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SPORTS

Seahawks' Darnold bounces back from trio of shaky games

SEATTLE, Washington (AP)

Sam Darnold and Seattle's offense didn't get off to the start it wanted on Sunday, though the Seahawks quarterback certainly rounded into form in the second half.

Darnold threw three touchdown passes, all in the second half, of a 37-9 victory over the Atlanta Falcons. It was Darnold's most touchdown passes in a game since Nov. 2, when the Seahawks (10-3) beat the Washington Commanders 38-14.

"We did a great job in the second half," Darnold said, "of coming back and finishing the game strong."

Seattle found itself deadlocked in a 6-6 tie at halftime because of the Seahawks' inability to convert red zone chances into touchdowns. One of Jason Myers' three field goals in the afternoon, a 22-yarder, came after Darnold tossed a pair of incompletions and a false start.



Seattle Seahawks quarterback Sam Darnold points to fans after a victory over the Atlanta Falcons in an NFL football game, on Sunday, December 7, 2025, in Atlanta, Georgia.

In the second half, Darnold more closely resembled the quarterback the Seahawks were used to before a three-game stretch in November in which he threw two touchdown passes against four interceptions.

Darnold passed for 182 of his 249 yards after halftime in addition to his

three touchdown passes, the last of which required him to step up in the pocket before delivering a strike to the NFL's leading receiver, Jaxon Smith-Njigba, from 4 yards out. Darnold said he's sought to become better at escaping up in the pocket, rather than up and out.

"I just felt like the other edge rushers were

getting around a little bit, so I just tried to get up the middle and obviously made a play," Darnold said. "And 'Jax' did a great job of getting open."

So did plenty of other Seahawks receivers on Sunday. Five players had at least 20 yards receiving, including relative newcomer Rashid Shaheed, who had his most yards in a game (67) since the Seahawks acquired him from the New Orleans Saints ahead of the NFL trade deadline.

In Darnold's opinion, the Seahawks' offense, which ranks second in the NFL in points per game (29.3), is doing a fine job of moving up and down the field. That's thanks in no small part to his play.

"I feel like we're in a good spot," Darnold. "We've just got to continue to harp on the details of everything. We know that in the locker room, and we'll do a good job of that throughout the week."

Darnold has only been brought down 17 times through 13 games, but the Seahawks' offensive line has shown some cracks as of late. He was sacked twice on Sunday after being brought down four times in a 26-0 win against the Minnesota Vikings.

Though Darnold emerged from the game relatively unscathed, keeping him upright will be paramount to the Seahawks' prospects for the postseason in 2025.

The Seahawks host two games next week. The Colts come to town on Dec. 14, and the Rams will arrive in Seattle for a key matchup with NFC West title implications on Dec. 18.

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STATE

Farmworkers to receive compensation under consent decree regarding discriminatory and deceptive hiring practices



TOPPENISH, Washington

Toppenish-based Shinn & Son will pay \$300,000 and reform its hiring and training practices under a consent decree with Washington state to resolve allegations the farm discriminated against local farmworkers and women while misleading jobseekers.

People who lost out on work or were otherwise hurt by Shinn & Son's actions will receive compensation from the settlement, with amounts ranging from about \$5,000 to \$25,000, depending on the number and severity of each worker's claims. Shinn & Son grows hops, corn, hemp, and pumpkin and has operated in Washington since 1980.

Shinn & Son fired two crews of local farmworkers in the spring of 2023, shortly after the grower received approval from the U.S. Department of Labor to bring in foreign guestworkers through the H-2A visa program, according to the AGO's complaint filed in Yakima County Superior Court. The employer told the local farmworkers, most of whom were women, that there was no available work, even though 95 H-2A workers started working in the fields in late April 2023.

Between March and May 2023, at least 20 women who had been let go by Shinn & Son reapplied for work but were repeatedly told there were no openings. Since at least 2022, the employer demonstrated a pattern of discrimination against female employees, telling them they were "old grandmas," "useless," and should be put in nursing homes.

