

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Kim open to 3rd summit, with conditions

Associated Press

PYONGYANG, North Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said he is open to a third summit with President Donald Trump, but set the year's end as a deadline for Washington to offer mutually acceptable terms for an agreement to salvage the high-stakes nuclear diplomacy, the North's state-run media said Saturday.

Kim made the comments during a speech Friday at a session of North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament, which made a slew of personnel changes that bolstered his diplomatic lineup amid stalemated negotiations with the United States. His speech came hours after Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in met in Washington and agreed on the importance of nuclear talks with North Korea.

"We of course place importance on resolving problems through dialogue and

negotiations. But U.S.-style dialogue of unilaterally pushing its demands doesn't fit us, and we have no interest in it," Kim said during the speech.

According to the Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, Kim blamed the collapse of his summit with Trump in February on what he described as unilateral demands by the United States, which he said raised questions over whether Washington has genuine willingness to improve relations. But Kim said his personal relationship with Trump remains good and that they could exchange letters at "any time."

Kim repeated earlier claims that North Korea's crippled economy would persevere through heavy international sanctions imposed over its nuclear weapons program and that he wouldn't "obsess over summitry with the United States out of thirst for sanctions relief."

Kim said the United States has been refusing to withdraw what the North perceives as "hostile policies" while sticking to "mistaken judgment that we would succumb to maximum pressure." He said the North would not compromise on the "fundamental interests of our country and people, even by a speck," and blamed the United States for arriving in Hanoi with "completely unrealizable plans."

"If the United States approaches us with the right manner and offers to hold a third North Korea-U.S. leaders' summit on the condition of finding solutions we could mutually accept, then we do have a willingness to give it one more try," Kim added. "We will wait with patience until the end of the year for the United States to come up with a courageous decision. But it will clearly be difficult for a good opportunity like last time to come up."

Navy corpsmen get hands-on training in civilian hospitals

The Virginian-Pilot

PORTSMOUTH, Va. — The next war the Navy finds itself in could bring the first significant sea battles since World War II.

That means the heart of the Navy's medical community — hospital corpsmen — must be prepared to treat patients with major trauma in a chaotic environment with no guarantee of being able to quickly airlift them to a land-based hospital.

As the service shifts its focus away from the war on terrorism and toward major powers such as Russia and China, its corpsmen are preparing in a different way: Embedding with civilian hospitals where treating gunshots, burn victims and other severe wounds is commonplace.

The Navy has recently entered into partnerships with a handful of hospitals around the country to get some of its top corpsmen hands-on experience.

"If a ship takes a hit, you

can expect there will be many, many, many casualties. And you can expect to see things that we didn't see in Afghanistan. So burns, smoke inhalation, things like that," Vice Adm. Forrest Faison, the Navy's surgeon general, said during a recent interview at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. "Perhaps if they're in the water, hypothermia, in addition to traumatic amputations as metal flies and bulkheads collapse ... And that's what we've geared the curriculum toward, is to be able to deal with those."

About 30 corpsmen at a time are being embedded at the Cook County Trauma Unit in Chicago.

The program has also expanded to a hospital in Cleveland and one in Jacksonville, Fla., which just graduated its first group of 16 corpsmen in late March. Each graduate had prior experience at a military medical treatment facility like Naval Medical

Center Portsmouth.

Seaman Lashaun Limbrick was one of the first to go through the five-week program at University of Florida Health Jacksonville. He said it was fast-paced and each day was different.

They treated gunshot and stab wounds, heart attacks, strokes and boating injuries, among other things.

"If I didn't have that type of training or experience, whenever I'm on my own with the Marines downrange maybe I would freeze or something," Limbrick said. "So I feel like this is a real big confidence booster for me."

Faison wants to create additional partnerships with hospitals in New York, Seattle and Dallas. The Navy doesn't have a partnership with any local hospitals in Virginia, but he said he's open to that possibility.

Cmdr. Ligia Villajuana, the officer in charge of the program at the Florida hospital, said train-

ing at a Level I trauma center is rare for military personnel and she recommends it to others in the medical community.

"These are the patients that our corpsmen, our nurses, our doctors will get to see in the field," Villajuana said.

"It prepares them mentally and physically."

Whenever sailors are seriously injured at sea off Virginia, they're airlifted to Norfolk Sentara General Hospital — the only Level 1 trauma center in the region. But some day, they could be sent to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth instead.

"We're very interested in providing trauma services because I've got a medical center here with all the major specialties and trauma surgeons," Faison said. "So absolutely, if there was interest in the community and support from the community, I think we'd be very interested in doing that."

Migrants force way into Mexico

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Mexican authorities said a group of about 350 migrants broke the locks on a gate at the Guatemalan border Friday and forced their way into southern Mexico to join a larger group of migrants trying to make their way toward the United States.

The National Immigration Institute did not identify the nationalities of the migrants, but they are usually from Central America.

A similar confrontation occurred on the same border bridge between Mexico and Guatemala last year.

