

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Vinson joins South Korea in war games

BY KIM GAMEL

*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The USS Carl Vinson strike group joined South Korean ships in joint war games on Saturday, hours after the North defiantly test-fired a missile despite international pressure to halt its nuclear weapons program.

The maritime drills — the second in less than two months for the aircraft carrier and its accompanying warships — were taking place in the sea off the Korean Peninsula's east coast, South Korea's navy said.

The U.S. Navy described the exercises as "routine operations and training in the Western Pacific," but the drills were occurring against the backdrop of sharply rising tensions in the region.

U.S. Pacific Command said it

detected a missile fired from a site near the Pukchang air field earlier Saturday, but it apparently exploded over land shortly after takeoff.

"The missile did not leave North Korean territory," said Cmdr. Dave Benham a spokesman for the command. Past tests have seen missiles launched into the sea off the country's east coast.

South Korea's military said the missile flew for several minutes and reached a maximum height of 44 miles before it apparently failed.

It said it was still analyzing the type of missile. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press the missile was likely a medium-range KN-17.

North Korea routinely conducts missile tests, and Saturday's launch was the sixth

effort — including one involving multiple missiles — since President Donald Trump took office on Jan. 20.

U.S. officials caution against gloating over failures, noting that North Korea learns something from each launch and is making faster-than-expected progress toward its goal of developing a nuclear-tipped missile that could reach the U.S. mainland.

Experts also say the North is prepared to conduct another nuclear test. It already has carried out five underground nuclear explosions, including two last year.

Trump, who has called on China to do more to rein in its communist ally, responded on Twitter: "North Korea disrespected the wishes of China & its highly respected President when it launched, though un-

successfully, a missile today. Bad!"

South Korea's Foreign Ministry denounced the missile test, calling it the latest display of North Korea's "belligerence and recklessness."

It also warned the country's leadership that it will continue to face strong U.N. sanctions "if it continues to reject denuclearization and play with fire in front of the world."

Trump's administration has signaled he favors a hard line against the North by deploying a large amount of military hardware to the region, including the Carl Vinson.

But it has signaled more recently that it's planning to take a more diplomatic approach, while keeping all options, including military action, on the table.

## Marines take over training, advising mission in Helmand

BY E.B. BOYD

*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP SHORAB, Afghanistan — For the first time since the drawdown of U.S. troops in Afghanistan in late 2014, U.S. Marines returned to Helmand province en masse Saturday as the 300-person Task Force Southwest took over the training and advising mission there.

Unlike its Marine predecessors in the region, Task Force Southwest is not a combat unit. It's an advisory team made up of troops from different units.

The transition of authority is a routine changeover that does not change the overall number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Task Force Southwest is replacing a slightly smaller Army unit called Task Force Forge, which deployed to Helmand last year.

"We are excited to be back in Helmand, and we're pleased to assume this mission," said Task Force Southwest commander Brig. Gen. Roger Turner Jr. at the trans-

fer-of-authority ceremony. Camp Shorab stands on land previously occupied by Camp Bastion, which was dismantled and vacated by NATO forces during the 2014 troop drawdown.

The transfer of authority Saturday comes as Afghan forces across the country are struggling to hold off the Taliban. In the intervening two years, the group has made key gains in strategically important provinces like Helmand, including taking over large parts of Sangin district, where many Marines died during the surge of 2009-10.

Two key coalition goals this year are to prevent Afghan forces from letting any provinces fall completely into insurgent hands and to stem the overall loss of territory.

Helmand is a prime focus of the Taliban. It lies along key smuggling routes, and its poppy fields put money into the group's coffers.

The Taliban announced its spring offensive on Friday, vowing to target Afghan and coalition forces. Turner said Saturday that

he expects the militants to continue their previous strategies.

"They'll plant IEDs everywhere, and they'll indiscriminately target both security forces and the population," he said. "They'll continue to profit from the narcotics to finance their operations. They'll attempt to extort people for money."

Advisers returned to Helmand almost immediately after the drawdown as weaknesses within the Afghan forces began emerging. The number of coalition troops stationed there has grown from a handful of special operations troops in early 2015 to the several hundred troops that make up Task Force Forge.

Unlike during the surge, the new Marine unit will not be patrolling villages or manning outposts. Instead, they will provide advice and guidance to commanders of the Afghan army's 215th Corps and the 505th national police zone. They also will coordinate enablers like close-air support.

# ISIS claims responsibility for Baghdad police station blast

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for a bombing that targeted a police station in Baghdad's center Friday night, and Iraqi officials said the blast killed four people and wounded eight.

The attack was carried out by a suicide car bomber, according to police and hospital officials who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. They put the death toll at four.

But Saad Mann, a spokesman for the Interior Ministry and Baghdad Operations Command, told the Associated Press

that only three were killed in the bombing. He said all those killed were policemen and did not offer any information as to the number of injured.

The differing accounts could not be immediately reconciled.

The explosion targeted an entrance to the traffic police station in Baghdad's Karrada neighborhood. Moments after the attack the burning shell of a car could be seen sending up a plume of thick black smoke as police fired into the air to disperse a small crowd.

The attack comes as Iraqi forces struggle to push back Islamic State group militants in the northern Iraqi city of

Mosul, the last pocket of significant urban territory the group holds in Iraq.

