

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Base options sought to house migrant kids

BY ROSE L. THAYER

*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — The Defense Department is once again reviewing military bases to determine which ones are capable of housing migrant children. Acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan on Tuesday approved a request from the Department of Health and Human Services to look for housing options for up to 5,000 migrant children, said Army Lt. Col. Jamie Davis, a Pentagon spokesman.

Shanahan's approval simply begins a process to "identify facilities or land through fiscal year 2019," if requested, Davis said. A second request from HHS asking to house the children would be required before the Pentagon would take any further action.

"DOD is working with the

military services to identify potentially suitable locations for such support to HHS," Davis said.

About 12,500 unaccompanied minors are in federal custody, according to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which is part of HHS. That's 1,000 more than when HHS made the request one month ago.

There isn't a specific trigger that would lead HHS to house children at military facilities, said Evelyn Stauffer, spokeswoman for the Administration of Children and Families, the office within HHS that manages the refugee resettlement program.

"This is a situational decision based on need for temporary shelter and appropriate, available facilities," she said.

Apprehensions at the U.S. border with Mexico have in-

creased each month of 2019. In March, 92,607 people were apprehended at the border, according to Customs and Border Protection statistics. Of those, 8,975 were unaccompanied minors — up from February's numbers by more than 2,000 children.

Once children are referred to the Office of Refugee Resettlement from the Department of Homeland Security, the office is responsible for their care until they are released to a suitable sponsor, most likely a parent or close relative, while they await immigration proceedings.

Last month's request for housing stems from a continuing increase in border crossings. For that reason, HHS is "preparing for the need for high-bed capacity to continue" and "is once again requesting the assistance of the Depart-

ment of Defense to help respond to the migration influx of unaccompanied alien children along our southern border," Stauffer said.

HHS made a similar request last summer as President Donald Trump's administration faced scrutiny for separating parents from their children as they crossed the border. HHS, as well as DHS, were seeking space to house adults and minors. Neither agency acted on those requests.

However, the Pentagon identified three potential installations in western Texas — Fort Bliss in El Paso, Dyess Air Force Base near Abilene and Goodfellow Air Force Base near San Angelo. Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas also was considered.

## Taliban declare start of spring offensive amid talks with US

*Associated Press*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban announced Friday the start of their spring offensive despite talking peace with the U.S. and ahead of a significant gathering of Afghans meant to discuss resolutions to the protracted war and an eventual withdrawal of American troops from the country.

The insurgents released a lengthy missive in five languages, including English, saying the fighting would continue while foreign forces remain in Afghanistan.

The announcement is something the militant group does every year, even though Taliban attacks never really ceased during the harsh winter months. The insurgents carry out daily attacks targeting Afghan security forces and NATO

troops, and inflicting staggering casualties, including among civilians. Most recently, a Taliban attack near the main U.S. air base in Afghanistan killed three Marines on Monday.

The Taliban now hold sway over half the country after a relentless 17-year war, America's longest.

Friday's announcement instructs the Taliban mujahedeen, or holy warriors, to "launch jihadi operations with sincerity and pure intentions," strictly abiding by the Taliban command structure. It also urges fighters to avoid civilian casualties.

The U.N.'s annual report earlier this year said civilian deaths hit a record high last year, blaming the insurgents and other militants, such as Islamic State, though it also noted

an uptick in civilian casualties from U.S. bombing raids, most often in aid of Afghan troops on the ground.

Still, preparations are underway for Afghan-to-Afghan talks starting next week in Qatar, where the Taliban have a political office.

In Kabul, the Afghan High Peace Council, a government body created years ago to talk peace with anti-government forces, condemned the Taliban announcement, saying it brought into question the insurgents' sincerity in seeking a peaceful end to the war.

Atta-u-Rahman Saleim, a council deputy, said the announcement undermines the credibility of the Taliban. "They are insisting on war," he said. "We can see this every day."

U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who has escalated efforts to find a peaceful end to the war since his appointment last year, has been urging the Taliban to accept a cease-fire and hold talks directly with the Kabul government, something the insurgents refuse to do.

The Taliban, who see the Afghan government as a U.S. puppet, say they will talk to Kabul officials at the upcoming Qatar meeting only as "ordinary Afghans" and not as government representatives.

Meanwhile, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told The Associated Press on Friday that the insurgents banned the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Health Organization from operating in territory under their control.

# DOD ban on transgender troops instituted

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
AND COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's ban on transgender people serving in the military went into effect Friday, nearly two years after he surprised top Pentagon leaders with a series of tweets announcing he would not allow transgender people to serve "in any capacity."

The Pentagon will no longer allow the vast majority of people who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, the medical condition associated with those who do not identify with their birth sex, to enlist in the military. The new policy comes as Trump's administration faces at least four lawsuits seeking to halt the orders that overturned the Pentagon's 2016

decision to end its longstanding ban on open military service by transgender people.

The Pentagon on Friday defended its decision. Tony Kurta, who is performing the duties of the deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, told reporters that the decision was rooted in a study launched by former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis after top military leaders raised questions about transgender military troops' service.

