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Pentagon: Showdown ahead for F-35, A-10

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A showdown might soon settle one of the U.S. military's biggest air power controversies.

The high-tech and expensive F-35 Joint Strike Fighter will face off in upcoming testing with the Air Force's aging close-air-support stalwart, the A-10 Thunderbolt II, the director of the Defense Department operational test and evaluation office said Tuesday.

The battlefield comparison "makes common sense" and will pit the two airframes against each other in a variety of war scenarios this year, Michael Gilmore said during Senate testimony.

The department is in the midst of developing the F-35 — the most expensive procurement program in its history — to take over the A-10's four-decade-old role of supporting ground forces with its titanium armor and powerful nose cannon. But the move is opposed by

infantry troops and members of Congress who believe the A-10 is uniquely capable of saving lives on the battlefield.

"To me, comparison testing just makes common sense," Gilmore said. "If you're spending a lot of money to get improved capability, that's the easiest way to demonstrate it is to do a rigorous comparison test."

The F-35 is being touted as the most advanced fighter jet in the world, a jack of all trades intended to take over a variety of roles from other aircraft, including the A-10 and the F-16 fighter jet. The Marine Corps declared its variant of the aircraft combat-ready last summer and the Air Force plans to complete its testing this year.

But its 15-year procurement quest has been riddled with delays, scandals and technical glitches. The F-35 program office is trying to overcome a problem with the aircraft's software system that caused the

radar to blink out and require rebooting during flight.

The program, including production and maintenance, could ultimately cost taxpayers about \$1.4 trillion and, despite promises of air dominance, the F-35 remains untested in real combat — especially the type typically waged by the 1970s-era Warthog.

The A-10, on the other hand, is now deployed in the war against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria and has built a devoted following among combat veterans. But the airframe is aging and the Air Force now plans to retire the Warthog and unshoulder the costs of upkeep by 2022.

Gilmore said the two aircraft will face off on close air support and combat search and rescue, as well as other missions.

On paper, the F-35 faces some apparent challenges because it does not carry the firepower of the Gatling-style nose cannon or the ability to fly over targets for

a long period of time compared with the Warthog.

The controversy over whether the two aircraft will have similar capabilities became murkier in March when Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh testified to the Senate committee that the F-35 would not replace the A-10.

During the hearing Tuesday, Sen. Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., said the general's earlier testimony appeared to contradict statements on the fighter jet program's website and its longtime aim to take over the Warthog responsibilities.

The Pentagon's top weapons buyer denied any contradiction.

"Both statements are correct. We will in fact replace the A-10s with F-35s; that is the plan," said Frank Kendall, under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics.

But Kendall said there should be no expectation that the F-35 will perform in the same way as the A-10 on the battlefield.

Legislation would require DOD to track military hazing

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — New legislation set to be introduced Tuesday would require the Pentagon to create a database tracking incidents of hazing in the military, carry out an annual survey of U.S. troops on the issue and boost training so it is better recognized and handled.

The bill is called the Harry Lew Military Hazing Accountability and Prevention Act, said Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., who crafted the legislation and named it after her nephew. He was a Marine who committed suicide in Afghanistan's Helmand province in April 2011 after he fell asleep while

on guard duty and was subsequently assaulted by other members of his platoon.

Chu said in an interview that she asked Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., a member of the House Armed Services Committee, to include the bill in the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act as an amendment because it has a better chance of becoming law that way.

"Hazing has no place in our military, and it has a negative impact on military retention and the long-term health of military servicemembers and veterans," Chu said. "It certainly doesn't create a bond within a unit. But, what is most alarming is that, for the most

part, there has been no justice for the victims.."

The recommendations stem from a report released in February by the Government Accountability Office that was requested by Chu after her nephew died. It found that hazing — typically described as abusive behavior meant to correct a mistake or serve as a rite of passage into a group — is not tracked uniformly by the services.

The Pentagon adopted a new policy on hazing Dec. 23, less than a week after the GAO released a draft report to the Defense Department.

The Defense Department also agreed with a number of

the GAO's other recommendations, such as determining what constitutes hazing and tracking information uniformly across the services.