ISIS has carried out similar attacks targeting Iraqi security forces in the past. Iraqi and coalition officials have warned that as ISIS loses ground in Iraq the group will increasingly return to its insurgent roots.

In July of last year a massive truck bombing in the same Baghdad neighborhood killed more than 300 people on a busy street lined with shopping malls. The attack was the deadliest single bombing in Baghdad since U.S.-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

## Turkey urges US to stop supporting Kurd fighters

Associated Press

ISTANBUL — Turkey's leader on Saturday urged the United States to stop supporting Syrian Kurdish militants as local media reported the Turkish military has moved armored vehicles and personnel carriers to a base near the Syrian border.

The relocation comes a day after U.S. troops were seen patrolling the tense border in Syria. The Syrian Kurdish militia is Washington's main ally in combating Islamic State militants in Syria.

But Turkey views Syria's Kurdish People's Protection Units, known as YPG, as a terrorist organization and an extension of the Kurdish militants who have been waging a three-decade-long insurgency against Turkey.

"The YPG, and you know who's supporting them, is attacking us with mortars. But we will make those places their grave, there is no stopping," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said.

Tensions in the border area rose last week when Turkey conducted airstrikes against bases for YPG group in Syria and Iraq on Tuesday. The Turkish military said it killed at least 90 militants and wounded scores.

On Saturday, Syria's military said its troops and allied fighters repelled an attack by ISIS on a government-held area south of Aleppo province.

The attack took place in Khanaser, southeast Aleppo — a strategic region that links Aleppo with central and western Syria.

The military media arm said the ISIS attack was repelled.

The opposition Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said ISIS fighters launched the attack on military posts in the area, triggering intense clashes and leaving many casualties.

## Former Afghan warlord wants peace

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A former Afghan warlord who battled U.S. forces after the 2001 invasion and nursed bitter rivalries with other militant factions before signing a peace deal with the Afghan government appeared in public for the first time in more than 20 years on Saturday and called for peace.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who leads the Islamist organization Hezb-i-Islami, appeared in a gathering organized by provincial officials in eastern Laghman province, in which locals and government officials also were present. He told the crowd in a televised appearance: "Let's join hands to end war and bring peace in Afghanistan."

The United Nations removed Hekmatyar's name from its Islamic State and al-Qaida sanctions list in February, his assets were unfrozen and he is no longer subject to a travel ban or arms embargo.

During his remarks, Hekmatyar called on all insurgent groups to end the war and join the peace process in Afghanistan. He pointed to a recent attack by Taliban fighters on an army base in northern Balkh province, saying: "We cannot tolerate such a war and killing of Muslims inside a mosque while they are praying to Allah."

Hekmatyar said only Afghans can bring peace and stability to the country, not foreigners.

In September, Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani signed a peace treaty with Hekmatyar in which Ghani pledged to lobby the U.S. and the U.N. to remove him and his party from terrorist blacklists. Hekmatyar signed the agreement via video link to Kabul's presidential palace. The ceremony was broadcast live on TV.

In an annual ceremony Saturday marking the 25th anniversary of the victory of the mujahedeen over the former communist government,

Abdullah Abdullah, the country's chief executive officer, said he was happy Hekmatyar had embraced peace.

Abdullah said that as a result of the agreement signed earlier, Hekmatyar today is "in his own country and on his own soil, proudly among his own people, and the Afghan people have welcomed him, too."

"We hope that this would be an example for others," he added.

The 25-point peace agreement gives Hekmatyar and his followers immunity for past actions and grants them full political rights.

Hekmatyar, one of the most influential leaders in the fight against Soviet forces in the 1980s, took part in the civil war that erupted after the Soviet withdrawal, clashing with the Northern Alliance.

He was driven out when the Taliban seized power in 1996, but returned to fight the U.S., vowing to resist what he termed the foreign "occupation."

## N. Korea propaganda targets White House

*The Washington Post*

SEOUL, South Korea — A North Korean propaganda outlet Thursday released an inflammatory video clip showing a simulated attack on the White House, declaring “the enemy to be destroyed is in our sights.”

The video comes at a tense time in relations between North Korea and the United States, with the Trump administration sending warships to the region in a show of force.

Earlier this week, North Korea conducted large-scale artillery drills, showing off conventional weaponry that can easily reach the South Korean capital of Seoul.

President Donald Trump, who has been urging China to put pressure on North Korea and vowing to act if Beijing doesn't, gathered senators Wednesday to brief them on the “very grave threat” posed by Pyongyang.

At the same time, one of the U.S. Navy's largest submarines, the USS Michigan, which car-

ries Tomahawk cruise missiles, docked in the South Korean port of Busan last week. The USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier, together with the destroyers and cruiser that make up its strike group, arrived in the Korean Peninsula area this weekend as well.

A North Korean website, Meari, or Echo, released a video showing photos of the White House and aircraft carriers with a target on them, as if they are in the crosshairs.

It then shows simulated footage of the aircraft carrier exploding in a ball of flames, with the caption: “When the enemy takes the first step towards provocation and invasion.”

The 2.5-minutelong video also included scenes from the huge military parade that North Korea held on April 15 to mark the anniversary of the birth of the state's founder, Kim Il Sung, as well as showing footage of North Korean artillery and missile launches.

