

Trump and Biden call for unity

ANALYSIS

A raised fist and an image of strength

Trump’s gesture of defiance after narrow escape from death will likely power his bid to retake the presidency.

By Noah Bierman and James Rainey

Former President Trump was blanketed by Secret Service agents, blood on his ear, when he raised his fist and appeared to say “fight” three times, creating what is likely to become the most enduring image of a life that has been built on them.

The defiant gesture during his Saturday night rally in Pennsylvania, after narrowly escaping an assassination attempt, showed Trump’s instinctual understanding that a visual show of strength is likely to fuel the rest of his presidential campaign.

“He didn’t miss a beat. I can’t believe he had such self-awareness and consciousness to continue to campaign while he’s being hauled off,” said Joan Hoff, a Montana State University history professor and former director of the Center for the Study of the Presidency in New York.

It’s too early to calculate the full political impact of the moment. But it is already energizing Trump’s base and, for some voters not sold on the former president, could overtake uglier images such as his Jan. 6 speech that whipped up supporters who stormed the Capitol, his ambivalent response to the race-based violence in Charlottesville, Va., or any number of events during and after his presidency that have prompted concerns about his fitness for office.

It also carved another mark on 2024 as one of the most unusual and unpredictable campaign seasons in recent history.

Trump, despite multiple indictments, an eventual conviction, two impeachments and the attempt to overturn the 2020 election, ran away with his party’s nominating contest.

President Biden, the oldest president in history at 81, is pushing back against calls in his party to drop out of the race after a debate performance that set off alarm bells, and which some see as his decline.

Trump is already leading in national polls and in key battleground states. Any boost could be crucial.

Party conventions, usually drama-free and [See Campaign, A6]



A CAMPAIGN rally site for Republican presidential candidate and former President Trump where a shooter attempted to assassinate him, killing one attendee, is empty and littered with debris Saturday in Butler, Pa.

Shooting shocks nation, but gun terror in U.S. is not new

Few were surprised that a lone holder of an AR-style rifle could wreak havoc in an instant. So what will come next?

By Kevin Rector

The attempt on former President Trump’s life at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on Saturday felt familiar in a uniquely American way.

The shooter trained his AR-style rifle on people gathered far from his rooftop perch, echoing the mass shooting in 2017 in which a gunman opened fire on a music festival from the 32nd floor of a Las Vegas hotel.

Law enforcement officials said the

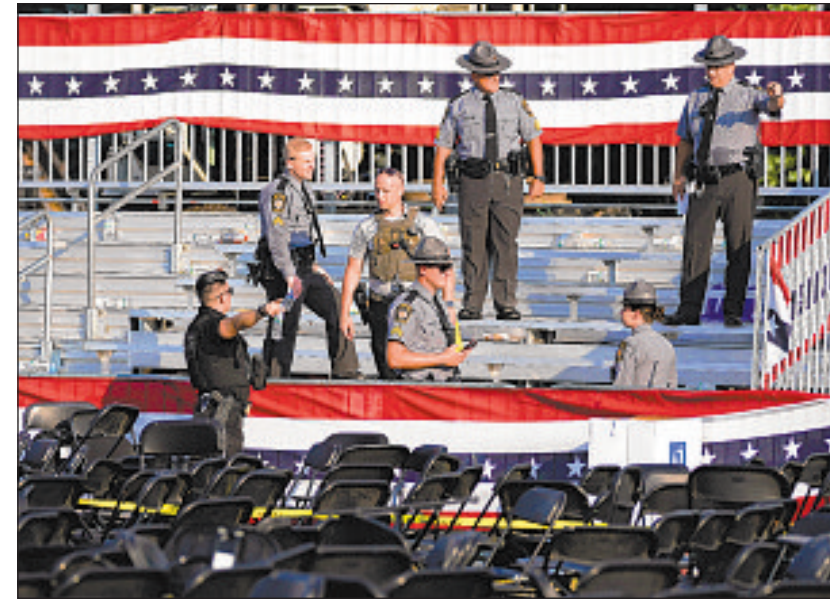
shooter was 20 years old and got the gun he used from home — just like so many other young shooters who have left bloody trails through this nation’s schools and churches, bars and other community gathering places.

“Time and time again our communities are shaken by acts of gun violence that have invaded what should be our safe places,” said Angela Ferrell-Zabala, executive director of the gun control advocacy organization Moms Demand Action. “But they are a consequence of our country’s weak

gun laws and guns everywhere culture — laws that allow hate to be armed with a gun to easily take someone else’s life.”