Kurta was pressed Friday for details about information from the study used to make the determination to alter the policy. He declined to provide any data supporting the policy, citing the ongoing litigation and denying the policy was being implemented because of Trump's surprise July 2017 tweets. The data collected in the Mattis study has not been

made public to date.

Some critics have responded by calling the new policy discriminatory and vowed to continue fighting it. Aaron Belkin, the director of the Palm Center, a research institute that studies LGBTQ inclusion in the military, called the policy "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" for transgender troops, referring to the former President Bill Clinton-era policy that banned gay service-members from serving openly. That policy was overturned by former President Barack Obama in 2011.

"Today our nation lurches backwards in a disgraceful retreat from the arc of our civil rights history," Belkin said in a statement released Friday. "Our hearts break for the courageous transgender patriots who want nothing more than to defend their country, and we pledge not to rest until inclusive

policy is restored."

He vowed the "transgender ban won't stand for long."

Pentagon officials have routinely denied the policy — dubbed "the Mattis plan" — constitutes a blanket ban on transgender people serving in the military.

The new policy bars from military service most people who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria — described by the American Psychiatric Association as "a conflict between a person's physical or assigned gender and the gender with which he/she/they identify." It does allow people to enlist with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria who have doctor certification they have remained stable in their biological sex for 36 months. People who have medically transitioned their sex are disqualified from service.

## Navy awards \$3.2B contract for 24 Hawkeyes

BY BRIAN FERGUSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy has awarded defense contractor Northrop Grumman a \$3.2 billion contract to deliver 24 E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft.

The five-year, fixed-price contract, announced by the Pentagon on Wednesday, cov-

ers work on the airborne early warning aircraft through 2026.

The contract also includes an option for nine additional foreign military sales aircraft, according to a Northrop Grumman statement. The State Department cleared Japan to obtain nine additional E-2Ds, according to a Defense Security Cooperation Agency statement

in September. Japan currently has four of the planes. Under the current program, the company has delivered 37 E-2Ds to the U.S. Navy, the Northrop Grumman statement said.

The company is also contracted to deliver a series of capability upgrades. The third upgrade is slated for this fall and includes an aerial refuel-

ing capability to extend the aircraft's endurance.

The carrier-based E-2D provides expanded battlespace awareness for carrier strike groups, area surveillance, search-and-rescue guidance and navigational assistance, among other roles, according to a U.S. Navy fact sheet.

## Navy investigates why barge capsized at Idaho base

*Associated Press*

SPOKANE, Wash. — The U.S. Navy is investigating why a barge capsized at a stealth submarine research facility in northern Idaho.

The 48-by-80-foot barge capsized in early February at the Acoustic Research Detachment base at Lake Pend Oreille, The Spokesman-Review reported on Wednesday.

The experimental support platform was used to deploy large-scale submarine models and to maintain an underwater sonic measurement system, according to Navy officials.

A buildup of ice on the platform might have contributed, but the incident remains under investigation, said Capt. Roxie Thomsen Merritt, a spokeswoman for the Naval Surface

Warfare Center's Carderock Division. "The weather conditions on Lake Pend Oreille were generally severe leading up to the event, with very cold temperatures and large amounts of accumulated snow and ice on the ESP," Thomsen Merritt said in an email.

Tugboats and other vessels started to haul the barge back to the base when it began to

sink "to avoid potential damage to the underwater test facility," Thomsen Merritt said.

A Naval Sea Systems Command team was sent to stabilize the barge and develop a salvage and restoration plan.

"They are still doing all the investigating and assessments, and we won't know the extent of the damage until they are through with the inspection," she said.

# Ex-National Guard general stripped of star

USA Today

WASHINGTON—The Army has stripped the former adjutant general of the Oklahoma National Guard of one star in retirement after an investigation substantiated allegations of an inappropriate relationship with a subordinate officer and improperly accepting gifts, according to documents obtained by USA Today.

Brig. Gen. Robbie Asher had been serving as Oklahoma's adjutant general, the senior commander for the National Guard in the state. Before his forced retirement in 2017 and demotion in 2018, he had been a two-star officer. The reasons for his dismissal and discipline had not been reported.

Asher, in an interview with USA Today, denied having

a sexual affair with the subordinate officer, a lieutenant colonel. The Army inspector general's investigation substantiated allegations that Asher had been involved in an "inappropriate relationship" with the fellow officer and had improperly accepted gifts from her by boarding his horses at her family's ranch for free. However, the Army stopped short of concluding Asher engaged in any sexual misconduct.

USA Today received through the Freedom of Information Act a redacted copy of the inspector general's report and memos that reprimanded and demoted Asher.

"Your actions lead me to question your judgment as a senior leader," Gen. James McConville, the Army's No. 2 officer, wrote in a January 2018

memo to Asher. "Not only did you choose to engage in this inappropriate relationship but after allegations arose, you responded by expressing your love for the subordinate officer to multiple people. Your actions brought significant discredit to you, the [Oklahoma National Guard] and the Army as an institution."