The institute said the migrants were acting in a “hostile” and “aggressive” way, and accused them of also attacking local police in Metapa, a Mexican village that lies between the border and the nearby city of Tapachula.

The group of 350 pushed past police guarding the bridge and joined a larger group of about 2,000 migrants who are walking toward Tapachula in the latest caravan to enter Mexico.

Claudia Jaqueline Sandoval, 43, from El Progreso, Honduras, was walking toward Tapachula with her 6-year-old daughter. Another son and a daughter are already in the United States.

“I have been HIV positive for 16 years,” said Sandoval, but her reason for going north was not just medical treatment. “It has been two years since I heard from my son” in the United States, and money is scarce, she said.

There are already several groups of migrants in the southern border state of Chiapas who have expressed frustration at Mexico’s policy of slowing or stopping the process of handing out humanitarian and exit visas at the border.

Trump border plan may prompt Congress to limit DOD funding

CQ-Roll Call

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s controversial border wall could propel lawmakers to end a time-honored “gentleman’s agreement” that has allowed the Pentagon to shift billions of dollars around in its budget — a move that could hamstring the military’s ability to respond quickly to unforeseen events.

House Democrats are poised to retaliate against Trump’s decision to repurpose Defense Department funds to help pay for the wall along the southern border, and the Pentagon’s budget flexibility seems to be the target.

Lawmakers want to remind the White House who holds the power of the purse.

“To have no reaction is almost inconceivable to me,” said Mike McCord, who served as the Pentagon’s comptroller during the Obama administration. “If the Congress doesn’t react, what message to the White House does that send?”

But they could ultimately give Pentagon officials less room to maneuver unanticipated funding crunches, former Pentagon officials say.

At stake is the Defense Department’s ability to transfer up to \$4 billion of its base budget, and \$2 billion of its warfighting funds provided outside of statutory spending limits, between accounts during a fiscal year. Ultimately, these funds make up less than 1% of the defense budget, but they provide a much-needed safety valve for Pentagon numbers crunchers, McCord said.

The flexibility to move money is necessary in part because of the Pentagon’s protracted budgeting process. Transfer authority, or moving money between accounts, and reprogramming, or moving money within an appropriations title, allows the Pentagon to redirect money without an act of Congress.

The kinds of events that could strain Pentagon accounts are small but significant domestic

developments, McCord said. Major domestic and international emergencies — a massive hurricane that devastates a large area, or a new conflict requiring a troop surge — are likely to require more than \$6 billion and necessitate Congress enacting separate emergency funding bills.

But regional flooding, like the kind that recently submerged major portions of Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, or wildfires that lead to activating National Guard and Reserve units, can create short-term strains on certain accounts.

Acting Pentagon spokesman Charles Summers said last week he didn’t want to speculate about how the Pentagon would respond if Congress did take away its ability to transfer big chunks of money.

“We continue to work with the Congress to ensure that American taxpayer dollars are used in the most efficient and wise manner,” he said.

Trump pursues sanctuary city proposal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Friday he is strongly considering releasing “Illegal Immigrants” into Democratic strongholds to punish congressional foes for inaction on the border — just hours after White House and Homeland Security officials insisted the idea had been rejected as fast as it had been proposed.

“Due to the fact that Democrats are unwilling to change our very dangerous immigration laws, we are indeed, as reported, giving strong considerations to placing Illegal Immigrants in Sanctuary Cities only,” Trump tweeted. He added that, “The Radical Left always seems

to have an Open Borders, Open Arms policy — so this should make them very happy!”

He later told reporters that he was “strongly looking at” the idea of releasing migrant families into those communities, though there were no immediate plans in place to implement Trump’s threat.

“They’re always saying they have open arms. Let’s see if they have open arms,” he said.

The reversal, which appeared to catch officials at the Department of Homeland Security off guard, came as critics were blasting news that the White House had at least twice considered a plan to release detained immigrants into so-called sanctuary cities, using migrants

as pawns to go after political opponents.

Before Trump’s comments, both the Department of Homeland Security and a White House official had insisted in nearly identical statements that that plan had been floated but then flatly rejected.

But not, apparently, by the president, who emphatically revived the idea.

The idea of pressing immigration authorities to embrace the plan was discussed in November and then again in February as the Trump administration struggled with a surge of migrants at the border, according to three people who spoke on condition of anonymity to outline private conversations.

Top Democrat steps up the demand for Trump tax return

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A top House Democrat on Saturday ratcheted up his demand for access to President Donald Trump's tax returns, telling the IRS that the law clearly gives Congress a right to them. The government's failure to respond by an April 23 deadline could send the dispute into federal court.

The response by Rep. Richard Neal, the House Ways and Means Committee chairman, comes after the Trump administration asked for more time to consider his initial request last week.

Neal, D-Mass., argues that a 1920-era law saying the IRS "shall furnish" any tax return requested by Congress "is unambiguous and raises no complicated legal issues" and that

the Treasury Department's objections lack merit.

The letter to IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig is the latest exchange in a tug of war over Trump's returns, which would give lawmakers far greater insight into the president's business dealings and potential conflicts of interest as it exercises its oversight role.

