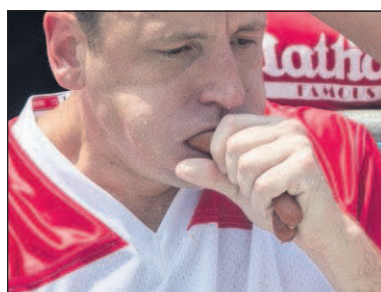


SPORTS

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Defending champ Chestnut sets record with 74 hot dogs



AP Photo/Mary Altaffer

Reigning champion Joey Chestnut eats two hot dogs at a time during the men's competition of the Nathan's Famous Fourth of July hot dog eating contest Wednesday in New York's Coney Island.

By **REBECCA GIBIAN**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Joey “Jaws” Chestnut extended his reign as champion eater at the Nathan’s Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest Wednesday, downing a record 74 wieners and buns in 10 minutes to take home the coveted Mustard Belt for the 11th time.

Miki Sudo held on to her title as the top women’s competitor at the annual Brooklyn eat-off, chomping 37 franks and buns to take home the top prize for an unprecedented fifth consecutive year.

Chestnut said he was “feeling good.”

“I found a vicious rhythm,” the 34-year-old Chestnut said after the stuffing session.

But while Chestnut ate 10 more dogs and buns than second-place finisher Carmen Cincotti, a judging error cast initial doubt over their totals after jurors didn’t see the eaters were taking the dogs and buns from two plates.

“Frankly, the judging was just off,” said George Shea, the longtime Coney Island announcer. “Joey said, ‘Look at my plates,’ and Carmen said, ‘Look at my plates.’ We counted the plates that they had eaten and it was 64 and 74.”

Eric Gonzalez, the Brooklyn district attorney, certified the final tally and Chestnut’s record of 74, two more than he consumed last year.

“At the end of the day, Joey Chestnut came in here and ate 74 hot dogs, broke a world record,” said Cincotti, who celebrated his 26th birthday on Wednesday. “Apparently they were good dogs.”

A total of \$40,000 in prize money was up for grabs, with the first-place winners taking home \$10,000 each.

Sudo fell short of the 41 hot dogs she consumed last year but easily beat out second-place finisher Mischelle Lesco, of Tucson, Arizona, who

chewed down 28 wieners and buns.

Thousands of attendees, many donning mustard-colored hot dog caps, braved 83-degree temperatures and a heat index of 91 degrees to witness the annual July Fourth competition on the Coney Island boardwalk. The outlandish tradition dates to 1972, though the company has long promoted what a former president acknowledged was a legendary start date of 1916.

Fan Martha Pleasant, of Franklin, New Jersey, said she was attending the competitive eating competition to support her husband, Dwight Pleasant, who “loves wieners.”

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Pella stuns Cilic at Wimbledon; Djokovic, Nadal advance

LONDON — Guido Pella of Argentina came from two sets down to stun third-seeded Marin Cilic at Wimbledon today, beating last year’s finalist 3-6, 1-6, 6-4, 7-6 (3), 7-5 in the second round.

Cilic looked headed for a routine victory before the match was suspended by rain in the third set on Wednesday but the former U.S. Open champion couldn’t find the same rhythm today.

“Yesterday he was playing so, so good, and hitting the ball so hard that I couldn’t do anything,” the 82nd-ranked Pella said. “So the rain helped me a lot.”

Cilic was runner-up to Roger Federer last year and showed great form by beating Novak Djokovic in the Queen’s Club final last month.

His early exit opens up Federer’s path to the final even more, with No. 8 Kevin Anderson the highest-seeded player left in the Swiss star’s half of the draw after No. 6 Grigor Dimitrov lost in the first round.

Stan Wawrinka also exited, losing to Italian qualifier Thomas Fabbiano 7-6 (7), 6-3, 7-6 (6). That match was also suspended on Wednesday with Wawrinka leading 6-5 in the third set, but Fabbiano wrapped up the victory quickly to equal his best Grand Slam result by reaching the third round.

Neymar urged to stop acting, win titles to get FIFA award

MOSCOW — After a decade of duopoly, the FIFA-run vote to crown soccer’s best player finally seems open to third parties after Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo left the World Cup early.

Neymar must help Brazil lift the trophy next week if he wants to join the greats, according to the World Cup winner who first took home FIFA’s top individual award.

Cutting out the play-acting would also help Neymar win votes, 1990 World Cup winner Lothar Matthaus said Wednesday.

“We need players like Neymar,” said the former West German captain, who won the inaugural FIFA world player award in 1991. “But not with this acting what he was doing now in each game.”

A debate about Neymar faking injury and overreacting to tackles is polarizing opinion between European outrage and Brazilian defense.

Former England forward Alan Shearer called Neymar’s behavior “absolutely pathetic” in a British broadcast Monday. Neymar’s theatrics distracted from Brazil’s 2-0 win over Mexico that took the five-time champion into the quarterfinals.