The report also indicates there was a belief among some in the Oklahoma National Guard that having sex with superior officers was key to advancement. "Success in the OKNG was dependent on who you knew," a co-worker and acquaintance of Asher and the lieutenant colonel told investigators.

"The adage in the Oklahoma Army National Guard is, you know, the only way you're

gonna get anywhere is you gotta hitch your wagon to the right person," the woman said in the report. "And you probably need to be sleeping with somebody because that's how you're going to get ahead in the Oklahoma National Guard," according to her statement to the Army.

Asher joins a list of senior officers in recent years who have been disciplined for misconduct, many of them for improper relationships with women.

Army policy prohibits relationships between soldiers of different ranks for a number of reasons, including those that compromise or appear to compromise supervisory authority or the chain of command. Military law prohibits extramarital affairs.

## Wis. National Guard tracks 52 sexual assault complaints

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin National Guard received 52 reports of sexual assault between 2013 and 2017, with more than half related to military service, Guard officials said during a roundtable with reporters Thursday.

The U.S. Air Force is investigating allegations of sexual assault and harassment within a Wisconsin Air National Guard security unit dating back to 2002. The investigation came at the request of U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., after a master sergeant in the unit, Jay Ellis, told her office that he had learned of six incidents between 2002 and 2016 and high-ranking officers had done little to address them.

That probe spurred a request from Gov. Tony Evers and Baldwin last month to the National Guard Bureau in Washington to review the Wisconsin Guard's sexual assault and harassment reporting procedures, investigative process and accountability measures.

The Guard's sexual assault response coordinator, Robert Barina, said Thursday that 20 of the 52 assault reports were "restricted," meaning the person who reported the assault requested confidentiality and the identity of all involved remains secret. The Guard's leader, Maj. General Donald Dunbar, is notified when such a report is made but isn't told the details. The Guard helps connect the victim with counseling services, but no investigation is launched and the allegations aren't referred to law enforcement.

Confidentiality was not requested in the remaining 32 reports. In those cases, Dunbar was notified and the incidents were referred to civilian law enforcement as well as Guard investigators.

Twenty of those 32 reported assaults were connected with the victim or perpetrator's military service in some way, Barina said. Guard investigators substantiated 10 of those reports.

## US joins search for missing Japanese F-35 plane, pilot

BY SETH ROBSON  
AND HANA KUSUMOTO  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The Japan Air Self-Defense Force on Friday identified the pilot missing since his stealth fighter plunged Tuesday into the Pacific Ocean as Maj. Akinori Hosomi.

Also Friday, U.S. Forces Japan said an Air Force U-2 Dragon Lady tactical reconnaissance plane has joined the search for Hosomi and the F-35A Lightning II fighter he was flying when it disappeared just before 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.

The Lightning II went down approximately 85 miles east of Misawa Air Base, its home field in northeastern Japan, just before 7:30 p.m. Tuesday. A search team found parts of the downed aircraft's left and right rudders in the water about two hours later, the JASDF said Wednesday.

It's the first loss of an F-35A, a fifth-generation fighter, anywhere in the world. A Marine

Corps F-35B, capable of short takeoffs and landings, crashed in September near the Marine air station in Beaufort, S.C.

Hosomi, 41, accumulated a total 3,200 flight hours, including 60 hours in F-35As, according to a JASDF spokesman. How long the search will continue is undecided, the spokesman said.

The pilot broke off a training exercise with three other JASDF F-35As but did not otherwise signal trouble with the aircraft before it disappeared, the JASDF said Wednesday.

The U.S. Navy sent search-and-rescue assistance in the form of a ship and a patrol plane, it said Wednesday.

"At the request of the Government of Japan, US forces continue to support Japan-led search and rescue efforts with the USS Stethem (guided missile destroyer), P-8A (maritime patrol aircraft) coverage as well as U-2 support," USFJ spokesman Air Force Col. John Hutcheson said in an email Friday.

# Trump wants to keep North Korea sanctions

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump says the U.S. wants to keep economic sanctions in place to pressure North Korea to give up nuclear weapons, but he isn't ruling out a third summit with Kim Jong Un or taking steps to ease food or other shortages in the repressive nation.

"We want sanctions to remain in place," Trump said Thursday at the White House during a meeting with South Korea President Moon Jae-in. "I think that sanctions right now are at a level that's a fair level."

Moon, for his part, has called for an easing of sanctions, including those holding back joint economic projects between North and South Korea. Trump said he would favor easing those sanctions at the right time but added: "This isn't the right time."

He said he was open to discussing smaller steps such as helping to ease North Korea's humanitarian problems, but that in general, the U.S. wants sanctions to remain.

"There are various smaller deals that maybe could happen," Trump said.

"You could work out step-by-step pieces, but at this moment, we're talking about the big deal. The big deal is we have to get rid of the nuclear weapons."

Negotiations on Pyongyang's nuclear program appear to be stalled, and there is uncertainty over whether Kim is considering backing out of talks or restarting nuclear and missile tests. The Korean Central News Agency on Thursday said that at a party meeting on Wednesday, Kim stressed "self-reliance" in his country to "deal a telling blow to the hostile forces" that "go with bloodshot eyes miscalculating that sanctions can bring" North Korea

"to its knees."