## President tells NRA it has ‘champion’ in White House

*Associated Press*

ATLANTA — For nearly a decade, gun owners felt like they were living on pins and needles, worried about gun rights being taken away and feeling as though their way of life was scorned and under attack.

All those fears disappeared the moment Donald Trump was elected president and, this weekend, National Rifle Association members gathering for the gun lobby's annual meeting are celebrating and rejoicing.

The first sitting president to address the NRA since 1983, Trump made it clear in a stump-style speech he wasn't wavering in his support for gun rights: “The eight-year assault on your Second Amendment freedoms has come to a crashing end.”

Trump's address was remi-

niscent of his election rallies. He told NRA members he would not back away from defending the right to bear arms.

“You have a true friend and champion in the White House,” he said.

His appearance in Atlanta sparked protests from people advocating for stricter gun control measures.

Lorraine Bascombe, who works in the health care industry and lives in suburban Atlanta, said she expected any Republican president to favor fewer regulations on gun purchases. But she worries Trump won't listen to people who want “sensible, safe” gun control.

Bascombe said Republicans “stalled and prevented” Obama from increasing restrictions on gun sales, a stalemate she found frustrating.

## Mattis a key voice on national security

*The Washington Post*

When Defense Secretary Jim Mattis sat down with leaders in Saudi Arabia earlier this month, a top White House official traveling with him offered up a new label for the Pentagon chief, who is well known as a combat-hardened former general: “favorite of the president.”

The depiction from deputy national security adviser Dina Powell sheds light on the substantial role that Mattis has assumed since taking charge at the Pentagon three months ago, as one of President Donald Trump's most influential advisers and a commanding voice on foreign policy issues.

Mattis' standing in Trump's Cabinet makes the top Pentagon position more powerful than it has been in recent years, helping to steer the administration toward more traditional foreign policy positions while allocating greater authority and resources to the military.

Already, Trump has granted the Pentagon authority to expand its counterterrorism fight in Yemen, and his missile assault on a Syrian air base this month marked a political high-water mark for his turbulent presidency. On Wednesday, Mattis helped lead an unusual White House briefing for senators on the dangers posed by North Korea's nuclear program.

Some lawmakers and security experts raised concerns about the president's reliance on Mattis and other current and former military leaders, including H.R. McMaster, an active-duty three-star general who serves as Trump's national security adviser, suggesting it could militarize American interaction with the world and diminish the diversity of viewpoints represented in policy deliberations.

The retired Marine general brings decades of military and government experience to a national security team that largely comprises Washington outsiders. As a combat leader in Afghanistan and the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Mattis worked closely

with foreign militaries. As head of U.S. Central Command under President Barack Obama, he brandished his diplomatic credentials in his dealings with Middle Eastern leaders.

While Mattis' hawkish proposals for pushing back against Iran eventually led to disagreements with the Obama White House and his early departure from CENTCOM, he now appears as an advocate for stability and restraint. His soft-spoken advocacy of continuity on a range of issues, from NATO to the alliances with Japan and South Korea, has reassured foreign leaders unnerved by the president's impulsive statements.

In February, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe appeared to voice the relief that many foreign officials have privately expressed at Mattis' appointment. “I was very encouraged to see someone like you could have such ... experience both in the military as well as security, defense and the diplomacy taking this office,” he said during a visit by Mattis to Tokyo.

Mattis has emerged as a key adviser to Trump not just on traditional military issues, but also on a range of foreign affairs. Officials said Mattis briefs the president before each of his meetings with visiting heads of state and is considered inside the West Wing to be “the unquestioned authority on the lay of the land.”

Mattis, who officials said has forged a close partnership with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, has at times pushed back gently against Trump's views, managing to put forward alternate positions without explicitly challenging his boss.

Although it's impossible to know the extent to which Mattis has shaped Trump's evolving views on Russia, NATO and other issues, the president has spoken repeatedly of his trust in the Pentagon chief and, even before he took office, voiced his willingness to defer to Mattis' rejection of torture in the interrogation of terrorism suspects.

# Climate March draws large crowds to DC

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — On what was a near-record-hot day, tens of thousands of demonstrators assembled in Washington on Saturday. Their large-scale climate change protest marked President Donald Trump's first 100 days in office, which have been punctuated by multiple rollbacks of environmental protections and former President Barack Obama's climate policies.

The People's Climate March, which originated with a massive demonstration in New York in September 2014, picked a symbolically striking day for its 2017 event. Temperatures approached 90 degrees and possibly set a record for April

29 in the District of Columbia, which would amplify the movement's message.

Marchers are sure to be further galvanized by a move taken by the Environmental Protection Agency late Friday. The agency announced that it was beginning an overhaul of its website, which included taking down a long-standing site devoted to the science of climate change, which the agency said was "under review." (The EPA did link to a snapshot of how the page looked on Jan. 19, before the Trump administration.)

"There is no Planet B," read a sign held by Eva Gunther of Washington as the protest assembled on the National Mall Saturday morning.

"Hang on EPA, the midterms are coming. 2018," read another carried by Kathy Sommer, of Stony Brook, N.Y.

The climate event differed from last week's March for Science in its focus and also its participants — only 1 out of 8 planned contingents of Saturday's protest were scientific researchers.

The rest included labor activists, indigenous people already facing severe effects from climate change and children and young people who will live with the effects of climate change longest as the Earth continues to warm.

