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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Navy relaxes sailors' off-duty attire policy

BY JOSHUA KARSTEN

Stars and Stripes

The Navy will allow sailors to dress and “live socially in their preferred gender while off-duty,” a policy announcement that comes amid new Pentagon restrictions on transgender people joining the military.

The statement, signed by Vice Adm. Robert Burke, clarifies that there is no policy prohibiting servicemembers from expressing themselves while off-duty in their preferred gender.

“Appropriate civilian attire, as outlined in the uniform regulations, will not be determined based on gender,” according to the policy, which Burke signed in March.

The guidance does restrict off-duty attire in some overseas posts “to meet local conditions and host-nation agreements with foreign countries,” which would rest on the discretion of regional commanders.

The clarification follows a Supreme Court decision clearing the Pentagon to en-

force its restrictions on those who identify as transgender from signing up for service while the new rules are being challenged in court.

The policy, which went into effect Friday, stipulates that any current servicemembers diagnosed with gender dysphoria may continue to serve as their preferred gender. However, transgender people wishing to enlist now must adhere to standards associated with their biological sex.

Diagnosed gender dysphoria recruits can enlist “provided they can demonstrate 36 consecutive months of stability in their biological sex,” the Pentagon policy states. They must also be cleared by a mental health care provider to ensure that a transition “is not necessary to protect their mental health.”

The Pentagon argues that the policy, which is backed by the White House, is not a ban. But many LGBTQ organizations have filed lawsuits likening it to the Clinton-era “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, which

closeted gays and lesbians serving in the military.

Transgender advocates have decried the Pentagon rules but voiced support for the Navy’s latest policy statement.

“The Navy is taking care of its transgender servicemembers by giving them the option to dress and express themselves as they choose,” Bree Fram, director at the LGBTQ military advocacy group SPART*A, told NBC News on Sunday.

NBCNews reported that no other military branches have announced similar off-duty clothing policies for transgender troops, citing the Palm Center, a nonpartisan public policy think tank, and OutServe-SLDN, an LGBTQ military advocacy group.

In addition to off-duty attire policies, the Navy policy emphasized zero tolerance for harassment or hazing, stating that all servicemembers “are expected to continue to treat each other with dignity and respect.”

Sailor in apparent murder-suicide on Okinawa identified

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The 3rd Marine Division sailor apparently responsible for killing a woman and then himself on Okinawa over the weekend had a pattern of domestic violence known to local and military police.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Gabriel A. Olivero, 32, a Navy corpsman from North Carolina, fatally stabbed a Japanese woman, 44, with whom he was allegedly in a relationship, Saturday morning inside a six-story apartment building in the Kuwae district of Chatan, according to an Okinawa prefectural police spokesman. Olivero then apparently turned the knife on himself.

Olivero had a history of do-

mestic violence allegations, and the woman — whose name has not been released — had reported him to U.S. military police in January for sexually assaulting her during a breakup, the spokesman said.

The woman told Okinawa police in February that she did not wish to press charges as the incident was being handled by base officials.

In a letter dated Sunday, Lt. Gen. Eric Smith, commander of the III Marine Expeditionary Force, made an appeal to servicemembers on Okinawa to keep a low profile to show respect. Smith said in the letter, made available to The Associated Press on Monday by a U.S. military official, that what had happened will provoke “strong feelings” and asked all to show respect to a community in mourning.

The bloodied bodies of Olivero and the woman were found in bed, along with a knife, after police were called at 7:26 a.m. Saturday, the spokesman said. The woman’s child was present when the incident occurred and called a relative, who then reported it to police.

The woman suffered multiple stab wounds to her neck and had defensive injuries on her hands, the police spokesman said.

Olivero’s injuries are not known; an autopsy was scheduled for Monday.

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is supporting the Okinawa police investigation, said III MEF spokesman 1st Lt. David Mancilla.

Okinawa Police received a call from U.S. military police about a domestic dispute between Olivero and the woman back in January, the police

spokesman said. The woman said Olivero sexually assaulted her during a breakup.