Trump declined to provide his tax information as a candidate in 2016 and as president, something party nominees have traditionally done in the name of the transparency. By withholding his tax returns, Trump has not followed the standard followed by presidents since Richard Nixon started the practice in 1969.

The issue appears sure to end up in federal court. With an eye to a legal challenge, Neal told

Rettig that he has two weeks to respond — by 5 p.m. on April 23. If Rettig fails to do so, Neal said he will interpret as denying the request, which could pave the way for a court battle. Neal also seeks the returns through a subpoena.

Mnuchin accused lawmakers of seeking Trump's returns for political reasons. But he also acknowledged his "statutory responsibilities" and that he respects congressional oversight. Some Treasury-watchers observe that Mnuchin's decision to consult with the Justice Department could suggest that Treasury lawyers believe Neal has a legal right to Trump's returns.

Neal said Saturday that the administration has no right "to question or second guess" his motivations.

Taliban launch new attack in Afghan city

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban launched a new assault early Saturday on the northern city of Kunduz, which briefly fell to the insurgents in 2015 and has come under attack several times since then.

Mohammad Yusouf Ayubi, head of the provincial council in Kunduz, said at least six people were killed and more than 50 were wounded as the insurgents attacked from multiple directions just after midnight. He said hundreds of people fled their homes as the sound of gunfire and explosions echoed from the city's outskirts.

The northern city lies at a strategic crossroads in the heart of a major agricultural region, with easy access to much of northern Afghanistan as well as the capital, Kabul. The Taliban seized Kunduz for around two weeks in 2015 before withdrawing in the face of a NATO-backed Afghan offensive. The insurgents pushed into the city center a year later, briefly raising their flag before gradually being pushed out.

The Taliban declared the start of their annual spring offensive on Friday, but the insurgents have managed to keep up a steady tempo of attacks even during the harsh winter months in recent years.

In the western Ghor province, the Taliban ambushed a police convoy on Friday, killing seven security forces and igniting a battle that raged for several hours, said Abdul Hai Khateby, the governor's spokesman.

In the northern Baghlan province, the Taliban killed seven police and wounded eight in an attack on checkpoints late Friday, said Safder Mohsini, head of the provincial council. The insurgents also attacked a district headquarters in the eastern Nangarhar province late Friday, killing two police, said Attahullah Khogyani, the governor's spokesman.

Pelosi criticizes Trump's use of 'painful images of 9/11 for a political attack'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has weighed in on the most recent controversy involving Rep. Ilhan Omar, retweeting video edited to suggest that the Minnesota Democrat was dismissive of the significance of the Sept. 11 attacks.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the president "shouldn't use the painful images of 9/11 for a political attack."

The video pulls a snippet of Omar's speech last month to the Council on American-Islamic Relations in which she described the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center as "some people did something," as well as news footage of the hijacked planes hitting the towers. Trump on Friday tweeted, "WE WILL NEVER FORGET!"

Omar's remark has drawn criticism largely from political opponents and conservatives. They say Omar, one of the first Muslim women to serve in Congress, offered a flippant description of the assailants and the attacks on American soil that killed nearly 3,000 people.

Neither Trump's tweet nor the video includes her full quote or the context of her comments.

Omar told CAIR in Los Angeles that many Muslims saw their civil liberties eroded after the attacks, and she advocated for activism.

"For far too long we have lived with the discomfort of being a second-class citizen and, frankly, I'm tired of it, and every single Muslim in this country should be tired of it," she said in the March 23 speech, according to video posted on-

line. "CAIR was founded after 9/11 because they recognized that some people did something and that all of us were starting to lose access to our civil liberties."

CAIR was founded in 1994, according to its website, but its membership increased dramatically after the attacks.

Many Republicans and conservative outlets expressed outrage at Omar's remarks.

"First Member of Congress to ever describe terrorists who killed thousands of Americans on 9/11 as 'some people who did something,'" tweeted Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas. The retired Navy SEAL lost his right eye in 2012 in an explosion in Afghanistan.

"Here's your something," the New York Post blared on its cover beneath a photograph of the flaming towers.

Swallowed objects spark rise in ER visits for children

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The number of young kids who went to U.S. emergency rooms because they swallowed toys, coins, batteries and other objects has nearly doubled, a new study says.

In 2015, there were nearly 43,000 such visits among kids under 6, compared with 22,000 in 1995, according to the study published Friday in the journal *Pediatrics*. The rate jumped from almost 10 per 10,000 ER visits to 18 per 10,000.

The increase “rang some alarms,” said Dr. Danielle Orsagh-Yentis, the lead author and a gastrointestinal physician at Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

Orsagh-Yentis noted that an increasing number of consumer products use potentially dangerous button-sized batteries, including TV remotes, digital thermometers and remote-controlled toys, which likely contributed to the increase.

She said her interest in studying the trend began during her training, “when we were all being called in in the middle of the night at odd hours to remove foreign bodies from either the esophagus or stomachs of children.”

