out their dream of playing on Sundays in the NFL." □