The proposed legislation appears to take things farther. In addition to calling for a database of incidents, it would require the Defense Department to issue guidance on how to use the data, including information about "protected classes" such as minority race and religious groups who are "often the victims of hazing."

The database has similarities to one that was formed in recent years for sexual assault in the military.

No commanders attend sex assault panel

BY DIANNA CAHN
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — A panel of psychologists, researchers and defense officials hoped that a half-day event next door to the Pentagon on military sexual assault, harassment and hazing would draw commanders integral to leading a cultural change.

Not one showed up. “We sent invites out to all of the Department of Defense,” said Ellen Haring, a senior fellow at Women in International Security and a member of the board of directors at the Service Women’s Action Network, which organized Monday’s event.

“We held this at Arlington to make it as close to the Pentagon as possible,” she told the small group of mostly women who attended at the Women in Military Service for America memorial at the cemetery’s entrance. “We were disappointed there was no

interest.”

For more than four hours, experts discussed why, despite a decadelong effort to counter the problem, harassment and sexual assault in the military continues.

The numbers are staggering:

- 116,600 servicemembers were sexually harassed in 2014 — 22 percent of women and 7 percent of men.

- 20,300 active-duty servicemembers were sexually assaulted — 4.9 percent of women and 1 percent of men.

- 43,900 active-duty servicemembers experienced gender discrimination in 2014; 60 percent of those were committed by a supervisor or unit leader.

The numbers come from a 2014 study released by the Rand Corp. — the most comprehensive study on the subject to date.

The survey was the first to identify the high rates of men

being sexually harassed, said Andrew Morral, a senior behavioral scientist at Rand. The study found that an estimated 1 in 12 men in the Army and 1 in 10 in the Navy experienced sexual harassment or gender discrimination in 2014. It also found that most sexual assaults against men go unreported because men are more likely to describe the assault as a hazing event.

Jessica Gallus, the research psychologist for the Army’s Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Prevention program, said the Army has created programs to try to help drive home the message, such as basing the training in a virtual reality or game-based program and using animated vignettes.

It’s not a cure-all, she said, but it breaks the “death by Power Point” effect.

Another problem with the military’s efforts lies in its failure to use its data adequately,

said Brenda Farrell, who is responsible for military and DOD personnel issues at the Government Accountability Office. She said while the DOD has put a lot of effort into creating a sexual assault prevention strategy, it hasn’t linked its prevention techniques with the overall goals, so it lacks the ability to evaluate whether its techniques are working.

“Without a defined link between activities and desired outcomes, DOD may not be able to determine which activities are having the desired effect or, when necessary, to make timely and informed adjustments to its efforts to help ensure it continues to progress toward desired outcomes,” she said. “Also DOD may lack the information that is needed to conduct a rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of its efforts.”

Afghan official: 8 militants killed in a botched attack

BY CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Eight suicide bombers blew themselves up prematurely while organizing coordinated attacks in Kunduz province Tuesday, the Interior Ministry said.

The incident occurred in Nahar Kohna village in the Dasht-e-Archi district of northern Kunduz. The would-be bombers were linked to the Taliban, the ministry said in a statement.

News of the botched attack came the day after Afghan forces arrested a top Taliban official in the province, where the insurgent group recently launched an offensive in an attempt to recapture Kunduz city.

The group briefly occupied Afghanistan’s fifth-largest city last year — the first major urban center to fall under Taliban control since they were ousted in

the 2001 U.S. invasion.

A local official said Monday that many villages in Kunduz’s Dasht-e-Archi district had been cleared of the Taliban, but holdouts remained in some of the rural villages. Operations were underway to remove them, local police spokesman Hijratullah Akbari said.

Also on Tuesday, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan announced that it was seeking information about eight other insurgents from the Haqqani network and Taliban that were “known to be planning attacks on the Afghan people” in four provinces, including the capital.

Officials were seeking information about the suspected plotters, the command said: Hayatullah, Mullah Mushfiq, Sangari and Faruq in Parwan; Tila Khan and Mansour in Khost; Hamdard-Hasib in Kabul; and Talha in Logar.

S. Korea: North set to launch 5th nuclear test at any time

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea’s President Park Geun-hye said Tuesday that North Korea is ready to stage a fifth nuclear test at any time, but she warned Pyongyang will face tougher sanctions if it goes through with the test.