"Bringing in temporary guestworkers when there are qualified people here in Washington willing and able to do the work

is an abuse of the system and a violation of our laws," Washington Attorney General Nick Brown said. "I'm determined to hold employers accountable when they circumvent our state's worker protections."

H-2A program requirements

The federal H-2A program is meant to address temporary labor shortages by allowing employers to hire seasonal agricultural workers from other countries. To be eligible for the H-2A program, employers must certify that there is a shortage of U.S.-based workers who are willing, qualified, and able to work.

As part of the program, employers must offer local workers the same benefits, wages, guarantee of hours, and working conditions offered to foreign H-2A workers, which the AGO alleged Shinn & Son failed to do.

Columbia Legal Services, a legal aid organization, initially brought the issue of Shinn & Son's employment practices to the attention of the Attorney General's Office.

Under the consent decree, Shinn & Son cannot misrepresent the jobs it has available and the terms and conditions, including wages. The employer is also barred from discriminating against people based on their sex or immigration status when it comes to employment. The order also requires Shinn & Son to adopt a nondiscrimination policy and share it with employees in English and Spanish.

The consent decree, which will be in effect for five years, includes recordkeeping and reporting requirements related to compliance and mandates that Shinn & Son provide annual trainings to supervisors about their obligations under Washington consumer protection and anti-discrimination laws.



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IMMIGRATION

A street vendor couple has a defiant response to immigration arrests: Stick to the routine

CHICAGO, Illinois (AP)

The massive Border Patrol presence on a recent Saturday morning in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood didn't faze Ofelia Herrera even though she and her husband are in the United States illegally.

She waited for agents to move a few blocks away, then opened their stand serving Mexican-style corn on the cob and "aguas frescas" flavored with cucumber, pineapple and strawberry in the heart of the Mexican immigrant community, just as they've done for 18 years. Sirens blared through a chaotic day as Chicago police responded to a Border Patrol call for help and confronted demonstrators.

Herrera, 47, and Rafael Hernandez, 44, have refused to alter their routines during an immigration enforcement blitz in Chicago that has caused many without legal status to stay home since it began in early September. Even some U.S. citizens of Latino heritage are afraid to go outside.

The couple says working not only pays the bills but helps avoid depression, making them stand out from others gripped by fear in Chicago's immigrant communities.

"The only thing you can do is have faith in God and not be afraid," Herrera said in an interview at the couple's South Side house, already bedecked with Christmas decorations just days after Halloween. "Fear gives way to depression and other things. At the end of the day, they don't deport you to Mexico but you are sick with depression and other things because you didn't have faith in God."

Hernandez agreed. "We know people who have fallen into depression. They don't leave the house. It's very sad."

The couple's Little Village food stand, adorned with American flags, is in a bustling area the Border Patrol has visited often. The two-lane commercial drag is lined with family-owned restaurants serving birria and chilaquiles, and



Rafael Hernandez, originally from Mexico, sells food from his family's food truck, on November 6, 2025, in Chicago, Illinois.

clothing stores with displays of Mexican sports team jerseys and white dresses for quinceañera parties.

Vendors sell sliced fruit and pottery from parked vehicles. Strains of ranchera music from cars and shops add to the festive atmosphere, drawing Mexican immigrant visitors from across Chicago and beyond.

Many of the couple's friends haven't ventured outside in more than two

months. That fear has sparked a grassroots effort to buy out street vendors, allowing them to go home early and avoid public exposure.

Herrera crossed the border in 2004, followed later by her two children who are now adults living in Chicago. Hernandez made the journey in 2005. Both paid smugglers thousands of dollars for day-long treks through the Arizona desert. Acquaintances enticed them to head to Chicago, the second-highest U.S. destination for Mexican immigrants after Los Angeles.