Moon said it's important to maintain the "momentum of dialogue" and express a positive outlook to the international community that a "third U.S.-North Korea summit" will be held.

"I'd like to express my high regard for how you have continued to express your trust towards Chairman Kim," Moon said. "And also, you have made sure that North Korea does not deviate from the dialogue track."

The United States and North Korea have accused each other of causing the Hanoi summit's breakdown. But they haven't formally abandoned diplomacy. Moon, a liberal who facilitated U.S.-North Korea diplomacy last year, told Trump that he would push for an inter-Korean summit with Kim, according to Moon's office. Moon met Kim three times last year.

# International court rejects Afghanistan probe

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — International Criminal Court judges on Friday rejected a request by the court's prosecutor to open an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan and alleged crimes by U.S. forces linked to the conflict.

In a lengthy written ruling, judges said an investigation "would not serve the interests of justice" because an investigation and prosecution are unlikely to be successful as those targeted — including the United States, Afghan authorities and the Taliban — are not expected to cooperate, the court said in a statement.

The decision does acknowledge that the 2017 request from prosecutor Fatou Bensouda to open a probe "establishes a reasonable basis to consider that crimes within the ICC jurisdiction have been committed in Afghanistan and that potential cases would be admissible before the Court."

The decision comes a month after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Washington would revoke or deny visas to ICC staff seeking to investigate alleged war crimes and other abuses committed by U.S. forces in Afghanistan or elsewhere. Bensouda's U.S. visa already has been revoked.

Her request to open an investigation said there is information that members of

the U.S. military and intelligence agencies "committed acts of torture, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, rape and sexual violence against conflict-related detainees in Afghanistan and other locations, principally in the 2003-2004 period." She said the Taliban and other insurgents have killed more than 17,000 civilians since 2009, including some 7,000 targeted killings. She alleged that Afghan security forces have tortured prisoners at detention centers.

Human Rights Watch slammed the ruling, calling it "a devastating blow for victims who have suffered grave crimes without redress."

# Deadly gas explosion also damages Porsche collection

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — The gas explosion that killed one person and injured 25 others in North Carolina also damaged a building that houses a rarely seen but world-famous collection of Porsches.

The Ingram Collection is housed next to the building in Durham that collapsed Wednesday. The structure that holds the German-made sports cars was extensively damaged. About half its roof collapsed.

Details on any damage to the collectible cars have not been released.

The Ingram Collection holds some important classics, said Rob Sass, editor-in-

chief of Porsche Panorama, the official magazine of Porsche Club of America.

"There are Porsches and then there are Porsches," he said. "If it's a significant car in the Porsche world, chances are they have one. They really enjoy a peerless reputation."

For example, the collection includes a Gmund coupe, an early model that separates the casual Porsche fan from a "true believer."

The Ingram Collection is not open to the public, Sass said. But Porsche enthusiasts such as Jerry Seinfeld, Jay Leno and others have visited, according to media reports.

The collection is owned by Robert In-

gram, a general partner in a venture capital firm who previously served as the CEO of a major pharmaceutical company.

His son, Rory, manages the collection, according to a 2015 story on Porsche's website. Another son, Cameron, owns Road Scholars, a company that restores vintage Porsches.

"If anybody is going to be able to resurrect [the damaged cars], it's going to be the Ingrams," Sass said.

Robert Ingram did not respond to requests for comment. The Ingram Collection issued a statement on the Road Scholars Facebook page that focused on the loss of life and injuries, not the cars.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Woman's taunts help cops track her down

**PA** WAYNESBURG — A woman who taunted a sheriff's department online by asking if they "do pick up or delivery" has gotten a response: They do both, and she's in custody.

Chloe Jones commented on the Greene County Sheriff's Office Facebook post featuring her as one of the county's most wanted, writing, "Do you guys do pick up or delivery??" followed by four crying-laughing emojis. Police said she failed to appear in court on assault charges.

She then got into arguments with other commenters and claimed she was at a hospital in Morgantown, W.Va. Police there tracked her down this week and she was extradited to Pennsylvania.

The sheriff's office took to Facebook again to announce her arrest and added that Jones "and her witty comments are taking a hiatus from our Facebook comments section due to the jail not having internet for her to use."

### Cops: Three-way sex leads to house fire

**NJ** WOODBURY — Authorities said a woman set fire to the home where her boyfriend lives several hours after they had a consensual sexual encounter there with another woman.

Woodbury police said Tasia Young told them she had been "going through a lot" and was angry her boyfriend had her take a cab home after the encounter while the other woman remained at the residence.

No injuries were reported in the fire. But Young's boyfriend and six other people who live in apartments at the home were displaced by the blaze.

### Toddler survives fall from apartment

**WA** REDMOND — Authorities said a 20-month-old boy survived a six-story fall from a window on the top floor of a Redmond apartment complex when he landed on the roof of a parked car.