Her research team analyzed a nationwide database of non-fatal emergency room visits

for children younger than age 6. Almost 800,000 children were treated during the study years after swallowing foreign objects. Coins, batteries and toys accounted for most of the visits.

While 90% of treated children were sent home without hospitalization, severe internal injuries and deaths have been reported. Batteries and small high-powered magnets often marketed as desk toys for adults are among the most dangerous objects.

In recent years, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued safety warnings and orders to stop sales of some magnets, citing dozens of hospitalizations and at least one toddler death.

The agency also has warned about dangers from button-sized batteries, which when swallowed can trigger a chemical reaction that can burn holes through tissue inside the throat.

Morag Mackay of Safe Kids Worldwide, an injury prevention advocacy group, called for more research to understand why the incidents are on the rise. She said parents and caregivers need to be vigilant.

Man suspected in boy’s fall from balcony at mall

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A 5-year-old boy plummeted three floors Friday after being pushed or thrown from a balcony at the Mall of America, according to witnesses, and a 24-year-old man with a history of causing disturbances at the mall was in custody.

Bloomington Police Chief Jeffrey Potts said police don’t think there is any relationship between the man and the family of the child, who suffered life-threatening injuries.

The child was being treated at a hospital, but no details on his condition were immediately available.

Witnesses told police that the child may have been pushed or thrown from the mall’s third level to the first floor, Potts said. He said the suspect immediately took off running but was quickly found and arrested at the mall.

A witness said a woman screamed that her child was thrown from the balcony.

Brian Johnson told WCCO-TV the woman was screaming, “Everybody pray, everybody pray. Oh my God, my baby, someone threw him over the edge.”

Police said Emmanuel Deshawn Aranda, of Minneapolis, was being held on suspicion of attempted homicide.

Aranda’s criminal record includes two convictions in 2015 for obstruction of the legal process/interfering with a peace officer, as well as convictions for fifth-degree assault, trespassing and damage to property.

Court records show Aranda was arrested on July 4, 2015,

after police said he matched the description of a man throwing things off the upper level of the Mall of America to the lower level.

Police say Aranda refused to give his name and resisted arrest. Aranda also was accused of walking into a mall store and sweeping his hand across a display table, breaking glasses.

In October 2015, Aranda was accused of throwing glasses in Twin Cities Grill in the mall.

The complaint says Aranda approached a woman who was waiting for the restaurant to open and asked her to buy him something. The woman refused, and Aranda allegedly threw a glass of water in her face and a glass of tea that struck her leg. Aranda was under a trespass notice at the time banning him from the mall until July 4, 2016.

It wasn’t immediately clear if Aranda had an attorney.

Police don’t have an idea about possible motive, Potts said.

“At this point we believe this is an isolated incident,” the chief said. “We’re actively trying to figure out why this occurred.”

No details were immediately available about the child’s condition.

The 4.2-million-square-foot Mall of America is in Bloomington, about 10 miles south of Minneapolis. The mall, which opened in 1992, has more than 520 stores and is visited by 40 million visitors annually, according to its website.

Conn. police charge sailor with assault of teen

Associated Press

MONTVILLE, Conn. — Police in Connecticut say an enlisted sailor had sex with a 13-year-old boy he met on a dating app.

State police say Chazzman Chung, 27, cultivated a relationship with a boy and had sex with him in December in the bar-

racks at the Naval Submarine Base New London.

Chung has been charged with enticing a minor by computer and risk of injury to a minor.

Police say they were called to a home in Griswold in December by a mother reporting that her teenage son had sex with an

older man.

Police say they interviewed Chung in February in connection to the incident.

The Navy says it is investigating the assault allegations.

Chung’s case was not listed in online court records and it was unclear if he has a lawyer.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man charged for shining laser at QB

MO KANSAS CITY — A citation was issued against a Missouri man accused of flashing a laser at New England quarterback Tom Brady during the Patriots' AFC championship game against the Kansas City Chiefs.

Prosecutors said that Dwyan Morgan, 64, of Lee's Summit faces a single count of disturbing the peace, a municipal violation.

Television stations posted footage after the game that showed a green light flashing on Brady late in the Patriots' 37-31 overtime victory Jan. 20. Prosecutors said Brady was unaware of the laser.

Man sentenced for theft of Sno-Cat

CO EAGLE — A Colorado man was sentenced to three years in a community corrections program for stealing a Sno-Cat fitted out to look like the "General Lee," the famous car featured in the classic television series "The Dukes of Hazzard."

Jason Cuervo of Grand Junction was sentenced Tuesday after previously pleading guilty to aggravated motor vehicle theft.

The 28-year-old, who has an extensive criminal history, stole the Sno-Cat and its trailer on March 11, 2018, in Minturn. Authorities said Cuervo hitched it to the back of his pickup and hauled it to Grand Junction.

2 men sentenced for stealing snow fences

WY LARAMIE — Two Colorado men were ordered to pay \$16,000 in restitution to the Wyoming De-

partment of Transportation for stealing pieces of wood fences designed to help reduce snow blowing onto Wyoming highways in the winter.