The woman went to the station in February and was told to press charges against Olivero, but she declined, saying the issue was being handled by base officials, the spokesman said. Police contacted her again in March to see how she was doing. She told the officer she was fine and there had been no trouble.

Olivero had been at the woman’s house since Friday, the Okinawa Times newspaper reported.

The woman was described as “very sincere and charming” by her co-workers as “very sincere and charming,” the report said. She came to work on Friday morning as usual and told everyone “See you tomorrow” when she left the office.

S. Korea's Moon ready to hold 4th summit with North Korea

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Monday that he is ready to hold a fourth summit with Kim Jong Un, reflecting a growing sense of urgency in efforts to revive stalled nuclear talks between North Korea and the United States.

The comments came after Kim, the North Korean leader, issued a strong warning that the deadlock risked reviving tensions and gave the U.S. an end-of-year deadline to offer a mutually acceptable approach to the negotiations.

Moon is eager to keep the delicate peace process alive nearly a year after the first inter-Korean summit was held with fanfare in the heavily fortified border area of the divided

peninsula.

He also met with President Donald Trump last week as the sides struggle to get diplomacy back on track after the second nuclear summit between Trump and Kim collapsed without agreement in late February.

"Now is the time to begin the preparations in earnest for an inter-Korean summit," Moon said in a meeting with senior aides in Seoul. "As soon as [North Korea] becomes ready, I hope the two Koreas will be able to sit down together, regardless of venue and form," he said.

He called for "detailed and substantive talks" and promised to spare no effort to make sure the next inter-Korean summit "becomes a stepping-stone for an even bigger op-

portunity and more significant outcome."

Moon has met with Kim three times since April 27, 2018, at one point rushing to the truce village of Panmunjom to persuade the North Korean leader to change his mind about canceling his first summit with Trump, which was held on June 12 in Singapore.

The two Koreas announced ambitious plans to improve relations after their previous summits in Panmunjom and Pyongyang, including issuing a largely symbolic end-of-war declaration by the end of last year. That didn't happen, but the two sides did begin mine-clearing operations in the Demilitarized Zone and a railway survey in the North.

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.

USCG cutter visits port in Hong Kong

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter Bertholf stopped Sunday in Hong Kong Harbor for a port visit just weeks after irking China with a passage through the Taiwan Strait.

The Coast Guard last sent a cutter to Hong Kong, a territory of China, 17 years ago, according to a Monday statement from the service. The Alameda, Calif.-based Bertholf's crew "will have opportunities to explore Hong Kong and interact with local citizens through community relations projects and tours," it said.

Hong Kong is 335 nautical miles southwest of the Taiwan Strait, which the Bertholf sailed through with the Navy destroyer USS Curtis Wilbur on March 24-25. That passage marked the fifth time in six months that U.S. ships transited the strait.

Beijing protested the Bertholf and Curtis Wilbur's passage through the 110-mile-wide strait, which separates mainland China from Taiwan. Beijing urged the United States to respect the "one-China" principal — China's view that it has sovereignty over Taiwan — Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Geng Shuang said at a press conference March 25.

The U.S. acknowledges Beijing's view that it has sovereignty over Taiwan but considers Taiwan's status unsettled.

Coast Guard Pacific Area commander Vice Adm. Linda Fagan said in the Monday statement that the U.S. has "a strong commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, governed by a rules-based international system that promotes peace, security, prosperity and sovereignty of all nations."

The Bertholf's commander, Capt. John Driscoll, said he looked forward to the cultural experience the port call would offer.

Balikatan exercise wraps up in Philippines

BY CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II
Stars and Stripes

The 35th Balikatan military exercise by the U.S. and Philippines armed forces, the first to incorporate advanced U.S. stealth fighters, concluded Friday.

The exercise was held this year on April 1-12 in locations around the country. It included 28 joint training events in counterterrorism and urban, amphibious and aviation operations, according to a statement released by exercise officials.