Amid denouncements of political violence from leaders and average Americans on both sides of the political aisle, the nation’s great gun divide felt newly raw Sunday — but hardly changed. Despite their presidential candidate nearly being shot dead, there were no outward calls from leading Republicans for the party to ease [See Guns, A7]

Witness accounts raise security questions



LAW ENFORCEMENT officers gather amid debris in the aftermath of the shooting on Saturday at the campaign rally site in Butler, Pa.

‘BULLIED’: The attacker is described as a high school outcast who registered as a Republican and worked at a nursing home. NATION, A8

Assassination attempt stuns operatives in both parties familiar with detail-oriented precision of Secret Service.

By Seema Mehta, Nathan Solis and Richard Winton

The attempt to assassinate former President Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on Saturday raised questions about security protocols and how a gunman could open fire so close to the presumptive GOP nominee.

For several minutes, witnesses pointed toward a nondescript roof just outside the venue where Trump was speaking in Butler, Pa. Multiple people shouted at law enforcement that a man with a rifle was taking aim at Trump.

In videos shared on social media, attendees pleaded and shouted, “He’s got a gun.”

The shooting, which left one spec- [See Security, A7]

Gunman probably acted alone, FBI says; victims reel

By Noah Goldberg, Summer Lin, Brittny Mejia and Angie Orellana Hernandez

BUTLER, Pa. — As the FBI works to uncover the motive behind the assassination attempt of former President Trump at a campaign rally, agency officials said Sunday that they believe the shooter — who wounded two others and left one dead — acted alone.

Gunfire broke out at the event Saturday night in Butler, Pa., setting off a wave of panic among attendees. The presumptive Republican presidential nominee said his right ear was pierced in the shooting.

“In this moment, it is more important than ever that we stand United, and show our True Character as Americans, remaining Strong and Determined, and not allowing Evil to Win,” Trump wrote on his social media site.

The FBI has identified the shooter as Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20, of Bethel Park, Pa. In a Sunday briefing, officials said they have yet to identify “an ideology associated” with Crooks.

Kevin Rojek, FBI Pittsburgh special agent in charge, said the gun used was an AR-style 556 rifle, which law enforcement officials believe was purchased legally by Crooks’ father. Authorities said it’s unclear how the young man gained access to the weapon.

During the search of the shooter’s car, Rojek said, agents found “a suspicious device,” which was inspected by bomb technicians and rendered safe. Officials said they are investigating the shooting as an assassination attempt, and they are also looking at it as a “potential domestic terrorism act.”

Rojek said there are no indications yet that the shooter had mental health issues.

The Pennsylvania State Police identified the man fatally shot as Corey Comperatore, 50, of Sarver, Pa. They identified the two other victims as David Dutch, 57, and James Copenhaver, 74, who are listed in stable condition.

In a Sunday news conference, Gov. Josh Shapiro said Comperatore’s wife asked Shapiro to share that her husband “dove on his family to protect them.” The governor called the assassination attempt “absolutely unacceptable and tragic.”

“My message to all Pennsylvanians, my message to all Americans, is to be firm in your beliefs, to believe what [See Aftermath, A6]

Israeli GPS trick fools missiles — and more

‘Spoofing’ disrupts passenger planes, taxis, even dating apps in Mideast

By Nabil Bulos

BEIRUT — It was the last minute of the flight, just before touchdown at Beirut’s international airport, when the Airbus 320’s ground proximity warning — the system that warns pilots if their aircraft is about to hit a mountain or other obstacle

— squawked, “Terrain! Pull up! Pull up!”

Fadi Ramadan, the 37-year-old pilot, fell back on the emergency protocol drilled into him every six months for the last 15 years of his flying career.

“It’s muscle memory at this point. Whenever we get this warning, we immediately go full power and full

back stick to get the plane to a safe altitude,” said Ramadan, a former employee of Lebanon’s flagship carrier Middle East Airlines.

He was about to do just that. But looking out the cockpit, he knew something was wrong with the plane’s Global Positioning System, or GPS. They were nowhere near the mountains over-

looking the airport, and he could see the runway right in front of him. And the plane’s instrument landing system, which relies on radio navigation, showed they were in the right place.

“Disregard,” he told his co-pilot, and landed the plane with the alarm blaring all the way to the gate.

[See Israel, A4]

Fitness guru Richard Simmons dies

The influencer had recently retreated from public view, becoming a topic of fascination. CALIFORNIA, B1

Film, TV drought is ‘here to stay’

Work plunges 40% from 2022, report says, citing cuts linked to streaming wars. BUSINESS, A9

Weather

Partly sunny. L.A. Basin: 83/63. B5

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Paris in disarray before Olympics

Political uproar, a fouled Seine and other issues mount as city prepares for Games. SPORTS, D1

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