The Laramie Boomerang reported that Tres Steinhoff and Billy Cobb were both sentenced to five years of supervised probation.

First historical marker for lynching victim built

VA CHARLES CITY — Virginia installed its first historical marker to commemorate the lynching of a black man.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported that the marker was installed in Charles City outside of Richmond. It marks the death of Isaac Brandon, 43, in 1892.

The father of eight was seized by a mob from the Charles City County courthouse jail and hanged from a nearby tree. Brandon was accused of attacking a white woman but was never charged and never had a trial.

2 arrested after hiding in water of flooded road

ND HARWOOD — Cass County sheriff's deputies used all-terrain vehicles to arrest two people on active warrants who they said attempted to conceal themselves in the water of a washed out roadway.

Authorities said deputies were patrolling an area near Harwood when they spotted two vehicles stuck on a road surrounded by water. Two of the four people said the other two possibly had active warrants.

Deputies used the ATVs to drive into the water where they found the two remaining people trying to hide submerged in

water.

Officials said the two had signs of hypothermia and were taken to a hospital then transferred to the Cass County Jail. A 39-year-old woman is being held on a probation violation and drug possession warrant. A 38-year-old Fargo man is being held on warrants from three counties.

Woman makes threats to 2 courthouses

NJ CAMDEN — A woman admitted calling in two bomb threats that forced evacuations at courthouses in New Jersey because she was frustrated about a civil lawsuit she had pending.

Federal prosecutors said Amdije Toska made the threats Jan. 12, 2018, in calls to the William Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton, which houses the state Supreme Court and other legal offices, and the federal courthouse in Camden.

They said the court clerk in Camden was familiar with Toska's voice because she called there so frequently.

Man broke into building, smeared blood on flag

FL PALMETTO BAY — Authorities said a homeless man broke into a South Florida village hall building, caused \$500,000 in damage and smeared blood on the walls and on an American flag.

An arrest report said Holdson Marcelin, 38, was charged with burglary, criminal mischief and causing property damage at Palmetto Bay Village Hall on April 3.

WPLG reported Marcelin smashed the entrance with a garbage can, then destroyed items in the lobby and turned over office equipment. Sur-

veillance video recorded him cutting himself and smearing blood on the walls and an American flag, which he dragged around.

Endangered rhinos gain one more in their ranks

IA DES MOINES — A zoo in Des Moines announced another birth for a pair of endangered rhinos.

Blank Park Zoo said its 9-year-old female eastern black rhino, Ayana, gave birth to a 112-pound female calf. Ayana and her mate, Kiano, produced their first calf in 2016, Tumani.

The newborn isn't on display while still bonding with her mother. Zoo spokesman Ryan Bickel said people can check on her through the zoo's social media and live webcams.

The zoo will name her through a fundraising contest.

Squirrel shooter in park sparks school lockdown

NV DAYTON — The threat of a man with a gun that caused a brief lockdown at a northern Nevada school turned out to be a county employee shooting squirrels at a nearby park.

The Reno Gazette Journal reported that the Lyon County sheriff's office received a call with reports of a man with a rifle at a park across the street from Dayton Elementary School 12 miles northeast of Carson City.

School Superintendent Wayne Workman said deputies responded immediately and doors were locked for about 20 minutes before they determined a Lyon county employee with a pellet gun was trying to address a problem with squirrels in the park.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Jackets beat No. 1 seed Lightning again

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — The Columbus Blue Jackets are making a serious bid to knock the team with the best regular-season record out of the playoffs.

Matt Duchene had a goal and three assists, Sergei Bobrovsky made 23 saves, and the Blue Jackets stunned the Tampa Bay Lightning 5-1 on Friday night to take a 2-0 first-round series lead.

Two down. Two more to go.

“It’s half the wins that we need,” Duchene said. “We’re keeping our heads down and our eyes on the prize.”

Columbus also got goals from Cam Atkinson, Zach Werenski, Riley Nash and Artemi Panarin. The Blue Jackets started the playoffs last season by winning the first two games of the first-round series with eventual Stanley Cup champion Washington, which won the next four games.

Mikhail Sergachev had a goal and Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 22 shots for the Lightning, who lost two games in a row just

twice in the regular season.

Tampa Bay matched the 1995-96 Detroit Red Wings for the most wins in a regular season with 62.

“The regular season is different than the playoffs,” Lightning coach Jon Cooper said. “Things just happen so fast. Alarms are going off. This is a five-alarm fire. But it’s adversity and sometimes that’s good that you have to go through stuff like this to see how we respond. One thing I do know about being with this group is they find a way.”

Lightning right wing Nikita Kucherov, who led the NHL with 128 points, was held off the scoresheet for the second consecutive game and picked up tripping, boarding and 10-minute misconduct penalties late in the third period.

It’s likely that Kucherov will face discipline from the NHL.

“I’m not going to give you any thoughts on it,” Columbus coach John Tortorella said. “It’s self-explanatory.”