But there's pretty clearly plenty of overlap.

Ken Hunter, 78, traveled from Charlestown, W.Va., for

Saturday morning's march. He also came to Washington for the March for Science last weekend and the Tax March on April 15 — and attended a Women's March in Florida.

"Hell, I haven't marched this much in years," Hunter said with a laugh. "But these are all very important issues, and it was important to be out here."

The motivation for the current climate march is clear: The young Trump administration already has moved to roll back Obama's signature climate initiative, the Clean Power Plan, and Trump and his team have taken many other actions to weaken environmental protections of air and water, and to enable fossil fuel exploitation on public lands and waters.

## Pope celebrates Mass in Cairo amid high security

*Associated Press*

CAIRO — Military helicopters flew overhead and police fanned out in force Saturday as Pope Francis celebrated an open-air Mass for Egypt's tiny Catholic community on the final day of his two-day visit aimed at comforting Christians after attacks by Islamic militants.

Despite the security concerns, Francis zoomed around the Cairo sports stadium in an open-topped golf cart before the start of Mass.

The crowd cheered him wildly, waving Egyptian and Holy See flags and swaying to hymns sung by church choirs. The defense ministry's stadium has a capacity of 25,000, but it was less than half full.

In his homily, Francis urged his followers to be good and merciful to their fellow Egyptians, saying "the only fanaticism believers can have is that of charity!"

It was a very pastoral message after Francis, on his first day, demanded that Muslim leaders renounce religious fanaticism that leads to violence. Francis

made the appeal during a landmark visit to Cairo's Al-Azhar, the revered, 1,000-year-old seat of Sunni Islamic learning.

Security was exceptionally tight around the stadium and in the upscale neighborhood where Francis spent the night, with uniformed and plain-clothed police stationed every yard or so along his motorcade route. Police used metal detectors to check vehicles for explosives and armed guards stood watch.

Attacks against Christians in northern Sinai, the epicenter of the insurgency, have forced hundreds of families to flee the region, seeking refuge elsewhere in Egypt. Recent attacks on churches — one in Cairo in December and twin Palm Sunday attacks in cities north of the Egyptian capital — have claimed at least 75 lives and injured scores.

He ended the day paying tribute to the victims of a December bombing at Cairo's St. Peter's church. Blood on one of the church walls remains along with pictures of the victims in remembrance of the attack.

## Body found believed to be missing teen hiker

*Associated Press*

GRAND CANYON NATION-AL PARK, Ariz. — The fate of a woman who went missing two weeks ago while on a Grand Canyon hike with her step-grandson remains an unknown while their family awaits the positive identification of a body found in the park and believed to be the 14-year-old boy.

The two went missing April 15 while in the bottom of the canyon during a hike from the North Rim to an area known as Tapeats Creek.

The Grand Canyon National Park says a body found Friday by a commercial river trip is likely Jackson Standefer, of Chattanooga, Tenn. The body was taken by helicopter to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office, which will confirm the identification.

Mark McOmie, Standefer's uncle, said the family is waiting to comment until the body is formally identified. He described his nephew as a loving and well-loved boy who was always smiling.

Standefer and LouAnn Mer-

rell were on a trip with Standefer's mother and LouAnn's husband, Randy, co-founder of Merrell Boot Co. Authorities say the teenager and his step-grandmother were crossing a creek when they lost their footing and were swept away.

The Merrells are from Utah. Park rangers spent days searching with a helicopter, ground crew, drone and motorized inflatable boat. The search was later scaled back.

Standefer was an eighth-grade student at The McCallie School, an all-boys boarding institution in Chattanooga.

School spokesman James Tanner said Friday the school had no comment because it had just learned of the news. But Tanner said Standefer was active in outdoors programs, crew team and a youth Christian group.

Tapeats Creek is in a remote area of the Grand Canyon that isn't frequented as often as other areas.

Experienced hikers say it's an arduous hike down the canyon that ends in stunning and unique views.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Man reportedly out of control found dead

**OR** BROWNSVILLE — Authorities are investigating the death of a man who was reported to be out of control at a home in Brownsville.

Sheriff Bruce Riley, of Linn County, said a caller told 911 dispatchers that the man appeared to be on drugs.

Deputies arrived to find a 54-year-old man lying on top of the man who was reported to be out of control. Deputies then discovered the man on the bottom was unconscious and had no pulse. Deputies called for an ambulance and performed CPR, to no avail.

Riley identified the man as Robert Grant Kline, 63. Kline and the 54-year-old man both lived on the property.

The Linn County Major Crimes Team is investigating.

### Man with replica rifle detained near school

**AZ** PHOENIX — Phoenix police said a man was detained after being found with a nonoperational replica rifle and a pellet gun in the vicinity of a high school.

A police department spokesman said there was no shooting and nobody was injured during the incident Friday morning, and that the man was taken into custody while in a field. Sgt. Alan Pfohl said police are trying to determine the man's intent.

Pfohl said police searched the area after somebody reported seeing a man walking with a gun.

The school was placed on lockdown, but the incident occurred before classes began, and Pfohl said there's no indication the man was at the school.

### Mystery: Someone is shaving others' cats

**VA** WAYNESBORO — Why would someone go around shaving other people's cats?

The mystery has the attention of police in Waynesboro, a small city in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley where someone has been taking cats and precisely shaving their underbellies or legs. It's happened to seven cats since December.