North Korea “completed its preparations for a fifth nuclear test and it is in a situation in which it can carry out” the test whenever it wants to, Park was quoted as saying during a meeting with chief editors of South Korean newspapers and broadcasters at the presidential office in Seoul. She didn’t elaborate on the claim.

Her statement came as a South Korean news agency reported that the North is believed to have put a new, powerful, midrange missile on standby for

an impending launch. Yonhap cited an unidentified official in Seoul for the report. South Korea’s Ministry of Defense said it had no intelligence about such plans.

It would be the second effort in less than two weeks to fire a purported Musudan missile, which has the range to reach far-off U.S. military installations in Asia. U.S. officials said another launch on April 15 failed, although they didn’t confirm the type of missile.

Tensions spiked even further last weekend after North Korea tested a submarine-launched ballistic missile. South Korean military officials said on Saturday that the missile flew only about 20 miles, well short of the roughly 190 miles needed to be a success. But analysts said the North appears to be making significant progress in its weapons programs.

Hornets top Heat, even series

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Steve Clifford has seen that look in Kemba Walker's eye. It tells the Charlotte coach to just give the point guard the ball and let him go.

Walker responded, like he's done so many times before.

Walker had 11 straight Charlotte points during a crucial stretch midway through the fourth quarter and finished with a playoff career-high 34 points to lead the Hornets to an 89-85 victory over the Miami Heat on Monday night, evening the first-round series at 2-2.

"He's so confident late in games that he will make the play," Clifford said.

The smallest player on the floor at 6-foot-1, Walker finished 13-for-28 from the field.

"Throughout my career I have made big plays — that is what I'm known for," Walker said. "Tonight was a good example of it."

Jeremy Lin finished with 21 points and Courtney Lee sank two free throws with 4.6 seconds left to seal the win after being fouled on an offensive rebound.

Lin, who kept Charlotte in the game in the first half, said it was fun just watching Walker from the corner — and taking a breather — down the stretch.

"I told Kemba to take us home," Lin said. "It's on you."

Game 5 is Wednesday night in Miami. Heat coach Erik Spoelstra called Walker "dynamic."

"He's a handful in the pick-and-rolls and there is only so much you can do with that little guy," Dwyane Wade said. "He's crafty. ... And every time we tried to make a comeback, he hit a big shot."

Lin also was a handful too, maneuver-

ing his body in the lane to draw fouls and get to the line. He finished 8-for-9 on free-throw attempts.

"Walker and Lin, they put you on your heels," Spoelstra said. "They are aggressive and make you have to defend with position. You have to expect that in the playoffs — great performances."

Lee finished with 11 points and helped hold Wade to 12 points on 4-of-11 shooting.

"We fought so hard tonight," Lin said. "Up 18 and then all of sudden up one. We put everything out there and I'm glad we got the win."

Joe Johnson led Miami with 16 points, while Luol Deng had 15.

Miami trailed by as many as 18 in the second half, but pulled to 76-75 when Gerald Green knocked down a three-pointer from the left wing with 6:07 left in regulation.

Walker took over from there. The runner-up for the league's Most Improved Player buried a pull-up jumper from 18 feet and sank both foul shots after drawing a fourth foul on Wade on a drive. Walker made a three-pointer from the left wing, added a floater in the lane and another pull-up jumper to push the lead to 87-80.

The Heat kept battling back, though, with Wade's jumper and a free throw by Hassan Whiteside cutting it to two.

The Hornets nearly squandered their last possession, but Walker threw up a desperation 3-pointer to beat the shot clock that hit the front rim. Lee went for the rebound and was fouled. He swished both shots to make it a two-possession game.

Trail Blazers 98, Clippers 84: Al-Farouq Aminu scored a career-high 30 points and host Portland pulled away

after Chris Paul left with a broken bone in his right hand, beating Los Angeles to even their playoff series at two games apiece.

Paul departed midway through the third quarter. It was not immediately clear how he was hurt, although his wrist appeared to bend back when he guarded Portland's Gerald Henderson on a layup.

The Clippers were further hurt when Blake Griffin retreated to the bench late in the game after appearing to aggravate the left quad injury he struggled with this season.