The Blue Jackets rallied from a three-goal, first-period deficit

to beat Tampa Bay 4-3 in Game 1 on Wednesday night as Seth Jones scored the go-ahead goal on the power play to cap Columbus’ three-goal third period.

Tortorella said he’s not surprised about the 2-0 series advantage even after the early hole in Game 1.

“No, and I’m serious about that,” Tortorella said. “I think we’re a good team. We’ve gone through a lot as a team. If we’re going to be successful as a team, we have to play as a team. So, even when we were down 3-0, I don’t think we got away as far as how we have to play.”

Duchene assisted on both of Columbus’ goals during the first period and put the Blue Jackets ahead 3-0 on the power play when the center scored on the rebound at 1:28 of the second after Vasilevskiy had stopped his tip-in try.

Columbus, 28th in the NHL on the power play during the regular season, converted two of four chances and is 3-for-6 overall.

Tampa Bay’s top-ranked power-play unit has failed in all

five opportunities in the series.

The Lightning got within two goals at 3-1 when Sergachev’s shot went into the net off Blue Jackets defenseman Markus Nutivaara’s skate five minutes into the third. But, Nash and Panarin scored goals over a three-minute span midway through the period.

Bobrovsky stopped Kucherov’s shot and got a piece of Steven Stamkos’ scoring chance that also went off the crossbar during an early second-period power play.

“We’re better than we’re executing,” Stamkos said. “There’s no sense in pouting right now. We have to find a way to win.”

Duchene stole the puck from J.T. Miller along the left-wing boards and sent a pass into the low slot that Atkinson redirected past Vasilevskiy 5:15 into the game.

Werenski made it 2-0 from the blue line after Duchene won a faceoff during a power play at 11:44 of the first.

Werenski also had an assist, and fought Brayden Point.

NHL playoffs roundup

Islanders top Penguins, go up two games in series

Associated Press

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — After falling behind in the second period, the New York Islanders didn’t get discouraged. They maintained their focus, tied it minutes later and then pulled away in the third period.

Jordan Eberle and Josh Bailey scored less than four minutes apart in the final period and the Islanders beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 3-1 Friday night for a 2-0 lead in their first-round playoff series.

“You can’t get too emotional, get too down and get frustrated,” New York captain Anders Lee said. “We were playing a good game at the time (Pittsburgh scored), but there was plenty of time left.”

Anthony Beauvillier had the

tying goal midway through the second and Robin Lehner stopped 32 shots to help New York open a postseason series with two wins for the first time since sweeping Edmonton in the 1983 Stanley Cup Final for the Islanders’ fourth straight championship.

Erik Gudbranson scored and Matt Murray finished with 31 saves for the Penguins, who have lost the first two games of a postseason series for the first time since the 2013 Eastern Conference finals against Boston.

Golden Knights 5, Sharks 3: Mark Stone scored the tie-breaking goal on a power play created by a penalty that negated an apparent San Jose goal and visiting Vegas responded

after blowing a three-goal lead in the first period to win the game and tie its Western Conference playoff series at one game apiece.

The teams packed an entire game into the opening minutes with the Golden Knights scoring three goals in the first 6:11 and the Sharks rallying for three more in the final 3:01 to become the first team in NHL history to tie a playoff game in the first period after falling behind 3-0.

The craziness continued at the start of the second period when the Sharks briefly celebrated an apparent goal in the opening minute by Brent Burns. That quickly turned to frustration when the officials waved off the goal because

Logan Couture interfered with Marc-Andre Fleury, giving the Golden Knights the power play.

Game 3 will be Sunday night in Las Vegas.

Blues 4, Jets 3: Oskar Sundqvist scored twice to lead visiting St. Louis past Winnipeg.

Pat Maroon and Ryan O’Reilly also scored for the Blues, who lead the best-of-seven matchup 2-0 and host Game 3 on Sunday night. Rookie Jordan Binnington made 26 saves.

Blake Wheeler and Mark Scheifele each had a goal and one assist for the Jets, Patrik Laine also scored and Dustin Byfuglien had a pair of assists. Connor Hellebuyck stopped 28 shots.

Scott earns share of lead in Masters

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Adam Scott had a choice to make, and some time to do it.

Then he came out of a storm delay to hit the shot of his day. And just like that, Scott is in the mix on a star-studded leaderboard as he tries to end a long victory drought and win his second Masters title.

Scott waited out a 29-minute delay to hit a risky 2-iron to the par-5 15th green Friday, a shot that settled near the pin for an eagle that briefly moved him into the lead by himself at Augusta National.

“When you’re swinging well you have to go for it,” Scott said. “I don’t know if it was the smartest decision, but it certainly paid off.”

Scott had just hit his drive when the announcement came to suspend play. He walked to his ball and marked it, certain that a 4-iron would be enough to clear the water when he came back.

But the wind picked up and

the shot became more difficult when he returned. He hit the 2-iron instead, and the gamble paid off when the ball ended up 5 feet from the pin.