The boy was in serious but stable condition at an area hospital. Redmond police spokesman James Perry told KIRO that the boy "landed in a way where the car absorbed enough of the impact that he was awake and crying when paramedics arrived" Tuesday afternoon.

Perry said the toddler was alone in a bedroom while his mother and two siblings were in another room. Investigators believe the boy propped himself up on a window that was cracked open, then pushed through a screen and tumbled down.

### Geese undeterred by laser, fake coyote

**AR** BENTONVILLE — Officials at Bentonville's municipal airport are exploring more options to scare off geese after a laser and a fake coyote failed to do the trick.

The airport said the geese pose a safety risk to pilots and passengers. Initially, officials considered killing the geese, but they opted for nonlethal methods instead.

Airport transportation director Dennis Birge said workers have tried shining a \$700 laser at the geese to make them fly away, but it hasn't scared them. Birge told the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette that a decoy coyote has been slightly more effective, but it can't be left in one place for too long because the geese grow accustomed to it.

The airport said it's now con-

sidering using a trained dog or falcon to scare off the geese.

### Drivers urged to brake for turtles in roads

**MO** JEFFERSON CITY — Officials are urging drivers to give turtles a brake this spring on Missouri roads.

The Missouri Department of Conservation says vehicles kill thousands of box turtles each year, and spring is a particularly treacherous time for box turtles and other common varieties because they are more active.

Conservation agents say the turtles come out of their burrows and start hunting for food and mates during warm, wet conditions. Males sometimes travel as far as 6 miles searching for territories and mates. Females also cross roads in search of places to nest.

### Police: 2 people twice robbed home of vet

**MA** MARLBOROUGH — Police have arrested two people who they say twice robbed the home of a disabled Vietnam veteran while he was in the hospital after being burned in a fire.

Marlborough police say Joseph Migliaccio, 35, and Sarah Hampton, 31, both of Sudbury, were arrested Wednesday and charged with breaking and entering and larceny in connection with burglaries last weekend at the home of Gene Rano.

Two people were caught on security video breaking into the home and removing valuables, including televisions.

Rano, 68, who uses a wheelchair, was severely burned April 2 while burning branches in his yard.

Police said the suspects knew Rano wasn't home.

His son, Nicholas Rano, said he feels "disgust and hate and anger" toward the suspects.

Migliaccio said they had permission to enter the home and remove items.

### Police say driver hit pedestrian on purpose

**FL** OAKLAND PARK — Authorities have arrested a man who they say intentionally drove his SUV into a pedestrian in a Florida parking lot.

The Broward Sheriff's Office said in a news release that Luis Alberto Ferri, 36, is charged with aggravated battery for an act described as "bizarre, cruel and reckless."

Investigators released security video of the Feb. 23 attack. It shows the SUV stopping to let the pedestrian walk by but then accelerating and swerving into the person, leaving the victim with a broken leg.

### Ex-student sentenced on voyeurism charge

**WY** LARAMIE — A former University of Wyoming student has been sentenced to two years of probation for filming a student showering in a dormitory bathroom.

The Laramie Boomerang reported Wednesday that Cameron Bunnell, 19, pleaded guilty to a voyeurism charge earlier this year. The victim told campus police last July that he had confronted Bunnell after he saw the cellphone recording of him through a crack in the stall door.

Bunnell's attorney, Brian Quinn, said his client was in a "vulnerable mental place," and a combination of medications had affected his thinking at the time.

Bunnell also was ordered into a treatment program.

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# Mariners homer in 15th straight game

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Trailing by two runs and down to their last strike, the Seattle Mariners found a way to keep their winning streak alive.

“Confidence is building,” manager Scott Servais said.

Seattle became the first major league team to homer in each of its first 15 games when Dee Gordon connected in the sixth inning, then beat the Kansas City Royals 7-6 Thursday behind Daniel Vogelbach’s home run in the 10th.

Seattle improved the best record in the major leagues to 13-2, completing a four-game sweep and extending its winning streak to six. The Mariners became just the third team since 1987 to open with at least 13 wins in the first 15 games after Milwaukee (14-1 in 1987) and Boston (13-2 last year).

Kansas City has lost 10 straight games, has the poor-

est record in the big leagues at 2-10 and is off to its worst 12-game start since 2006. The Royals failed to preserve leads of 4-0 in the sixth and 6-4 with two outs in the ninth.

“Other teams just can’t seem to do any wrong,” said Kansas City’s Whit Merrifield, whose hitting streak ended at 31 games.

Royals center fielder Billy Hamilton was carted off with a knee injury after failing to grab Mitch Haniger’s tying, two-run triple in the ninth. Royals manager Ned Yost said he did not have an update on Hamilton’s condition.

“Hanny had the at-bat of the game,” Servais said. “You’re down to your last strike, fighting and clawing. He finally got the changeup up in the zone.”

Merrifield went 0 for 6. He had not gone hitless since Sept. 9.