CJ McCollum had 19 points for the Blazers, while Mason Plumlee added 14 rebounds and 10 assists.

Griffin had 17 points before leaving with under 6 minutes left.

Game 5 is Wednesday at Los Angeles.

Thunder 118, Mavericks 104: Russell Westbrook had 36 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists, and host Oklahoma City beat Dallas to win the first-round playoff series 4-1 and advance to the Western Conference semifinals.

Westbrook was 13 of 23 from the field and 7 of 8 on free throws. Kevin Durant scored 33 points and Steven Adams added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Thunder, who will play the San Antonio Spurs in a series that begins Saturday.

Oklahoma City shot 50.6 percent from the field and outrebounded the Mavericks 42-35.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 24 points, Justin Anderson had 14 and Zaza Pachulia added 12 points, nine assists and seven rebounds for the Mavericks, who were hampered by injuries throughout the series.

Manziel indicted in alleged assault

Associated Press

DALLAS — Former Cleveland Browns quarterback Johnny Manziel was indicted by a grand jury on Tuesday on misdemeanor charges stemming from a domestic violence complaint by his ex-girlfriend.

The 2012 Heisman Trophy winner and Texas A&M star was accused by ex-girlfriend Colleen Crowley of hitting her and threatening to kill her during a night out on Jan. 30. Crowley said in court documents that Manziel struck her so hard that she temporarily lost hearing in one ear.

The indictment accuses Manziel of striking Crowley and "forcing [her] into a vehicle and against a vehicle dashboard."

Manziel faces a charge of misdemeanor assault related to family violence, which carries up to one year in jail and a \$4,000 fine.

Manziel was cut by the Browns in March after two tumultuous seasons marked by inconsistent play and off-the-field headlines about his partying and drinking, including one stint in rehab. His future in the NFL is uncertain at best, and might be nonexistent without a second stint in treatment that two agents have demanded. The league also has tougher standards regarding domestic violence cases after revising its policy in August 2014 following the Ray Rice case, which could complicate any attempt by Manziel to return.

The first agent, Erik Burkhardt, cut ties with Manziel after last season. Burkhardt's replacement, Drew Rosenhaus, dropped Manziel last week. His marketing agency dropped him before the charges were filed, and Nike confirmed last week that it no longer has an endorsement deal with Manziel.

Crowley alleged that the 23-year-old quarterback accosted her at a Dallas hotel and later struck her when they drove back to her apartment in Fort Worth. She was granted a protective order that requires Manziel to not see her for two years, stay at least 500 feet from her home and place of work, and pay \$12,000 in legal fees.

Crowley alleged she and Manziel had a confrontation in the hotel room that eventually continued downstairs to the valet station. She said he forced her into a car and a valet disregarded her pleas for help.

The two eventually drove to where her car was parked in front of a Dallas bar, she said in an affidavit. She said Manziel got into the driver's seat and began to drive. Crowley said Manziel stopped when she tried to jump out of the car, but then he dragged her back inside and hit her.

Manziel was cleared of any wrongdoing last year after he and Crowley got into a heated roadside argument near his home. He was not arrested, and Crowley told police she didn't want to press charges.

Warriors' Curry is out 2 weeks

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — If the Golden State Warriors want to cap a record-setting season with a second straight NBA title, they will need to survive the next two weeks without their best player.

Stephen Curry is expected to miss at least two weeks with a Grade 1 sprain of the MCL in his right knee, dealing an unexpected blow to the Warriors' hopes of repeating as champions.

"From our perspective, it's relatively good news," general manager Bob Myers said Monday. "Clearly we don't want to be here getting MRIs at this point of the season, especially someone of Steph's stature. ... But mechanically the knee is intact, so that's good."

Myers said the two-week estimate was an educated guess based on how players typically respond to similar injuries, but cautioned the absence could be three weeks or possibly slightly shorter.

The team will have a better handle on how long Curry will be out after about a week but Curry will miss the rest of the first round of the playoffs and almost assuredly the start of the second round if the Warriors advance. Golden State leads Houston 3-1 heading into Game 5 at home

Kerr wins Coach of the Year

OAKLAND, Calif. — Steve Kerr is the NBA's coach of the year, after leading to the Golden State Warriors to the best regular season record in league history.