Police Capt. Kelly Walker said Friday that all the cats have been returned otherwise unharmed, but some seem bothered.

He said police aren't sure what crime has been committed, but the owners "would just like it to stop."

### Woman pulls gun on barber taking too long

**OH** CLEVELAND — Police in Cleveland are trying to identify a woman they say pulled a gun on a barber because he was taking too long to cut her 7-year-old son's hair.

According to Cleveland.com, a police report says the woman threatened the barber at a barber school on April 14.

Police said the woman complained several times before pulling a handgun from her purse and pointing it at the barber, telling him, "I got two clips. I'll pop you." The police said the woman put the gun back after another employee came over to calm her down.

The barber was able to finish the haircut, and the woman left with her two children afterward.

WJW-TV reported that surveillance video captured images of the woman, and authorities are asking for help identifying her.

### Machete attack at coffee shop injures 1

**KY** LEXINGTON — Officials said a student was injured, another person is in custody and a university has canceled classes following a machete attack at a university coffee shop in central Kentucky.

Lexington police Sgt. Jervis Middleton told the Lexington Herald-Leader that it happened Friday morning at Transylvania University. He said the assailant was armed with a machete and knives and is thought to be a former student.

Fire department Battalion Chief Joe Best said the victim was taken to the hospital with injuries that weren't life-threatening. He said the assailant also was taken to the hospital to be evaluated.

Transylvania University said on Twitter that a student was injured during an incident at the school's coffee shop Friday and that classes were canceled.

### Mom breast-feeding in bathroom kicked out

**UT** FARMINGTON — A Utah mother was recently kicked out a Nordstrom Rack bathroom after a customer complained about her breast-feeding.

The Deseret News reported that Ana Davis was feeding her baby at a Nordstrom last month when an employee asked her to move into a dressing room. Davis said the employee told her the complaining customer felt uncomfortable with a nursing mother in the bathroom.

Davis' husband reached out to the company at the local and corporate level to inform it of the incident. The store manager responded to the Davises to apologize.

### Naked man arrested in women's bathroom

**WA** SPOKANE — Police said they arrested a man after a woman reported discovering him naked in a stall in a women's bathroom at Spokane Community College.

The Spokesman-Review reported that Brandon Birdsill, 27, was arrested Wednesday.

Birdsill had previously been arrested for an identical crime on the same campus in 2014 and had been banned from returning.

Court documents say the woman told police she opened an unlocked stall door in the bathroom to find Birdsill lying on couch cushions while performing a sexual act. She told a professor, who found Birdsill still in the bathroom.

Birdsill is being held in jail on \$30,000 bond.

### Unconscious baby put in duffel bag, thrown out

**MT** HELENA — A Montana woman abused a 13-month-old girl in her care, used methamphetamine while the child was unconscious and when the girl stopped breathing, put her body in a duffel bag and threw it in a trash can before going home to sleep, federal prosecutors said.

Janelle Red Dog, 43, of Poplar, has reached an agreement to plead guilty to second-degree murder in the April 2016 death of Kenzley Olson on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

Red Dog did not seek medical help for Kenzley and instead used meth with a friend. Kenzley died of multiple blunt force injuries, but an exam also noted numerous bruises from head to toe in various stages of healing, suggesting a pattern of continued physical abuse and neglect, an autopsy found.

From wire reports

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# 3 Huskies DBs taken in second round

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — It's Philly, so of course they booed.

Roger Goodell heard it. Cincinnati's selection of Oklahoma running back Joe Mixon intensified it.

And Drew Pearson incited the fans at the NFL Draft Friday night by lauding — and lauding and lauding — the hated Dallas Cowboys.

Not everything got jeered on the second day of the grab bag. The most popular group in the second round came from nearly 3,000 miles away from Philadelphia: the Washington Huskies secondary.

Three members — cornerbacks Kevin King and Sidney Jones, safety Budda Baker — were taken in the first 11 picks Friday night.

None of those choices drew the attention that Cincinnati's pick at No. 48 overall did: Mixon, who was uninvited to the scouting combine because he was videotaped punching a woman in the face, breaking bones.

He punched Amelia Molitor during an altercation at a restaurant, and was suspended from the team for a year. He came back and had two strong seasons. In 2016, he was an All-Big 12 performer who set the school record for all-purpose yardage in a season.

Fans in the draft theater booed lustily when Bengals Hall of Famer Anthony Munoz announced the choice. Cincinnati has a history of bringing players with off-field problems to the roster.

"For some of our fans, probably (they'll) pause for a second," Bengals coach Marvin Lewis said. "But this thing's got to move forward, and he's got to move on. He's lived with this since the day it's occurred."

Another running back who dropped to Round 2 was Florida State All-American Dalvin Cook. He slipped from the first round because of off-field issues and some injury concerns. Cook is a big-play guy and the Vikings, of course, let go of Adrian Peterson this year.

"You've got to accept things

as a man, and I just was waiting my turn," Cook said.

The Steelers took a local standout, running back James Conner of Pitt. Conner overcame cancer to return to the Panthers, and now he gets to stay home in the pros.

Earlier, King's extra-long stay at the draft turned out to be a short stint.

