

OLYMPICS



CHINA'S Liu "671" Qingyi competes in breaking at the Paris Olympics. The 2028 Games in L.A. have decided not to include the event.

For Games' newbie events, a lot more than medals are at stake

Breaking aims for a breakthrough in Paris. Will it and other events satisfy the IOC?

By David Wharton

PARIS — When the battles begin, when the time comes to throw down, look for Victor Montalvo to bring his classic

That free-flowing style. His smooth transitions from top rock to spins.

With the sport of breaking —

don't call it breakdancing — debuting at the 2024 Summer Games this week, the Los Angeles B-boy hopes to win gold while also scoring points in the court of public opinion.

"I feel like it's going to bring breaking to a different audience," he says of the Olympics. "Like, a broader audience."

Some sports — gymnastics and swimming, basketball and

track - don't have to worry about getting noticed. But for newer and smaller events, even some traditional ones, competition is about more than just medals.

It's about survival, about generating the television ratings and ticket sales to keep hold of their coveted spots on the Olympic program.

Skateboarding and surfing

hit it big in their first try at the Tokyo Games three years ago, securing a place — at least for now — on the roster. Meanwhile, the likes of wrestling and boxing have faced elimination. Same with modern pentathlon, where Jessica Savner of the U.S. muses about finding "better ways to market and show our sport."

The situation for breaking, [See Sports, A4] **ANALYSIS**

Harris thrives as she drops Biden's themes

Her campaign's tone and message appear to be resonating in battleground states.

By David Lauter

WASHINGTON — As Vice President Kamala Harris rallied in critical swing states this week, an observer could watch in real time as she honed the lines on which she's campaigning — themes that differ sharply in both style and substance from those President Biden had planned.

Harris still has some major strategic decisions to make. But so far, her approach has worked better than most Democrats thought possible when Biden quit the race under pressure less than three weeks

Harris inherited a race that Biden was on track to lose decisively, polls suggested. She now leads former President Trump in most national polls and is at least tied with the Republican in recent surveys of major swing states from Arizona to Pennsylvania.

Increasingly, voters also believe Harris can win — a $measure\,that\,in\,the\,past\,has$ sometimes proved more predictive than head-tohead polling.

Going back to October of last year, voters nationwide consistently said they expected Trump to win, according to weekly polls by YouGov for the Economist. This week, for the first time, the Democrat took a slight [See Harris, A6]

The man who's buying 17 Skid Row buildings



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times **LEO PUSTILNIKOV** is purchasing 17 buildings owned by the nonprofit Skid Row Housing Trust.

Developer adds to a large portfolio with acquisition of failed trust's properties.

By LIAM DILLON

The first time Leo Pustilnikov tried to create a downtown Los Angeles real estate empire his effort ended in allegations of fraud and betrayal.

In 2011, Pustilnikov and two wealthy investors were negotiating deals for a halfdozen aging buildings to build a portfolio that they believed would top \$100 mil-

Then, less than a year later, the deals fell through and the partnership spiraled into bitter litigation.

"On many occasions you mentioned to me that you don't have a problem stepping on peoples toes," wrote Izek Shomof, one of the investors, in an email to Pustilnikov at the time. "[I]n the past i told you it was a very bad thing to say or do because when you step on peoples toes it hurts. Maybe you

don't care if it hurts, but in life, what goes around comes around."

Now, Pustilnikov, who has since amassed an assortment of high-value properties from Beverly Hills to Redondo Beach, is trying again downtown. The centerpiece of his plan is 17 buildings remaining in receivership after last year's collapse of the nonprofit Skid Row Housing Trust. At 1,200 units, the trust portfolio is one of the largest collections of supportive housing in Los Angeles, with many of

[See Pustilnikov, A8]

Love O.C., but 'we just can't afford to live here'

Over a third consider relocating, poll finds. The price of housing is a major reason.

By Hannah Fry

Brittany West planned to put down roots and build a life with her fiance and their new baby in Orange County, a place that's lauded as ideal for raising children.

But it's become more difficult to make ends meet, even though West and her fiance, Ben, both have solid incomes. Modest rent hikes on their Irvine condominium, higher prices for basic goods and costly child care for their 9-month-old son have pushed the couple to start planning to abandon Orange County for more affordable digs in the Sacramento area.

[See Orange County, A12]

Domestic abuse remarks surface

In 2021, future vice presidential nominee JD Vance said divorces "didn't work out for the kids." NATION, A5

Griner cherishes Paris Olympics

U.S. women's basketball star is grateful she can enjoy competition after her prison time in Russia. sports, B12

Weather

Partly sunny. L.A. Basin: 89/67. **B8**

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Lawsuit alleges infighting between Metro leaders

In court filing, former security head tells of rising tensions with CEO over safety.

By RACHEL URANGA

When a homeless man with an airsoft gun hijacked a Metro bus, careened into several cars and crashed into the Ritz-Carlton last March, Metro's top security officer at the time, Gina Osborn, called Metro Chief Executive Stephanie Wiggins. It was around midnight and there was no answer. She texted her and then called Wiggins' top aide, Nicole Englund.

"This bus just got hijacked, I'm giving you all the details," she said.

Startled, Englund offered to call Wiggins herself. By the next day, Osborn said, she hadn't heard back from either of them.

This behind-the-scenes glimpse of the hijacking is described in a lawsuit filed this week, alleging that Osborn later was wrongfully terminated for raising concerns about how law enforcement agencies were patrolling the Metro system. The complaint lays bare the tension between Osborn and Wiggins at a time when safety had become the agency's most public problem.

In leading the \$9-billion agency, one of Wiggins' biggest challenges has been making passengers - many of whom confront the region's homelessness, crime and drug use problems dur-[See Metro, A12]



A METRO BUS crashed into the Ritz-Carlton hotel in downtown Los Angeles in March after a man with an airsoft gun commandeered the transit vehicle.



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