“Out of my last nine outs, I feel like I’ve made six good swings on good pitches in the

zone,” Merrifield said. “I either hit it on the barrel at somebody or just missed it and hit it in the air. That’s kind of what makes streaks like these so rare.”

The 2002 Cleveland Indians had homered in each of their first 14 games. Seattle’s 36 home runs are tied with the 2000 St. Louis Cardinals for the most in a club’s first 15 games. The Mariners have scored five or more runs in all but one game.

Vogelbach hit a 427-foot drive off Glenn Sparkman (0-1) for his sixth home run this season.

“I’m not in that situation if Hanny doesn’t have the at-bat to tie the game,” Vogelbach said. “He fouled off a ton of pitches. He made him work, and then got a pitch he could handle.”

Brandon Brennan (1-0) struck out three in the ninth, working around his own throwing error on a grounder to get his first big league win. Brennan has not allowed a run in his first 9 2/3 innings in the major

leagues, holding batters to a .156 average (5-for-32).

Connor Sadzeck pitched a perfect 10th for his first professional save.

Seattle trailed 6-3 before Edwin Encarnacion hit an RBI single off Wily Peralta in the eighth.

Pinch-hitter Omar Narvaez and Gordon singled off Brad Boxberger with one out in the ninth and Mallex Smith took a called third strike. Haniger hit a long drive on a full count and Hamilton, who entered at the start of the half-inning for defense, allowed the ball to glance off his glove on the warning track.

Haniger, who hit a tiebreaking homer with two outs in the ninth inning on Wednesday, slid into third as two runs scored. Hamilton’s left knee hit the wall, and he crumpled to the warning track, then was unable to put weight on the knee when he got up.

## MLB roundup

# Cardinals complete four-game sweep of Dodgers

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Matt Wieters drove in three runs and stole a base for just the third time in six years, leading St. Louis over Los Angeles 11-7 for a four-game sweep of the NL champions.

Making his first start this season, the 32-year-old Wieters hit a sacrifice fly in the second inning and a two-run double in the fifth that put the Cardinals ahead 8-7. With runners at the corners in the fifth, Wieters stole second as Matt Carpenter struck out, his first steal since April 27, 2017, and just the ninth of his major league career.

St. Louis’ bullpen combined for 5 1/3 scoreless innings in the series finale and allowed one run in the four games.

Harrison Bader was hit by pitches with the bases loaded

in both the second and fifth innings. He was the first player to force in runs twice in a game while getting hit since Toronto’s Reed Johnson on April 16, 2005, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Jose Martinez matched a career high with four hits, including an RBI double off Yimi Garcia in a two-run sixth. St. Louis set a season high for runs and swept the Dodgers in a four-game series for the first time since July 15-18, 2010.

David Freese and Walker Buehler hit solo home runs in the second inning for Los Angeles, and Kike Hernandez homered to cap a four-run third.

**Reds 5, Marlins 0:** Yasiel Puig returned from a two-game suspension and doubled home a pair of runs, and host Cincinnati completed a reinvigorating three-game sweep of Miami.

**Padres 7, Diamondbacks 6:** Manuel Margot hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning and San Diego bounced back after blowing a late five-run lead to host Arizona.

**Athletics 8, Orioles 5:** Khris Davis hit a pair of home runs for the second straight game, and Baltimore’s Chris Davis extended his record hitless streak to 53 at-bats in visiting Oakland’s victory.

Khris Davis leads the majors with nine homers this season.

**Indians 4, Tigers 0:** Shane Bieber allowed three hits in seven innings, Leonys Martin homered in his return to his former home and Cleveland shut out Detroit.

Martin, traded from the Tigers to Cleveland last year, hit a solo homer in the third. He and Carlos Santana had three hits apiece for the Indians.

**Red Sox 7, Blue Jays 6:** Rafael Devers hit an RBI single with one out in the ninth inning and struggling Boston beat Toronto for its first home victory of the season.

**Mets 6, Braves 3:** Amed Rosario drove in a career-high four runs, and rookie Pete Alonso rocketed his latest homer into a terrace fountain far beyond the center field fence as visiting New York beat Atlanta.

**Cubs 2, Pirates 0:** Jose Quintana struck out 11 in seven innings of four-hit ball and host Chicago blanked Pittsburgh.

**Giants 1, Rockies 0:** Jeff Samardzija and two relievers combined on a three-hitter and Kevin Pillar homered as visiting San Francisco squeezed past slumping Colorado.

# DeChambeau, Koepka tied atop Masters

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Bryson DeChambeau believes science was at work late in the afternoon at Augusta National, creating a force in the atmosphere where big roars from great shots filter through the back nine.

An easier description: Another exciting finish at the Masters, this time on a Thursday.

Brooks Koepka got it started, adding to his reputation of playing his best golf in the majors. He rolled in a 20-foot birdie putt from behind the 12th green, the first of four straight birdies to take the lead. DeChambeau answered with four straight birdies at the end of his round, with two shots inches away from being even better.

His 8-iron on the par-3 16th grazed the edge of the cup. His 6-iron into the 18th was even better, so good that it rolled smack into the middle of the pin and bounced back an inch or two.