Kerr got 64 first-place votes from the panel of 130 media members who regularly cover the league. Portland's Terry Stotts was second in relatively close voting. San Antonio's Gregg Popovich was third.

Kerr missed the Warriors' first 43 games this season while recovering

from back surgeries, with the team being operated in his absence by assistant coach Luke Walton. Voters took notice of Walton's work as well; he finished tied for eighth in the balloting.

Golden State finished 73-9 this season, breaking the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls' record of 72-10 for the best record in league history. Kerr played for that Chicago team.

— The Associated Press

on Wednesday night.

"If it's not two weeks, don't go crazy," Myers said. "If it's before that, great. If it's after, it's after."

Curry was injured on the final play of the first half of Sunday's 121-94 win in Houston when he slid awkwardly on a wet spot on the court and fell. He immediately grabbed his knee and jogged with a limp

to the locker room.

Curry came out with the team after half-time, but sat on the bench for most of the warmup time. After talking with coaches, he returned to the locker room with his second injury of the series. Curry had missed the previous two games with a sprained right ankle but said that was not an issue during the first half Sunday.



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Blues take Game 7, oust Blackhawks

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — The St. Louis Blues acquired Troy Brouwer for moments like this, dealing fan favorite T.J. Oshie to Washington for some badly needed veteran presence.

The 30-year-old forward showed plenty of poise when his first shot clanked off the post midway through the third period. The second effort off the backhand produced the goal that put a long-frustrated franchise over the top against the defending Stanley Cup champions.

Brouwer described the go-ahead score of a 3-2 Game 7 victory over the Chicago Blackhawks on Monday night as “the ugliest goal I’ve ever scored and probably the timeliest goal I’ve ever scored.”

“I just tried to stay with it, knowing the magnitude of the game, knowing how everything’s been going,” Brouwer added.

Brouwer played for the Blackhawks’ Cup winner in 2010 and this was his seventh career Game 7. The goal at 8:31 was his first in 24 postseason games since 2013 and was the difference in a tense series that was either tied or a one-goal game 91 percent of the time, according to NHL.com.

Chicago just missed a chance to tie it when Brent Seabrook’s shot went off both posts with about 3:30 left. Coach Joel Quenneville came close to challenging the play.

“We had a sniff there,” Quenneville said. “We didn’t get the positive feedback from the headset. It was close.”

It is the first time the Blues advanced past the first round since 2012, when they beat San Jose in five games but then lost four straight to Los Angeles. St. Louis plays Dallas in the next round.

“We’re still not where we want to be,”

Brouwer said. “We want to be playing in a month and a half still.”

Jori Lehtera scored his first career play-off goal and rookie defenseman Colton Parayko also scored for the Blues, who avoided another inglorious finish. They led 2-0 early, their second two-goal cushion in two games, before the Blackhawks tied it in the second period.

Marian Hossa scored his third goal of the series and Andrew Shaw got his fourth on a power play for the Blackhawks. Patrick Kane was dangerous all night but was scoreless, and was minus-3.

“It just doesn’t really feel right,” Kane said. “Pretty quick right after to put everything right after into words. Obviously, not the outcome we were looking for.”

The Blackhawks have won three of the last five Cups — but when they don’t win it all, the postseason can be a short one, with three first-round eliminations the last six seasons.

“You get the feeling that it’ll be one of those things again and we feel from the get-go we’ve got the team to do it again,” Chicago captain Jonathan Toews said. “Not much you can say right now. It was close the whole way.”

Brouwer scored from close range off a feed from Robby Fabbri. The first shot went off the right post and he nudged the second past Corey Crawford.

St. Louis was coached by Quenneville the last time it played in a Game 7, a loss at Vancouver in 2003. The Game 7 win was the franchise’s first since 1999.

“To coach it, to play in it, to strategize in it, it was a lot of fun,” Blues coach Ken Hitchcock said. “I don’t know if it’s a milestone. It’s a hump.”

The Blues outscored the Blackhawks 7-3 in the first period in the series, but Chicago owned the second period with an 11-3 advantage. That included the first

three of five unanswered goals in Game 6 on Saturday.