The couple met while working at a Mexican restaurant in Little Village. They have two U.S.-born children; their 10-year-old son speaks little Spanish and has been largely oblivious to the immigration crackdown.

"Chicago is nice," Hernandez said. "The crime is difficult but Chicago is marvelous. There are many opportunities for those of us who are immigrants. It's painful what is happening."

POLITICS

The Supreme Court will decide whether Trump's birthright citizenship order violates the Constitution

WASHINGTON (AP)

The Supreme Court agreed on Friday to take up the constitutionality of President Donald Trump's order on birthright citizenship declaring that children born to parents who are in the United States illegally or temporarily are not American citizens.

The justices will hear Trump's appeal of a lower-court ruling that struck down the citizenship restrictions. They have not taken effect anywhere in the country.

The case will be argued in the spring. A definitive ruling is expected by early summer.

The birthright citizenship order, which Trump signed Jan. 20, the first day of his second term, is part of his Republican administration's broad immigration crackdown. Other actions include immigration enforcement surges in several cities and the first peacetime

invocation of the 18th-century Alien Enemies Act.

The administration is facing multiple court challenges, and the high court has sent mixed signals in emergency orders it has issued. The justices effectively stopped the use of the Alien Enemies Act to rapidly deport alleged Venezuelan gang members without court hearings. But the Supreme Court allowed the resumption of sweeping immigration stops in the Los Angeles area after a lower court blocked the practice of stopping people solely based on their race, language, job or location.

The justices also are weighing the administration's emergency appeal to be allowed to deploy National Guard troops in the Chicago area for immigration enforcement actions. A lower court has indefinitely prevented the deployment.

Birthright citizenship is the first Trump immigration-related policy to

reach the court for a final ruling. His order would upend more than 125 years of understanding that the Constitution's 14th Amendment confers citizenship on everyone born on American soil, with narrow exceptions for the children of foreign diplomats and those born to a foreign occupying force.

In a series of decisions, lower courts have struck down the executive order as unconstitutional, or likely so, even after a Supreme Court ruling in late June that limited judges' use of nationwide injunctions.

The Supreme Court, however, did not rule out other court orders that could have nationwide effects, including in class action lawsuits and those brought by states. The justices did not decide at that time whether the underlying citizenship order was constitutional.

Every lower court that has looked at the issue has concluded that Trump's order violates or likely violates the 14th

Amendment, which was intended to ensure that Black people, including former slaves, had citizenship. Birthright citizenship automatically makes anyone born in the United States an American citizen, including children born to mothers who are in the country illegally, under longstanding rules.

The case under review comes from the state of New Hampshire. A federal judge in July blocked the citizenship order in a class action lawsuit including all children who would be affected. The American Civil Liberties Union is leading the legal team representing the children and their parents who challenged Trump's order.

"No president can change the 14th Amendment's fundamental promise of citizenship," Cecillia Wang, the ACLU's national legal director, said in a statement, adding, "We look forward to putting this issue to rest once and for all in the Supreme Court this term."

LATINOAMÉRICA

Mexico freezes Miss Universe co-owner's bank accounts during organized crime investigation

MEXICO CITY (AP)

Mexico's anti-money laundering office has frozen the bank accounts of the Mexican co-owner of Miss Universe as part of an investigation into drugs, fuel and arms trafficking, an official said Friday.

The country's Financial Intelligence Unit, which oversees the fight against money laundering, froze Mexican businessman Raúl Rocha Cantú's bank accounts in Mexico, a federal official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment on the investigation.

The action against Rocha Cantú adds to mounting controversies for the Miss Universe organization. Last week, a court in Thailand issued an arrest warrant for the Thai co-owner of the Miss Universe Organization in connection with a fraud case and this year's competition — won by Miss Mexico Fatima Bosch — faced allegations of rigging.