Both wound up in a share of the lead at 6-under 66.

"Absolutely, there is an energy and there is something in science that does talk about

that," said DeChambeau, who has a scientific answer for everything. "It's great to have momentum and great atmosphere and gets you all pumped up, creates adrenaline flow. ... I believe that's partially what happened today."

They were one shot ahead of 48-year-old Phil Mickelson, who delivered thrills of his own.

Mickelson found some momentum after shots in the pine trees at No. 10 and in the water on No. 11, both leading to bogey when he thought it could have been worse. He answered with three birdies on the next four holes, including a shot into the 16th that stopped inches from the cup.

He had a 67, his best start since 2010, when he won his third green jacket.

"It looked like, after bogeying 10 and 11, that would kill some momentum. It was the other way around, because I made two great bogeys that should have and could have been doubles," Mickelson said. "And then when I got to the holes that I could birdie, I took advantage

of it with some good shots."

Tiger Woods missed all the action. He played earlier in the round and methodically scored a solid 70. It was a good start for Woods in his quest to end 11 years without a major, and he was atop the leaderboard briefly until a late bogey. He sounded satisfied.

"I've shot this number and won four coats, so hopefully, I can do it again," said Woods, who slightly miscalculated. The last green jacket he won in 2005 began with a 74. The goal was to not fall too far behind early, and he is just four shots behind.

Rory McIlroy's bid for the last leg of the career Grand Slam began with a 73, which featured six bogeys.

"I made five birdies — that wasn't the problem," McIlroy said. "I just made too many mistakes."

Even more surprising to McIlroy was no one from the early starters took advantage of soft turf from recent rains.

"It's there for the taking, and I'm surprised someone hasn't run off," McIlroy said.

And that's right about when Koepka and DeChambeau took off.

"Honestly, I was hitting it great all day," DeChambeau said. "Just an accumulation of great golf that finally showed in the score."

He two-putted for birdie on the par-5 15th. He narrowly missed his first hole-in-one in competition. From the woods right of the 17th fairway, he went just over the back of the green and chipped in from 35 feet.

He didn't see until later how good his shot was into the 18th because he was in light rough short of the fairway bunker, unable to see the green but knowing it was good from the roar of the crowd.

"Oh my gosh," DeChambeau said when he watched the replay for the first time. "I guess I should have pulled the flagstick."

He is not the only player to putt with the flagstick in the cup — allowed under the new Rules of Golf — just the only one to apply science to the decision.

## Frozen Four roundup

# Massachusetts, Minnesota Duluth advance to final

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Marc Del Gaizo thought maybe he was dreaming.

There was no other way the freshman defenseman could put into perspective the role he played in helping Massachusetts advance to college hockey's Frozen Four championship game for the first time in school history.

"It's probably the coolest moment of my life," Del Gaizo said. "Right now it seems like I'm dreaming, but we're off to the national championship and that's all that matters."

Del Gaizo scored 15:18 into overtime to seal a 4-3 victory over Denver in a semifinal

game that ended just after midnight Friday.

The Minutemen (31-9), making just their second NCAA Tournament appearance, rebounded after squandering a 3-1, third-period lead and overcame having two forwards — including captain Niko Hildenbrand — ejected for illegal hits to the head.

The victory continued turning around a Hockey East program that hadn't previously won more than 21 games and was two years removed from a 5-29-2 finish in its first year under coach Greg Carvel.

"That five-win season is still pretty fresh," Carvel said. "The pain from that season has sunk in. The glory of this sea-

son hasn't sunk in yet."

That's, in part, because the Minutemen's ride from obscurity to the national spotlight isn't over.

UMass now prepares for its most daunting test in facing defending champion Minnesota Duluth on Saturday. The Bulldogs (28-11-2) advanced to their third consecutive championship game with a 4-1 win over Providence.

Star defenseman and Hobey Baker award finalist Cale Makar can appreciate how big this moment is for the Minutemen.

"It's definitely special for this school," Makar said.

**Minnesota Duluth 4, Providence 1:** Coach Scott Sandelin

isn't taking the Bulldogs' third consecutive trip to the Frozen Four championship game for granted because of how difficult it is to get there.

It wasn't easy for the Bulldogs once again in pulling out a 4-1 win over Providence in a tightly contested game they sealed by scoring two empty-net goals in the final 33 seconds Thursday.

The National Collegiate Hockey Conference champion Bulldogs became the first team to reach three consecutive championship games since Boston College from 2006-08. Minnesota Duluth lost 3-2 to Denver in the 2017 championship game.

# Capitals hold off late Hurricane surge

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nicklas Backstrom and Alex Ovechkin came out firing, the Carolina Hurricanes surged and the Washington Capitals showed why they're the defending Stanley Cup champions when it mattered most.

Backstrom and Ovechkin combined to score three goals on the first eight shots before 19-year-old rookie Andrei Svechnikov led a furious third-period comeback. But Backstrom blocked a couple of shots in the final minutes, Braden Holtby made 27 saves and Washington held on to beat Carolina 4-2 on Thursday night in Game 1 of their first-round series.