The Washington cornerback was taken by Green Bay as the first selection in the second round. One of five players who were on hand and were not taken in the opening round, the 6-foot-3 former safety isn't particularly speedy, but has the size and aggressiveness pro teams seek.

Plus, the Packers, who acquired the spot from Cleveland in a deal Thursday night through which the Browns got Miami tight end David Njoku, were ravaged by injuries in the secondary last season.

"I am a playmaker, somebody who will go get the ball," King said. "I think everyone wants somebody like that in the secondary."

"Last night, it had nothing to do with me. When my name was called, that's when it had something to do with me."

King was joined by secondary mate Baker on Friday night when Arizona took the Washington safety.

Then the Eagles added yet another Huskies defensive back, selecting Jones. Jones tore his Achilles tendon at his pro day and might not be healthy for the 2017 season.

Through 64 selections, 18 defensive backs had gone, the most for two rounds of any draft.

Cleveland was expected to add a quarterback at some point and did so at No. 52 with Notre Dame's DeShone Kizer. The Browns have started 26 quarterbacks since 1999, when they returned as an expansion team.

Two more QBs went Friday: Davis Webb of Cal to the Giants and C.J. Beathard of Iowa to San Francisco, both in the third round.

# Tarasenko scores twice to help Blues even series

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Vladimir Tarasenko was at the right place at the right time to take advantage of a lucky bounce and help the St. Louis Blues get a big win.

Tarasenko scored twice, including the tiebreaking goal with 3:51 left to give the Blues a 3-2 victory over the Nashville Predators on Friday night, tying their Western Conference semifinal series at one game apiece.

On the go-ahead goal, Jaden Schwartz led the rush and initially tried to pass it to Joel Edmundson, but the pass was off the mark and Edmundson kicked it right to Tarasenko's stick.

"It's a great play by Schwartz and then I probably scream for Eddy to give it to me and he made a good play," Tarasenko

said. "It's a good goal for us. We lost the first game, we couldn't lose this one."

It was the first lead for St. Louis in 116:09 of the series.

"It ended up actually going off a stick and in, but I'm not taking anything away from him (Tarasenko)," Predators goalie Pekka Rinne said. "He has a great shot for a reason."

Jori Lehtera also scored for the Blues, and Jake Allen stopped 22 shots.

Ryan Ellis had a goal and an assist and James Neal also scored for the Predators, who had their franchise-high five-game postseason winning streak snapped. Rinne finished with 17 saves.

Tarasenko, who scored 39 goals in the regular season, had scored just once in the Blues' first five playoff games.

"He's just a big game player

and those kinds of guys find ways to make big plays at big times," Blues coach Mike Yeo said. "My only concern was that if he continued to play well and didn't get rewarded that his game would drop. And he has shown me that he hasn't done that."

**Oilers 2, Ducks 1:** Cam Talbot made 39 saves, Patrick Maroon scored a power-play goal and visiting Edmonton moved halfway to the NHL's Western Conference finals by beating Anaheim in Game 2 of their second-round series.

Andrej Sekera scored an early goal for the Oilers, who took the first two games on Anaheim's home ice. Talbot got credit from both teams for the result in Game 2, making all manner of impressive saves while Anaheim dominated the last 30 minutes.

Edmonton's first playoff appearance in 11 years is off to a rollicking start, with the Oilers following up their six-game defeat of defending Western Conference champion San Jose by taking two games from the five-time Pacific Division champions.

Everybody in hockey knows Connor McDavid is in his first postseason run after winning the NHL scoring title, but Talbot had just two games of backup playoff experience in his entire career before this spring. He followed up a two-shutout first round against San Jose and a wild Game 1 victory in Anaheim by protecting a lead for nearly 59 full minutes in Game 2.

Although the Ducks dominated long stretches of play in both contests, Talbot stopped 72 of 76 shots in the first two games.

# Celtics rally, knock off Bulls in Game 6

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Boston Celtics got hit with a devastating emotional blow just as the playoffs were about to start. They dropped the first two games at home, too.

Just as things really were starting to look bleak, they began to show just why they earned the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference.

The Celtics rallied to knock off the Chicago Bulls in six games, and now they're ready for a collision with John Wall and the Washington Wizards in the East semifinals.

"Sometimes, we lose sight of the important things in life," Al Horford said after Boston knocked out Chicago 105-83 on Friday night. "You appreciate life at the same time when you don't take for granted any of the moments. It was a rough couple of days for us to start the playoffs. The team wasn't ready."

Isaiah Thomas and his family were rocked by the death of his sister Chyna in a car accident the day before the playoff opener. The Celtics star played through tears at times. But he also got the support

he needed from his teammates and gave the Celtics a big lift in the series.

Avery Bradley did what Boston needed him to do, whether he was sticking with Jimmy Butler or pouring in the points. He scored a career playoff-high 24 in Game 5 and almost matched that with 23 in the clincher.

The Celtics also benefited from a lineup switch after Game 2, going with Gerald Green over Amir Johnson. All he did was score 18 points in Game 4 and 16 in Game 6 to help Boston win a tougher-than-expected series.

"The lineup change I thought really helped us," Horford said. "Bringing Gerald Green in and moving me to the 5, I felt like we really were able to spread them out and take advantage of certain looks we haven't gone to all year. I think that for us, that was the difference. Once we made that adjustment, we were harder to guard. We got it together, and we got it going."