Balikatan, which translates to "shoulder to shoulder" from Tagalog, also featured humanitarian projects that servicemembers participated in, including renovation projects at elementary schools and rendering medical and veterinary aid to civilians and their animals.

"Since 1951, we've had that mutual defense treaty, and

every year when we were allowed to come here, to interact, to interoperate with our brothers and sisters in the Philippine armed forces, it makes us both better," Lt. Gen. Eric Smith, III Marine Expeditionary Force commander, said during the exercise's closing ceremony Friday.

"We look forward very much to coming back, every time and every opportunity that we are allowed to by our hosts, the Philippine government," he said.

During this year's Balikatan exercise, the two countries focused on improving their military relations and capabilities and reinforcing maritime security and territorial defense capabilities in addition to their ability to respond to humanitarian disasters.

Marine Gunnery Sgt. Frank Montejano traveled from Camp Pendleton, Calif., to participate

in the exercise and demonstrated for Philippine marines and sailors how to move armored vehicles on and off other vessels.

Training with allies every year in different environments than he and his fellow Marines are accustomed to is an important aspect of the exercise, he said.

"In a real-world environment, we work with other countries when we have to take the fight to the enemy," Montejano said. "So the more we do it, the easier it becomes for us too."

Members of the Australian Defence Force also participated in parts of the exercise, including humanitarian aid and special forces training.

This year's Balikatan exercise was the first to include the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp, along with the Marine Corps' F-35B Lightning II aircraft.

USS Ross in Black Sea; allies boost patrols

By SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

The destroyer USS Ross entered the Black Sea on Sunday night, the fourth time this year the Navy has sent a warship to the region.

In the past year, U.S. and NATO officials have said they will boost their naval presence in the Black Sea in response to Russia becoming more assertive there, especially in the waters near the Crimean Peninsula, which was seized from Ukraine in 2014.

NATO ships spent 120 days in the Black Sea last year, up from 80 in 2017. The four U.S. warships that operated in the sea this year have already matched last year's total, not counting large allied exercises like Sea Breeze.

"Our allies in the Black Sea

continue to play a key role in maintaining security in the European theater," Cmdr. Dave Coles, the destroyer's commanding officer, said in a statement.

The USS Donald Cook, another Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, went to the Black Sea twice this year.

In January, the USS Fort McHenry, a dock landing vessel, was the first U.S. warship to enter the region since Russia seized three Ukrainian vessels last year in the Kerch Strait and imprisoned 24 sailors.

"That is just absolutely wrong, and it's not the kind of behavior you would expect from a major power," Adm. James Foggo, commander of Naval Forces Europe and Africa, said in a recent podcast. "Russia's actions to impede maritime transit in a

place like the Sea of Azov undermines and destabilizes the Ukraine as well as violates international norms of behavior."

Moscow is tracking the USS Ross' movements, which it considers a provocation, Russian officials said on state news outlets.

"We watch very carefully at how the alliance's plans to increase its presence in the region unfold, and we will react accordingly," Alexander Grushko, Russia's deputy foreign minister, told reporters Saturday. Ships and maritime patrol aircraft of Russia's Black Sea fleet routinely monitor U.S. and allied warships operating in the region.

Seizing Crimea has enabled Russia to strengthen its shore and sea capabilities in this area and reinforced its proprietary attitude toward the region, Mi-

chael Petersen, the Naval War College's Russia maritime expert, wrote in a January report on the national security website War on the Rocks.

Russia has set up an array of defense systems, such as S-400 surface-to-air missiles, Bastion-P mobile coastal defense missile systems and P-800 Oniks anti-ship missiles, as well as radar that can detect ships almost 300 miles away, Petersen said.

Russia's Black Sea Fleet suffered through 20 years of decline after the Cold War but in the past decade has transformed itself into a formidable force that enabled it to intervene effectively in Syria in 2015, Petersen said.

"Three years later, Russia still possesses the Black Sea region's dominant maritime military," Petersen said.

Airman's conviction in death of bicyclist upheld

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The Air Force criminal appeals court has upheld the negligent homicide conviction of a Ramstein senior airman found responsible for the cycling death of a fellow airman three years ago.