"We didn't panic," Backstrom said after his third career two-goal game in the playoffs. "We stuck with it."

One night after watching the Presidents' Trophy-winning Tampa Bay Lightning blow a three-goal lead and lose 4-3 to the Columbus Blue Jackets, the Capitals went up 3-0 at 18:05 of the first period and had the sellout crowd decked out in red

fired up for the first playoff game in Washington since the franchise won its first title in June. The Hurricanes took it to the Capitals, outshooting them 29-18 and got two goals in 2:19 from Svechnikov early in the third period to cut the deficit to one.

The Capitals, who led Columbus 2-0 in each of the first two games of last year's playoffs before losing 4-3 and 5-4, had those experiences and the Lightning's loss on Wednesday fresh in their minds.

"We knew it's not over, even 15-nothing," Ovechkin said. "You can see what happened last night in a different game. It's the playoffs and you never know what's going to happen."

Another three-goal comeback almost happened in this one. Well after the "Back-to-back!" chants faded into nervous silence, Hurricanes goaltender Petr Mrazek rebounded from allowing a soft opening goal to Backstrom by stopping Nic Dowd and Carl Hagelin on breakaways and turned aside Brett Connolly and Lars Eller on rapid-fire chances early in the third before Svechnikov got

the Hurricanes on the board. Mrazek finished with 14 saves.

Svechnikov became the youngest player to score two-plus goals in a playoff game since Dainius Zubrus in 1997, but the Hurricanes failed to score on two late power plays and Eller sealed it with an empty-net goal with 36.6 seconds left. Despite the loss, the young Hurricanes go into Game 2 Saturday knowing they can go toe-to-toe with the playoff-seasoned Capitals.

"We're here. We can play with them," defenseman Jacob Slavin said. "One of the biggest positives is that we've got a group in here that can play. Obviously they're the defending champs, they're a good team and they won last year for a reason and they know how to do it on that side. But I thought we stuck with them."

Carolina, which had 10 players making their playoff debuts after ending the NHL's longest postseason drought, didn't go away. In the Hurricanes' first playoff game since 2009, they showed a lot of the fight that allowed them to climb the standings and get in after some early

season scoring struggles.

"They're aggressive all over the ice and didn't give us a lot of time out there, but I think as a team we can play a little bit better," Backstrom said. "We got lucky there."

It's not just luck. After allowing two goals to Svechnikov he believes he should have stopped, Holtby was there to backstop the penalty kill after a hooking call on Jakub Vrana and a high-sticking call on T.J. Oshie threatened to push the game into overtime.

Backstrom — who beat Mrazek on a harmless-looking shot to open the scoring and tapped the puck in on a backdoor play on the power play — was arguably at his most important when he got his body in front of a couple of shots in the third to keep Washington ahead.

"It's one of the main things that won the Stanley Cup for us," Holtby said. "The guys didn't hesitate to get right back into doing those things. It's great to see."

## NHL playoffs roundup

# Leafs capitalize on Bruins' mistakes to win Game 1

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Toronto Maple Leafs know they can't count on short-handed penalty shots to help them get past Boston in the playoffs.

The hustle that forced the Bruins to make mistakes, though: That's something they are planning to do over and over again.

"It's a weird play, but we'll take all goals," defenseman Jake Muzzin said on Thursday night after Mitch Marner converted Toronto's first successful postseason penalty shot in two decades to propel the Leafs to a 4-1 victory over Boston.

"You pressure them, and you

can force turnovers and fumbled pucks," Muzzin said after Toronto took Game 1 of the first-round playoff series. "And away you go."

Marner scored twice — the first to erase a first-period deficit, and the second to give the Leafs the lead for good after he was brought down from behind by Jake DeBrusk on a short-handed breakaway. It was Toronto's first successful postseason penalty shot since Mats Sundin converted in 1999.

"When you get a power play, you want to get something good out of it and get some momentum," said Bruins forward Patrice Bergeron, who scored Boston's only goal. "Obviously,

that did the opposite. ... That can't happen."

Frederik Andersen made 37 saves and William Nylander also scored on a breakaway for Toronto, which swiped the home-ice advantage in the best-of-seven series as it tries to advance through Boston for the first time in six tries.

"It's one game, but it gets us a step closer to where we want to get to," said John Tavares, who added an empty-netter to clinch it.

"It's always good to start that way."

Tuukka Rask stopped 29 shots for Boston, and Bergeron scored a power-play goal mid-way through the first.

**Flames 4, Avalanche 0:** Matthew Tkachuk scored twice, Mike Smith made 26 saves for his first playoff shutout in nearly seven years, and host Calgary blanked Colorado in Game 1 of their first-round playoff series.

Rookie Andrew Mangiapane and Mikael Backlund also scored as Calgary won its first playoff game since beating Anaheim 4-3 in overtime on May 5, 2015.

The shutout was Smith's first in the postseason since May 20, 2012, when he made 36 stops while with the Phoenix Coyotes to shut out the Los Angeles Kings in Game 4 of the Western Conference final.