President of the Miss Universe Organization and Mexican businessman Raúl Rocha Cantú attends a press conference after the beauty pageant in Nonthaburi province, Thailand, on Friday, November 21, 2025.

The Miss Universe organization did not immediately respond to an email from The Associated Press seeking comment about the allegations against Rocha Cantú.

Mexico's federal prosecutors said last week that Rocha Cantú has been under investiga-

tion since November 2024 for alleged organized crime activity, including drug and arms trafficking, as well as fuel theft. Last month, a federal judge issued 13 arrest warrants for some of those involved in the case, including the Mexican businessman, whose

company Legacy Holding Group USA owns 50% of the Miss Universe shares.

The organization's other 50% belongs to JKN Global Group Public Co. Ltd., a company owned by Jakkaphong "Anne" Jakrajutatip.

A Thai court last week issued an arrest warrant for Jakrajutatip who was released on bail in 2023 on the fraud case. She failed to appear as required in a Bangkok court on Nov. 25. Since she did not notify the court about her absence, she was deemed to be a flight risk, according to a statement from the Bangkok South District Court.

The court rescheduled her hearing for Dec. 26.

Rocha Cantú was also a part owner of the Casino Royale in the northern Mexican city of Monterrey, when it was attacked in 2011 by a group of gunmen who entered it, doused gasoline and set it on fire, killing 52 people.

Baltazar Saucedo Estrada, who was charged with planning the attack, was sentenced in July to 135 years in prison.

HEALTH

US vaccine advisers say not all babies need a hepatitis B shot at birth

NEW YORK (AP)

A federal vaccine advisory committee voted on Friday to end the longstanding recommendation that all U.S. babies get the hepatitis B vaccine on the day they're born.

A loud chorus of medical and public health leaders decried the actions of the panel, whose current members were all appointed by U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. — a leading anti-vaccine activist before this year becoming the nation's top health official.

"This is the group that can't shoot straight," said Dr. William Schaffner, a Vanderbilt University vaccine expert who for decades has been involved with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and its workgroups.

Several medical societies and state health departments said they would continue to recommend them. While people may have to check their policies, the trade group AHIP, formerly known as America's Health Insurance Plans, said its members

still will cover the birth dose of the hepatitis B vaccine.

For decades, the government has advised that all babies be vaccinated against the liver infection right after birth. The shots are widely considered to be a public health success for preventing thousands of illnesses.

But Kennedy's advisory committee decided to recommend the birth dose only for babies whose mothers test positive, and in cases where the mom wasn't tested.

For other babies, it will be up to the parents and their doctors to decide if a birth dose is appropriate. The committee voted 8-3 to suggest that when a family elects to wait, then the vaccination series should begin when the child is 2 months old.

President Donald Trump posted a message late Friday calling the vote a "very good decision."

The acting director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Jim O'Neill, is expected to decide later whether



The CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices meets in Atlanta, Georgia, on Friday, December 5, 2025 to consider changes in hepatitis B vaccine recommendations for infants.

to accept the committee's recommendation.

The decision marks a return to a health strategy abandoned more than three decades ago.

Asked why the newly-appointed committee moved quickly to reexamine the recommendation, committee member Vicky Pebsworth on Thursday cited "pressure from stakeholder groups," without naming them.

Committee members said the risk of

infection for most babies is very low and that earlier research that found the shots were safe for infants was inadequate.

They also worried that in many cases, doctors and nurses don't have full conversations with parents about the pros and cons of the birth-dose vaccination.

The committee members voiced interest in hearing the input from public health and medical professionals, but chose to ignore the experts' repeated pleas to leave the recommendations alone.

The committee gives advice to the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on how approved vaccines should be used. CDC directors almost always adopted the committee's recommendations, which were widely heeded by doctors and guide vaccination programs. But the agency currently has no director, leaving acting director O'Neill to decide.

In June, Kennedy fired the entire 17-member panel earlier this year and replaced it with a group that includes several anti-vaccine voices.