How far can they go?

The Celtics advanced in the playoffs for the first time since 2012. They looked more like the team that led the East with 53 wins to finish two games ahead of de-

fending champion Cleveland and Toronto as this series wore on.

Sure, it didn't hurt that the Bulls' Rajon Rondo sat out the final four games because of a broken right thumb. Chicago struggled in a big way without him, but Boston had something to do with that, too. And in Game 6, it was no contest.

The Celtics set the tone by hitting threes on their first three possessions on the way to a 13-point halftime lead. They buried Chicago in the third, outscoring the Bulls 34-18. Things got so lopsided that Thomas gathered his teammates near the baseline late in the quarter and screamed: "That's a wrap for these (expletives)!"

It was a big exclamation mark for a team that looked as if it might be on the way to a quick exit after Game 2. They're staring at another big challenge, trying to slow Wall and the Wizards. But Jae Crowder likes what he's seeing from the Celtics.

"A lot of underdogs in this locker room," Celtics forward Jae Crowder said. "A lot of guys who had to prove themselves in this league ... who've been through the ropes, who've had to prove themselves. It's in our DNA."

# Wall, Beal help Wizards close out Hawks

Associated Press

ATLANTA — John Wall refused to give in.

Even as Dennis Schroder took off the other way, ahead of everyone for what looked like an uncontested layup, Wall managed to chase him down.

On a night when Wall set a career playoff high with 42 points, his remarkable defensive play was a big reason the Washington Wizards moved on to the second round of the playoffs with a 115-99 victory over the Atlanta Hawks on Friday night.

"That's a sign of a champion," Washington coach Scott Brooks said. "He gave us everything he had."

The Wizards will face the top-seeded Celtics in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Game 1 is Sunday in Boston.

After the home team won the first five games of the opening-round series, the Wizards finally broke through on the road to end Atlanta's season.

It was a much-needed confidence boost heading into a series lacking the home-court advantage.

"We can win on the road," said Bradley Beal, who also came up big in the series-clinching victory with 31 points. "Just being able to withstand their run and coming together and getting the win on the road, that's the biggest thing."

Boston looked downright vulnerable against the Bulls until Rajon Rondo went down with a broken thumb, missing the last four games of the season. The Celtics won them all, including a 105-83 clincher Friday night.

Atlanta coach Mike Budenholzer said Wall and Beal are a challenging 1-2 punch for any team to defend.

"When you have multiple pick-and-roll players, multiple ball-handlers, that can move you side to side," he said. "And they're different, too, so how you want to guard one isn't how you want to guard the other. ...

No doubt they've both improved and both are playing well. Those guys are a handful."

Wall averaged 29.5 points in the six games against the Hawks. Despite struggling early on with his shot, Beal finished the series at 25.8.

"That's how they have to play for us," center Marcin Gortat said. "They're both the head of the snake. They both have to be productive for us."

They might need a bit more help deeper into the playoffs. One option is Markieff Morris, who battled foul trouble through much of the series against the Hawks before settling down in Game 6. He was called for only two fouls, finishing with 17 points and eight rebounds.

But as long as the Wizards have Wall and Beal, they've got a chance.

"Listen, they're bad boys, both of them," Gortat said. "When they're locked in, and when they're playing team basketball, they're ridiculously

good. That's enough."

**Clippers 98, Jazz 93:** Clippers coach Doc Rivers put it simply when he said Chris Paul willed his team to victory with the season on the line.

Paul scored 29 points and visiting Los Angeles forced a Game 7 in its first-round series with a victory over Utah on Friday.

"It's just Chris," Rivers said. "He is as competitive as a human being as I've ever been around. When you put that with the talent and the will, that's why he has performances like this in big games."

Paul pushed Los Angeles throughout the night and just wouldn't let the Clippers lose. The nine-time All-Star dominated and finished with eight assists, three rebounds and two steals. DeAndre Jordan added 13 points and 18 rebounds.

The Clippers will host the only do-or-die game of the first round Sunday, with the winner advancing to face the Golden State Warriors.

# Red Sox get to Arrieta early, beat Cubs

Associated Press

BOSTON — Against Chicago Cubs ace Jake Arrieta, the Red Sox didn't have time for a slow start Friday night — not exactly a strength for them this season.

Andrew Benintendi helped Boston solve that issue, and the club just had to hang on from there.

Benintendi hit a solo homer off Arrieta to spark a five-run first inning and Boston beat Chicago 5-4.

The Red Sox had just seven first-inning runs this season entering Friday.

"Being able to scratch a few across, put up a crooked number early is always nice," Mitch Moreland said. "It kind of helps everybody settle in."

Every Boston starter had at least one hit, and Moreland, Hanley Ramirez, Jackie Bradley Jr. and Christian Vazquez also drove in a run each.

Left-hander Drew Pomer-

anz (2-1) got the win with six innings of two-run ball, surrendering early solo homers to Kris Bryant and Albert Almora Jr. before settling in. He allowed six hits and two walks while striking out seven.

Boston has won its last nine interleague games at Fenway Park.

Arrieta (3-1) logged his shortest start since Aug. 28, 2014, lasting only 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings and giving up 10 hits and three walks with five strikeouts.