In a ruling issued earlier this month, the court's appellate judges said Senior Airman Benjamin Hann was negligent while driving his car on March 26, 2016, near the gate of Wei-

lerbach Ammunition Depot regardless of which traffic lane he was in, which was a point of dispute at trial.

Hann, while trying to pass an SUV while speeding on a blind curve on the K-25 road, struck and killed Staff Sgt. Grant Davis. Davis was riding his bicycle in the opposite direction toward Ramstein Air Base.

Davis, 31, died at the scene from traumatic injuries. At the time of his death, he was assigned to the 76th Airlift Squadron as a communication system

operator, serving on board C-40, C-37 and C-20 aircraft.

A panel of seven Air Force officers found Hann guilty of negligent homicide at a Ramstein court-martial on May 4, 2017. He was sentenced to four years in jail, received a bad conduct discharge, was reduced in pay grade to E-1 and had to forfeit all pay and allowances. Hann also pleaded guilty to dereliction of duty, making a false official statement and obstruction of justice.

Hann, in his appeal, did not

contest that he caused Davis' death but challenged the extent of his culpability.

He argued in part that the "vastly different" conclusions reached by the government and defense experts regarding whether he was in his designated lane at the point of impact rendered the evidence insufficient to prove simple negligence on his part, according to the appeals' court document.

During Hann's court-martial, defense attorneys called the crash an "unintentional collision."

New Zealand hopes for information on nurse held in Syria

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — New Zealand's foreign minister confirmed Monday that a New Zealand nurse has been held captive by Islamic State in Syria for almost six years, information long kept secret for fear her life might be at risk.

The status of nurse and midwife Louisa Akavi, now 62, is unknown, but her employer, the International Committee of the Red Cross, says it has received recent eyewitness reports suggesting she might be alive.

The New York Times on Sunday became the first media organization to name Akavi,

ending a more than 5½-year news blackout imposed by New Zealand's government and the Red Cross with the cooperation of international media.

The collapse of ISIS has raised hopes that Akavi and the two Syrian drivers kidnapped with her might now be discovered.

In a statement, the ICRC said that as recently as December, Akavi may have been seen by at least two people at a clinic in Sousa, one of ISIS' last outposts.

"We continue to work together (with the Red Cross) to locate and recover her," New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters said.

DOJ plans to release redacted Mueller Russia report Thursday

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department plans to release its redacted version of the final report from special counsel Robert S. Mueller III on Thursday, providing Congress and the public with an expanded narrative of a historic investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and other crimes.

Mueller filed the nearly 400-page confidential report on March 22 after nearly two years of work, and Attorney General William Barr and his aides have been working with the special counsel's office to strip out classified or other protected information.

House Democrats have pledged to fight for access to an unredacted version and have vowed to subpoena the Justice Department if necessary.

Details from the report could prove damaging to President Donald Trump even though Barr wrote in a four-page let-

ter to Congress on March 24 that Mueller did not establish the existence of a criminal conspiracy between the president's campaign and the Russian government.

Equally explosive is the question of whether Trump obstructed justice by trying to interfere with the probe.

Mueller did not reach a decision on the issue, Barr wrote. Instead, the special counsel outlined the evidence and wrote that "while this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him," according to Barr's letter.

Barr and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller in May 2017 and supervised his work, instead determined that the evidence "was not sufficient to determine that the president committed an obstruction-of-justice offense."

It's unclear how much will be redacted, but officials have said they are looking at four

categories of information in the report, which is officially titled "Report on the Investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election."

Justice Department officials plan to conceal grand jury testimony, classified intelligence, information about ongoing investigations and details that could damage the reputations of "peripheral third parties."

Barr testified to a Senate panel on Wednesday that he would not use that fourth category to hide unflattering information involving the president. "I'm talking about people in private life, not public officeholders," he said.

Barr's letter suggested the report could contain reams of previously unknown material. He wrote that Mueller's prosecutors issued more than 2,800 subpoenas, executed nearly 500 search warrants, obtained more than 230 orders for communication records and interviewed about 500 witnesses.