Predators 3, Ducks 1: James Neal scored the winning goal late in the second period, and host Nashville beat Anaheim to force the second Game 7 in the first round of this postseason.

“Anything can happen,” Nashville captain Shea Weber said. “It’s obviously two good teams that are pretty equal and it is going to come down to the last game, and we’ll see how it goes.”

The Predators had lost the previous five Game 6s when needing a win to stay alive in the playoffs, and they snapped a three-game skid to the Ducks to force this series back to Anaheim for the deciding game Wednesday night.

“For our group to come together like that with the way we played at home, we really wanted to make sure we left it all on the ice tonight because it would have been really disappointing if we lost every game at home,” Predators center Ryan Johansen said.

Weber sealed the victory with an empty-net goal with 10 seconds left off an assist by Neal. Mattias Ekholm also scored a goal, and Pekka Rinne made 26 saves for the win.

“I don’t think there’s anything better in the Stanley Cup (playoffs) than a Game 7 when everything means something,” Predators coach Peter Laviolette said. “It’s a big game, our guys will be excited.”

Ryan Kesler scored a power-play goal for the Ducks, who now are 8-6 in Game 6s. They return to Anaheim where they lost their last three last spring in the Western Conference finals to eventual Stanley Cup champ Chicago. They also lost Game 7 on home ice to the Kings in 2014 and Detroit in 2013.

“It’s a new team, new time,” Anaheim

coach Bruce Boudreau said. “Every year is different. Every day is different. We’re looking forward to the game.”

This will be the first Game 7 with Anaheim for players such as left wing David Perron. The Ducks became the first to win on home ice in this series in Game 5.

“We are going to have to rely on guys who have been there before and we are going to throw our everything at them, play our best game and find a way to move on to that second round,” Perron said. “I’m excited for our next game already.”

Rinne, who had been struggling in this series, came up big late. He stopped Corey Perry on a point-blank shot from in front with 6:40 left and turned away Perron’s wrist with less than 3 minutes to go.

Nashville brought out Tennessee Titans tight end Delanie Walker to wave a towel and charge up the sellout crowd. Fans just needed something to cheer after watching the Predators get outscored 12-3 in losing the last three games. They also got right wing Craig Smith back on the ice after he missed most of the last three games with a lower-body injury.

Ekholm put the Predators up 1-0 at 8:10 of the second period, beating Andersen with a wrist from the top of the right circle off a pass from Calle Jarnkrok. That made the defenseman Nashville’s top goal scorer with his second in this series. Fans rewarded the Predators with not one, but two standing ovations in the period.

The Predators took a 2-0 lead when Johansen brought the puck up the right side and passed to Neal at the left post who tapped the puck into the net behind Andersen at 17:45.

Eovaldi flirts with no-hitter as Yankees top Rangers

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Nathan Eovaldi was well aware that he was throwing a no-hitter. The New York Yankees right-hander from the same hometown as baseball’s no-hit and strikeout king will take the seven-plus scoreless innings.

Eovaldi lost his no-hit bid when Rangers rookie Nomar Mazara led off the seventh with a single but pitched into the eighth without allowing a run for his first victory in four starts this season as the Yankees won 3-1 at Texas on Monday night.

“In the fifth inning, I realized I had it going on. Once it’s over with, it’s over with,” Eovaldi said. “And I just want to try to go as deep in the game as I can. ... When it was hit, I thought it was an out. But with the shift, the ball made it through.”

The Rangers were without a hit until Mazara, a day before his 21st birthday, singled through the left side of the infield. After Mazara was wiped out by a double play, Prince Fielder swung at a high pitch for a double to right-center before Ian Desmond grounded out to end the inning.

“He was amazing. His split ... anything that started at your thigh went straight to the ground,” Fielder said. “Obviously if you can get a big-league team to go no hits through the seventh, you’re doing something good.”

Jacoby Ellsbury and Starlin Castro had solo homers for the Yankees off Cesar Ramos (0-1), the lefty starting in place of Cole Hamels (sore groin).