"The home run I gave up, just a ball elevated," Arrieta said. "Made a few pitches in spots that I shouldn't have. And they strung some hits together."

Arrieta also had a tough beginning against Cincinnati in his last start, and this is the first time in his career that he has allowed four first-inning earned runs in consecutive outings. Arrieta took a no-hitter into the eighth inning in his last start in Boston on June 30, 2014.

Ben Zobrist also drove in a run for Chicago, which is playing its third regular-season series at Fenway and first since 2014.

After pulling within a run in the seventh, Chicago threatened again in the eighth with runners on first and second and one out. Fernando Abad came on and got both pinch-hitter Matt Szczur and Kyle Schwarber to strike out swinging.

Craig Kimbrel struck out Bryant and Anthony Rizzo to open the ninth before Zobrist doubled. Addison Russell then struck out to end the game, and Kimbrel locked up his eighth save.

"Fernando's two strikeouts were key, and then Kimbrel has been Craig. He's been overpowering. Great stuff," Boston manager John Farrell said.

## The gang's all here

Chicago pitchers Jon Lester, John Lackey and Koji Uehara were given a video tribute after

the top of the second inning for their return to Fenway Park. All three were members of Boston's World Series championship team in 2013.

Anthony Rizzo, once a top prospect in Boston's farm system, was also back at Fenway along with Cubs President of Baseball Operations Theo Epstein, the former Red Sox general manager who helped end the team's 86-year championship drought in 2004.

"I'm definitely still a Bostonian. I'm just lucky to have a great second home in Chicago. I consider them both home," said Epstein, who was raised in nearby Brookline.

## Batting sixth

Dustin Pedroia had hit in every spot in the lineup except for sixth in 1,415 career games before Friday night, when Farrell shook up the lineup. Pedroia went 2-for-3 with a walk and a strikeout from the sixth hole.

# Yankees rally from eight-run deficit to beat Orioles

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Matt Holliday hit a three-run homer in the 10th inning and the New York Yankees completed a stunning rally from an eight-run deficit, outslugging the Baltimore Orioles 14-11 on Friday night.

In a game of home run derby, Starlin Castro tied it with a two-run drive that capped a three-run burst in the ninth off Brad Brach. Then in the 10th, Holliday hit the eighth home run of the evening — five by the Yankees — with one out off Jayson Aquino (1-1).

Down 9-1 in the sixth, the Yankees pulled off their biggest comeback since overcoming a 9-0 gap to beat Boston 15-9 in 2012.

On the first true spring-like day in New York, the ball was flying. Featured were all kinds of monster shots — cleanup men Jacoby Ellsbury and Mark Trumbo connected for grand slams, and Yankees fan favorite

Aaron Judge homered twice.

Manny Machado launched a 470-foot homer, the longest in the majors this year, and Wellington Castro also homered for Baltimore.

Aroldis Chapman (1-0) pitched the 10th as the Yankees won their third straight and tied Baltimore at 14-7 for the AL East lead.

**Braves 10, Brewers 8:** Freddie Freeman's two-run home run snapped a tie in the ninth and visiting Atlanta rallied from a four-run deficit in the final three innings.

**Rays 7, Blue Jays 4:** Logan Morrison hit a two-run homer, Evan Longoria and Corey Dickerson added solo shots and visiting Tampa Bay connected three times in the eighth inning to beat struggling Toronto.

**Mariners 3, Indians 1:** Ariel Miranda (2-2) allowed two hits and pitched into the sixth inning, Robinson Cano and Ben Gamel homered, and visiting Seattle defeated Cleveland.

**Astros 9, Athletics 4:** Charlie Morton (2-2) struck out a career-high 12, George Springer singled home the tying run in his return from a leg injury and host Houston handed Oakland its fifth straight loss.

**Cardinals 7, Reds 5:** Dexter Fowler and Jedd Gyorko homered and Yadier Molina short-circuited a rally with a bases-loaded pickoff to lead host St. Louis to its ninth win in 11 games.

**Angels 6, Rangers 3:** Albert Pujols hit a tiebreaking three-run home run in the eighth inning and visiting Los Angeles beat Texas.

**Mets 7, Nationals 5:** Josh Edgin relieved Mets closer Jeurys Familia with the bases loaded in the ninth inning and got Bryce Harper to hit into a game-ending double play, stopping visiting New York's six-game losing streak.

**White Sox 7, Tigers 3:** Geovany Soto broke open a tie game with a two-run single in

the eighth inning, helping visiting Chicago beat Detroit.

**Pirates 12, Marlins 2:** Francisco Cervelli drove in three runs and visiting Pittsburgh scored eight times in the second inning.

**Twins 6, Royals 4:** Miguel Sano and Joe Mauer hit consecutive two-run doubles in the eighth inning and visiting Minnesota handed Kansas City its eighth straight loss.

**Rockies 3, Diamondbacks 1:** Trevor Story homered and rookie Kyle Freeland (3-1) pitched six effective innings, helping visiting Colorado move past Arizona into first place in the NL West.

**Giants 4, Padres 3:** Rookie Christian Arroyo homered, Brandon Belt had three hits including a double, and host San Francisco beat San Diego.

**Dodgers 5, Phillies 3:** Kenta Maeda (2-2) found his form during seven solid innings to lead host Los Angeles past Philadelphia.