Storms spawn tornadoes; at least 8 killed

Associated Press

Strong storms, including at least one tornado, swept through parts of the Midwest and the mid-Atlantic region, damaging homes and businesses and causing injuries after storms in the South killed at least eight people.

Storms that hit Ohio on Sunday and moved into New Jersey overnight into Monday brought heavy rains, lightning, strong winds and, in Ohio, at least one tornado.

The storms followed worse conditions that had swept across the South, unleashing more than a dozen confirmed tornadoes and flooding, killing at least eight people, injuring dozens and flattening much of a Texas town.

In Shelby, Ohio, the National Weather Service said a tornado touched down Sunday. No deaths were reported, but Richland County emergency officials said about a half-dozen homes and businesses were damaged and that at least six people were injured in the city roughly 90 miles southwest of Cleveland.

The weather service says a possible tornado also swept through part of Clark County in western Ohio on Sunday, about 40 miles west of Columbus, and damaged some mobile homes. There were no immediate reports of injuries there.

Storms on Monday spawned a tornado watch and flooded roadways in some areas of New Jersey, causing a roof to collapse at an apartment complex in Camden, though no injuries were reported.

The weather disrupted rail service in the mid-Atlantic region, caused delays at airports and left tens of thousands of utility customers without power.

More than 20,000 customers lost power in New Jersey when the storms hit, though crews were able to quickly restore service to most.

Trump building record war chest

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's reelection campaign is set to report that it raised more than \$30 million in the first quarter of 2019, edging out his top two Democratic rivals combined, according to figures it provided to The Associated Press.

The haul brings the campaign's cash on hand to \$40.8 million, an unprecedented war chest for an incumbent president this early in a campaign.

The Trump campaign said nearly 99% of its donations were of \$200 or less, with an average donation of \$34.26.

Trump's fundraising ability was matched by the Republican National Committee, which

brought in \$45.8 million in the first quarter — its best nonelection year total. Combined, the pro-Trump effort is reporting \$82 million in the bank, with \$40.8 million belonging to the campaign alone.

Trump formally launched his reelection effort just hours after taking office in 2017, earlier than any incumbent has in prior years. By contrast, former President Barack Obama launched his 2012 effort in April 2011 and had under \$2 million on hand at this point in the campaign.

Obama went on to raise more than \$720 million for his reelection. Trump's reelection effort has set a \$1 billion target for 2020.

Trump campaign manager

Brad Parscale said in a statement that Trump "is in a vastly stronger position at this point than any previous incumbent president running for re-election, and only continues to build momentum."

Trump's fundraising with the RNC is divided between two entities: Trump Victory, the joint account used for high-dollar gifts, and the Trump Make America Great Again Committee, the low-dollar digital fundraising operation known internally as "T-Magic."

The campaign is set to launch a traditional "bundling" program — which it lacked in 2016 — in the coming weeks. Bundlers are mid-tier donors who bring in contributions from their associates.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman with 64 dead cats is sentenced

MN FARMINGTON — A Minnesota woman who was found to have 64 dead cats, 43 live cats, a 400-pound pig and other animals on her property has been sentenced.

Caycee Bregel, 25, who ran an animal rescue nonprofit out of her home south of the Twin Cities, pleaded guilty Friday to 13 counts of animal cruelty.

Bregel was ordered to serve 200 hours of community service, two years of probation and 90 days of electronic home monitoring. She must also receive a psychological examination.

Interstate's reopening delayed by a month

NC WAYNESVILLE — State officials say all four lanes of Interstate 40 near North Carolina's border with Tennessee should reopen in May, more than two months after a rockslide closed the highway.

Officials with North Carolina's Transportation Department said in a news release Friday that crews have done extra work in the hope of preventing future slides and road closures in the area.

One lane has been opened in each direction since work began after the rockslide on Feb. 22.

State officials say they hope to reopen all four lanes about May 3. Officials had said immediately after the slide that they hoped to reopen the highway by early April.