“It was kind of a perfect number for a 2-iron, if there is such a thing, on 15 at Augusta, and hit a great shot,” Scott said. “These are the kind of momentum things that you have to sometimes make happen to put yourself in a good position.”

Scott’s position couldn’t be much better, tied with four other players at 7-under 137 after a second-round 68. Four others, including Tiger Woods and Dustin Johnson, are a shot back in the largest 36-hole logjam in Masters history.

Golf’s best worked their way to the top on Friday to set up a weekend pregnant with possibilities. Francesco Molinari, Jason Day, Brooks Koepka, Scott and Louis Oosthuizen created the first five-way tie for the lead going into the weekend at the Masters.

All of them are major cham-

pions. Three have been No. 1 in the world.

Looming just as large was Woods, who made it look even more crowded at the top by making Augusta National sound as loud as ever. Despite missing two birdie chances inside 8 feet on the back nine, he holed consecutive 30-foot birdie putts for a 4-under 68.

One of those big birdies followed a bizarre moment on the 14th hole.

Trapped in the trees, Woods hooked a low punch toward the green and was walking toward the fairway when a Georgia Bureau of Investigation agent trying to contain the gallery slipped on the rain-slickened grass and slid into the lower right leg of Woods.

He managed to keep his balance, winced, hobbled and flexed his ankle repeatedly when he made it to the fairway. Then he turned trouble into a birdie and was walking just fine the rest of the way.

“I’m fine. It’s all good,”

Woods said. “Accidents happen and move on.”

What’s happening is a weekend at Augusta National loaded with top players, and not just those tied at 7-under 136. Johnson, poised to return to No. 1 in the world after Justin Rose missed the cut, has looked effortless over two days and was one shot behind.

Nine players were separated by one shot, a group that includes seven major winners and five former No. 1-ranked golfers. Phil Mickelson, at 48 trying to become the oldest major champion, was three shots back. Justin Thomas and Rickie Fowler were four shots behind.

“This is really stacked,” Scott said. “I think it’s going to be an incredible weekend no matter what happens now.”

Woods has gone 14 years since he last won the green jacket, 11 years since his last major and had five surgeries — four on his back, the other to rebuild his left knee.

Sports briefs

NBA commissioner ponders altering 82-game season

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The future of NBA basketball could look like European soccer.

Tournaments that take place during the season along with league games intrigue Commissioner Adam Silver as a way to change the format of the NBA’s 82-game season.

If it even keeps an 82-game season.

Silver mentioned everything from shorter games to a shorter season Friday as ways the NBA could make its future product better for players and fans.

“The format we have in place now — I’m a traditionalist on one hand, but on the other hand it’s 50 years old or so, presenting an 82-game season, and there’s nothing magical about it,” Silver said.

“I think it’s on the league office to always be challenging the way we do things, to be paying attention to changing viewer habits, a changing marketplace, a new world of the way media is presented, often on smaller devices, less on screens, people having shorter attention spans, and saying, ‘This is an incredible game, it’s never been more exciting, the athleticism has never been greater, fantastic players coming from all around the world, but what’s the best way to put the season together?’”

Silver has focused on player health as commissioner, opening the regular season earlier to reduce the frequency of back-to-back games, and lengthening the All-Star break.

But players are still sitting out games throughout the sea-

son — either by their choice or because their teams are requiring it — often for reasons being listed as load management.

“I think a fair point from fans could be if ultimately the science suggests that 82 games is too many games for these players, maybe you shouldn’t have an 82-game season,” Silver said. “I accept that, and that’s something we’ll continue to look at.”

Fewer games could mean less revenue, unless they could be replaced by something that would generate as many or more viewers. Tournaments could be an answer, even if 82 games remains the format.

Silver has pointed to European soccer as something that could bring new interest to the NBA by offering teams more opportunities to win some-

thing, instead of just having one champion.

In other NBA news:

■ The Pelicans have reached an agreement in principle to make former Cleveland Cavaliers general manager David Griffin New Orleans’ new executive vice president of basketball operations, three people familiar with the situation said Friday.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because contract negotiations are ongoing and no announcement has been made.

Griffin will take over for former Pelicans general manager Dell Demps, who was fired in the middle of his ninth season with the club — a few weeks after All-Star Anthony Davis’ trade request in late January.

Two slams power Astros over Mariners

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Jose Altuve is as baffled as everyone else about his recent power surge.

Altuve and Yuli Gurriel hit grand slams as the Houston Astros beat the Seattle Mariners 10-6 Friday night for their major league-leading seventh straight victory.

Altuve doesn't know what's different, and he's even been self-scouting, studying video of his suddenly mammoth swing. He sees no difference between this week and last.

"You want to know what you're doing good because when you start not hitting the ball very good you want to come right back to that," Altuve said. "But I feel like I'm doing the same thing. I would say I'm getting good pitches to hit."

And lots of them.

Altuve's grand slam in the sixth inning extended a career-best streak of consecutive games with a home run to four.

He had four homers in the Astros' previous three-game series sweep of the Yankees and now has six on the season.