“The criticism is nonsense,” Brazil great Ronaldo told reporters Wednesday. “I am against all these opinions you mentioned. I don’t think referees have been protecting him enough.”

— *Associated Press*



AP Photo/John Froschauer

Los Angeles Angels' Kole Calhoun flips his bat after hitting a two-run home run off Seattle Mariners' Nick Rumbelow during the sixth inning of Wednesday's game in Seattle.

Calhoun homers, Angels end Mariners' streak with 7-4 win

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Kole Calhoun has come a long way since getting a needed break on the disabled list last month, and Garrett Richards looked pretty sharp after his own DL stint.

Calhoun hit a two-run homer, Richards pitched effectively into the sixth inning and the Los Angeles Angels beat the Mariners 7-4 on Wednesday to snap Seattle’s eight-game winning streak.

Batting in the leadoff spot for only the fourth time this season, Calhoun had three hits and drove in three runs to help lift Richards (5-4) in his return.

UP NEXT: MARINERS

- Los Angeles Angels (44-43) at Seattle Mariners (55-32)
- Tonight, 7:10 p.m. TV: RTNW

Calhoun’s towering homer in the sixth gave the Angels a 6-2 lead. He also had a single in the fourth inning for his first RBI. Calhoun is batting .306 with four homers and eight RBIs since coming off the DL on June 18. He was hitting .145 before that break.

“Kole did his job today,” Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. “That’s what we need from the guys at the top of the order. It gave

us a lot of opportunities today.”

Richards, who went on the DL on June 15 with a left hamstring strain, allowed three runs, including back-to-back homers to Kyle Seager and Ryon Healy, over 5 1/3 innings. He struck out eight.

“I just overthrew a couple of heaters there,” Richards said of the home runs. “But I felt good. The hamstring felt good. I knew I would be on a leash (80 pitches), so I just tried to execute pitches.”

Richards retired 10 of the next 11 hitters he faced after the home runs.

“Garrett just exhaled (after the homers) and made some really good pitches,” Scioscia said. “He gave us a chance to win the game.”

As midseason point nears, parity ruling the day in WNBA

By **DOUG FEINBERG**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Parity is rampant in the WNBA this season as the league reaches the midway point.

Only three losses separate the top eight teams.

Phoenix, Los Angeles and Seattle are at the top of the standings. Minnesota got off to a rough start, but lately has turned things around with seven consecutive victories.

“I think it’s the best and I’ve been in the league a lot of years. It’s the best year since I’ve been here. Every team has everyone playing for them with no one sitting out,” Seattle coach Dan Hughes said. “There’s a fine line between a lot of us. If you’re not on your game every night you’re probably going to get beat.”

Seattle’s next opponent is New York on Tuesday night. The Liberty have struggled to a 5-11 start this season after finishing with the third best record the past few seasons. New York has nearly the entire team back and just seem a play or two away from winning games.



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Seattle Storm's Breanna Stewart celebrates a score against the Connecticut Sun in the second half of a June 15 WNBA game in Seattle.

“We’re right there, we just are missing a rebound or a defensive assignment,” Liberty forward Shavonte Zellous said. “We still have faith in each other that we can turn things around.”

New York is currently sitting in 11th place in the standings. The only

team that is below the Liberty is the Indiana Fever, who is off to the worst start in franchise history with a 1-16 record. They are in danger of breaking the record for the league’s worst season set by the Tulsa Shock in 2011 when they went 3-31.

Phoenix took over the No. 1 position in the power poll for the first time since it began three years ago.

POWER POLL: A look at this week’s WNBA poll:

1. Phoenix (13-5): Suffered a big blow when Sancho Lyttle was lost for the season with an ACL injury.

2. Seattle (12-5): Storm plays seven of their 10 remaining 10 games in July on the road.

3. Minnesota (10-6): Seven straight wins has vaulted the Lynx back into the thick of the race for the top seeds. Maya Moore has been putting up MVP-type numbers during the streak.

4. Los Angeles (12-5): Lost a couple games in a row with Nneka Ogwu-mike sidelined with a back injury. She returned and the Sparks won again.

5. Washington (10-6): Come to a difficult part of the schedule with

seven of 10 games this month on the road.

6. Connecticut (9-7): Have three more road games before finally getting a chance to head home again. Sun play 11 of final 15 games at home.

7. Atlanta (8-8): Finally have everyone healthy and have been getting qualities minutes from Imani McGee-Stafford.

8. Dallas (7-8): Wings suffered a scary moment when Liz Cambage got poked in the eye against Minnesota. Fortunately all tests came back negative.

9. Las Vegas (6-12): The Aces got Moriah Jefferson back from her microfracture surgery and could make a surprising run to the playoffs.

10. Chicago (6-10): Won three straight before a tough overtime loss to New York on Sunday.

11. New York (5-11): It took overtime, but the Liberty snapped a five-game losing streak with a win in Chicago.

12. Indiana (1-16): Signed Cappie Pondexter on Sunday to get a little more veteran leadership in the locker room.