After Eovaldi (1-2) walked Mitch

Moreland to start the eighth, Dellin Betances took over and promptly got Elvis Andrus to ground into a double play before Brett Nicholas hit his first career homer. Andrew Miller worked a perfect ninth for his fifth save in as many opportunities as the Rangers lost their fourth straight game.

Eovaldi is only the second major league player from Alvin, Texas. The other is another big right-hander: Nolan Ryan, who threw a record seven no-hitters.

“We saw tonight what we saw toward the end of last year, and we’d love for that to continue,” said Yankees first baseman Mark Teixeira, who was then asked what he saw from the pitcher. “Uncomfortable swings. You can tell how good a guy is and how good his stuff is by the reaction of the hitters. They’re swinging at pitches in the dirt or they’re swinging at pitches over their heads because it’s just an uncomfortable at-bat.”

Eovaldi threw 66 of his 98 pitches for strikes. He walked two and struck out six, ending his streak of seven consecutive starts with at least seven strikeouts that was tied with the longest in team history.

“I feel like I’ve progressed in each outing,” he said. “It was good for everything to come together in this one.”

Tigers 7, Athletics 3: Tyler Collins tainted a much-needed win for the Detroit Tigers.

Collins directed an obscene gesture at fans after he lost a ball in the lights, leading to the first run Jordan Zimmermann gave up this year, but Miguel Cabrera hit two homers to help Detroit snap a skid

with a 7-3 win over the Oakland Athletics on Monday night.

“To be at home and to hear boos after that play hit a trigger inside of me and I lashed out completely inappropriately,” Collins said. “I’m absolutely embarrassed it happened and I’m very sorry to everybody in Detroit.”

The center fielder extended the middle finger on his left hand and waved it from right to left and also appeared to yell an obscenity to the booing crowd.

“Clearly, it’s something that can’t happen,” Tigers manager Brad Ausmus said. “I spoke to Tyler immediately in the dug-out, in the tunnel, after it happened and I spoke to him after the game. He regrets it.”

A contrite Collins said he could not see the flyball from Oakland’s Marcus Semien because of the lights. He wasn’t charged with an error, but left fielder Justin Upton was after he failed to field the ball on the ground, allowing Semien to reach third. Semien scored after Billy Burns, the next batter, hit a single to end Zimmermann’s unblemished start.

Twins 4, Indians 3: Oswaldo Arcia led off the ninth inning with a home run off of Zach McAllister (1-1) to lift host Minnesota over Cleveland.

Angels 6, Royals 1: Albert Pujols hit two homers and Mike Trout added another, powering host Los Angeles over Kansas City.

Mets 5, Reds 3: Neil Walker hit his seventh home run in 10 games, a tiebreaking shot in the seventh inning that kept host New York rolling against Cincinnati.

Rays 2, Orioles 0: Chris Archer (1-4) struck out 10 over 62/3 innings to end a 10-start winless streak, and host Tampa Bay beat Kevin Gausman (0-1) and Baltimore.

White Sox 7, Blue Jays 5: Todd Frazier doubled home the go-ahead run in a five-run seventh inning and visiting Chicago rallied to beat Toronto.

Marlins 3, Dodgers 2: Giancarlo Stanton homered, doubled and drove in two runs to lead visiting Miami past Los Angeles.

Red Sox 1, Braves 0: Rick Porcello (4-0) combined with three relievers on a four-hitter, Jackie Bradley Jr. hit his first homer and visiting Boston beat Atlanta, giving the punchless Braves their sixth straight loss.

Mariners 3, Astros 2: Taijuan Walker (2-0) tied his career-high with 11 strikeouts over seven innings, Leonys Martin and Kyle Seager hit solo homers and host Seattle beat Houston for its eighth win in 11 games.

Pirates 6, Rockies 1: Matt Joyce hit a three-run homer, Jeff Locke (1-2) threw six scoreless innings and visiting Pittsburgh beat Colorado in a game that was briefly delayed by rain.

Diamondbacks 12, Cardinals 7: Jean Segura had four hits, including a go-ahead three-run home run in the sixth inning, to lead host Arizona over St. Louis.

Giants 5, Padres 4: Hunter Pence hit a home run and sacrifice fly, Buster Posey also homered to back Madison Bumgarner’s (2-2) first win since opening day and host San Francisco held on to beat San Diego.