

Trump guilty on all counts

Jury hands down historic conviction of ex-president, who decries trial as ‘rigged’

ANALYSIS

What judgment will voters render?

By JAMES RAINEY

The sometimes-breathless gavel-to-gavel coverage of former President Trump’s trial was no surprise, as a singularly divisive figure sat for more than a month at the defense table, the first president to face criminal charges and the possibility of a trip to jail.

But for all the trial’s spectacle, many political observers predict that the impact of Thursday’s 34 guilty verdicts will be muted and unlikely to change the dynamic in a presidential race that appears extremely close, just over five months before the last day of voting.

The New York jury’s verdict puts Trump in an unprecedented position: trying to win the White House as a felon, guilty of falsifying business records to bury the details of his extramarital one-night stand with a porn star.

While a Trump appeal could still remove the threat of probation or jail, he still will have to explain to voters why a man convicted of a political cover-up should be entrusted with the most powerful office in the world.

Trump has provoked both admiration and despair — depending on the audience’s political leanings — with his ability to survive what some judged to be fatal missteps.

“I already gave up my membership in the He-Certainly-Can’t-Survive-This-Club,” David Axelrod, the top strategist in Barack Obama’s two successful presidential campaigns, said in an interview. “Look at how many other times he has gotten away with things. He is an extraordinary escape artist.” (Axelrod and other experts spoke before the verdict.)

In 2016, candidate Trump famously told a campaign crowd that he could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue in New York and shoot someone without losing his core supporters. Though the charges in the hush money case fell short of assault with a deadly weapon, they stand as a real-world test of Trump’s seeming invulnerability from political norms.

With about a month to go in the 2016 race, a previously secret video showed Trump boasting about his ability to sexually prey on women because of his fame. Many observers believed the “Access [See **Voters**, A7]



SETH WENIG Associated Press

FORMER President Trump walks to address the media after a Manhattan jury found him guilty on 34 felony counts Thursday in his hush money trial. “The real verdict is going to be Nov. 5 by the people,” Trump said.

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

He’s a felon, but that may not stop him

Many voters will react to the hush money trial verdict with a shrug

DOYLE McMANUS

Former President Trump’s conviction on 34 criminal counts of falsifying business records in New York is an ignoble first. No former president has ever been tried, much less found guilty, for felonies before.

But Trump’s new status as a convicted felon probably won’t significantly affect his chances of winning the



2024 presidential election.

That too is a strange historic first: a presidential candidate convicted of felonies, but suffering little if any political damage in the process.

However sensational the charges, which stemmed from hush money payments made to an adult film actor, many voters will react to the Manhattan jury’s decision with a shrug.

The conviction won’t prevent Trump from staying in the race until election day, and if he wins, he stands a good chance of avoiding serious penal-

ties while he’s in the White House.

It won’t be easy to spin a conviction on 34 felony counts as a victory, but there are plenty of ways Trump can mitigate the consequences.

He’ll continue to claim that the process was unfair and politically motivated, as he did on his way out of the courthouse Thursday evening.

“This was a disgrace,” he said, standing behind a steel barricade. “It was a rigged trial by a conflicted judge. ... This was done by the Biden administration to wound, to hurt a political [See **McManus**, A10]

Sentence due in July after verdict in N.Y. case

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, JENNIFER PELTZ AND MICHELLE L. PRICE

NEW YORK — Donald Trump became the first former president to be convicted of felony crimes Thursday as a New York jury found him guilty of falsifying business records in a scheme to illegally influence the 2016 election through hush money payments to a porn actor who said the two had sex.

Jurors deliberated for 9½ hours over two days before convicting Trump of all 34 counts he faced. Trump sat stone-faced while the verdict was read as cheering from the street below — where supporters and detractors of the former president were gathered — could be heard in the hallway on the courthouse’s 15th floor where the decision was revealed.

“This was a rigged, disgraceful trial,” Trump told reporters after leaving the courtroom. “The real verdict is going to be Nov. 5 by the people. They know what happened, and everyone knows what happened here.”

The verdict is a stunning legal reckoning for Trump and exposes him to potential prison time in the city where his manipulations of the tabloid press helped catapult him from a real estate tycoon to reality television star and ultimately president. As he seeks to reclaim the White House in this year’s election, the judgment presents voters with another test of their willingness to accept Trump’s boundary-breaking behavior.

Trump is expected to quickly appeal the verdict and will face an awkward dynamic as he returns to the campaign trail as a convicted felon. There are no campaign rallies on the calendar for now, though he’s expected to hold fundraisers next week.

Judge Juan Merchan set sentencing for July 11, just days before the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee, where Republican leaders who remained resolute in their support in the immediate aftermath of the verdict are expected to formally make him their nominee.

The falsifying business records charges carry up to [See **Trump**, A7]

Hollywood is in a box-office doom loop

Absurdly high expectations create perception of failure. What to do?

MARY McNAMARA

After days of morning-to-mid-afternoon gloom, Memorial Day bloomed bright and early over Los Angeles — the clouds blown



away, no doubt, by the powerful current of sighs, groans and complaints generated by the weekend’s disappointing box office.

Turns out Hollywood executives do believe in magic. Somehow they thought that forcing six months’ worth of strikes by writers and actors last year would come at no cost to

this year’s summer movie season.

That in 2023, with the film industry still in recovery from the COVID-19 shutdown, it would be perfectly fine to allow writing and production to come to a grinding halt again. Especially if it meant saving some dough in the short run and burning off a few ill-

advised deals while the folks with the multimillion-dollar salaries tried to figure out what to do about all these dang streaming services they rushed to create.

Meanwhile, outside the billionaire bubble, the delays, particularly of big-budget tentpole movies, scrambled this summer’s [See **McNamara**, A10]

Ukraine can use U.S. arms in Russia

Biden is said to give Kyiv the go-ahead to strike for limited purpose of defending Kharkiv. **NATION, A5**

Metro to enforce TAP cards at exit

Pilot program at North Hollywood station is agency’s effort to curb crime. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather

Clouds, then sun. L.A. Basin: 74/58. **B6**

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Trader Joe’s will open more stores

Two dozen locations are in the works for grocery chain, including eight in Southland. **BUSINESS, A6**

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