"He's a special player and I think he's got a chance to win MVP again," Gurriel said.

Gurriel, filling in for the injured Alex Bergman, hit his slam in the eighth inning to secure the game against the pesky Mariners, who lost the game but continued their major league record of 16 straight games with a home run to start the season when Tom Murphy hit a solo home run in the ninth.

George Springer also homered for the Astros, a two-run shot that cut Seattle's early 3-0 lead to 3-2.

"We have so many good players, starting with Springer," Altuve said. "He hit the two-run homer to get some momentum. Then we kept swinging, kept getting on base, and it seems like even with two outs the in-

ning is not over for us and we keep scoring runs."

The combination of starter Wade Miley, a former Mariners pitcher, and Brad Peacock (2-0) helped Houston hold down Seattle's muscular lineup, which came into the series with its AL West rival with 36 home runs and 117 runs scored.

The Mariners, who entered the game with a six-game winning streak, appeared to be up to the tricks that helped them to the major league's best record three weeks into the season, jumping on Miley early. They forced him to throw 41 pitches in the first inning, taking a 1-0 lead on Tim Beckham's RBI single. Domingo Santana's two-RBI single extended the lead to 3-0 in the second.

From there, though, Miley tightened things up through the fourth inning, when he was pulled for Peacock. The right-hander began the season as a starter, taking two turns

through the rotation before being moved to the bullpen during a stretch in which manager AJ Hinch plans to use four starters due to a fortuitous run of days off.

Miley and Peacock combined to pitch 7¹/₃ innings, giving up seven hits with nine strikeouts and two walks. They held the Mariners hitless for four innings, a stretch of 14 batters with just one baserunner, who reached on a walk. Roberto Osuna earned the save.

Seattle starter Wade LeBlanc threw two bad pitches, giving up a double to Josh Reddick, then a two-run homer to George Springer in the third inning, cutting the lead to 3-2. He steadied himself but injured his right oblique while throwing a pitch in the fifth inning and was replaced with two runners on base.

Mariners reliever Shawn Armstrong (0-1) got out of the jam in the fifth.

MLB roundup

Red Sox down Orioles for first win streak of season

Associated Press

BOSTON — Gold Glove center fielder Jackie Bradley Jr. made two key catches and the Boston Red Sox beat the Baltimore Orioles 6-4 Friday night, giving the World Series champions their first two-game winning streak of the season.

Baltimore's Chris Davis lined out as a pinch-hitter to end the game, extending his record hitless streak for a position player to 0-for-54.

Andrew Benintendi homered and Xander Bogaerts had three hits, helping Eduardo Rodriguez (1-2) and the Red Sox improve to 5-9.

Bradley made a diving grab in the fourth, then ended a threat in the eighth by robbing Joey Rickard of extra bases and Baltimore of a run. Bradley planted his right foot in the padding of the Green Monster

and pushed himself just high enough off the wall to grab the ball.

The catch helped preserve a 4-2 lead and Boston tacked on two more runs in the bottom of the eighth, one on a sacrifice fly by Bradley.

Athletics 8, Rangers 6: Kris Davis hit his major league-best 10th homer, his fifth in three games being a tie-breaking solo shot in the eighth inning, as visiting Oakland rallied from a five-run deficit to beat Texas.

Giants 3, Rockies 2 (18): Brandon Belt doubled to lead off the 18th inning and scored on Erik Kratz's one-out, fielder's choice grounder, as host San Francisco outlasted Colorado.

Brewers 8, Dodgers 5: Yasmani Grandal had three hits, including a two-run homer, and drove in three runs in his

first game back at Chavez Ravine, leading Milwaukee past host Los Angeles in a rematch of last year's NL Championship Series.

White Sox 9, Yankees 6 (7): Eloy Jimenez hit his first two major league homers, including a tiebreaking shot in the fifth inning, and visiting Chicago ended a five-game skid by beating banged-up New York in a rain-shortened game.

Rays 11, Blue Jays 7: Austin Meadows and Brandon Lowe each hit two home runs, becoming the first teammates to hit upper deck homers at Toronto in the same game in the win for Tampa Bay.

Royals 8, Indians 1: Alex Gordon homered, doubled twice and singled as Kansas City stopped a 10-game losing streak, racing to a big lead and beating visiting Cleveland.

Phillies 9, Marlins 1: Jake Arrieta allowed one run in seven innings to earn his 100th career victory and Philadelphia sent host Miami to its fifth consecutive loss.

Mets 6, Braves 2: Brandon Nimmo hit a two-run homer, Jeff McNeil added a two-run double and visiting New York kept hitting even without Pete Alonso, the team's hottest hitter, who got most of the night off.

Pirates 6, Nationals 3 (10): Colin Moran had a pinch-hit, three-run homer in the 10th inning and Pittsburgh scored five runs off host Washington's struggling bullpen.

Padres 2, Diamondbacks 1: At Phoenix, Manny Machado homered and Chris Paddack limited Arizona to three hits over 5¹/₃ innings to lead first-place San Diego.