Police: Woman drove to their station drunk

MA PROVINCETOWN — A woman was arrested on Cape Cod for driv-

ing drunk while attempting to pick up a friend at the police station.

The Cape Cod Times reported that Kelly Lamay, 43, of Eastham, pleaded not guilty to operating under the influence and negligent operation of a motor vehicle Friday in Orleans District Court.

Police said Lamay showed up drunk to the Provincetown police station early Friday morning as she picked up a friend who had been arrested for public intoxication.

Officers said Lamay registered twice the legal limit for blood alcohol percentage on two breath tests and failed four field sobriety tests.

Man wanders naked into stranger's home

CT NEWTOWN — Police in Connecticut said a man crashed his SUV into a stranger's yard and then wandered in the house naked.

Newtown police said Joseph Achenbach, 35, of Watertown, crashed his Ford Escape into the rear yard of a house while the homeowners were shopping Saturday morning.

The homeowners returned to find Achenbach wandering around naked. Police said he entered through an unlocked sliding-glass door and was apparently naked when he crashed his vehicle as his clothes could not be located.

Authorities: Flightless bird killed its owner

FL ALACHUA — A large, flightless bird native to Australia and New Guinea killed its Florida owner when it attacked him after he fell, authorities said Saturday.

The Alachua County Fire Rescue Department told the Gainesville Sun that a casso-

wary killed the man Friday on his property near Gainesville, likely using its long claws. The victim, whose name was not released, was apparently breeding the birds, state wildlife officials said.

"My understanding is that the gentleman was in the vicinity of the bird and at some point fell," Deputy Chief Jeff Taylor said. "When he fell, he was attacked."

210K gallons of liquid fertilizer are spilled

NE HEMINGFORD — A failure of storage tanks belonging to Farmer's Cooperative in Hemingford spilled 210,000 gallons of liquid fertilizer in northwestern Nebraska.

The Scottsbluff Star-Herald reported that the spill happened Wednesday morning. Co-op General Manager Bart Moseman said Friday that it immediately notified the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and that the spill is under investigation. The agency is also assessing the impact of the spill.

Hemingford fire Chief Shad Bryner said nine tanks failed — two of them containing roughly 40,000 gallons of water and the others holding the liquid fertilizer ammonium polyphosphate.

Stronger beer likely won't increase buzz

KS KANSAS CITY — Kansas finally abandoned a Prohibition-era rule that allowed certain stores to sell only beer with up to 3.2% alcohol content, but the stronger beer that's now allowed doesn't contain much more alcohol.

Kansas this month began allowing groceries and convenience stores to stock beer with

up to 6% alcohol by volume.

The Kansas City Star reported that beer drinkers are unlikely to notice a big difference because the outdated law measured alcohol by weight, but alcohol is now measured by volume.

The stronger beers now allowed could contain just a few drops of alcohol more than the 3.2% varieties.

Part of stolen giant hammer is returned

CA SANTA ROSA — Northern California authorities said part of a giant hammer stolen last October has been returned.

The Press Democrat in Santa Rosa reported that a local attorney told Healdsburg police Thursday that someone had left the hammerhead portion on Sonoma County property owned by a client.

Santa Rosa attorney Izaak Schwaiger said his client wished to remain anonymous but asked him to "mediate the artwork's return."

The hammerhead weighs more than 200 pounds and is 6 feet tall. It disappeared in October.

Blind veteran, 94, goes downhill skiing

SD SIOUX FALLS — A World War II veteran who's legally blind is not one to back away from a challenge.

Navy veteran Warren Heyer, of Sioux Falls, recently went downhill skiing at a special winter sports clinic in Colorado.

The Argus Leader reported that Heyer was among about 400 veterans with disabilities who participated in the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic on April 2.

From wire reports

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Tiger's race to 18 back on

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — No comeback by Tiger Woods was ever going to be complete without a major.

Now the question becomes how many more he can win.

Much appeal of that red shirt beneath a green jacket involved looking back at all Woods had to overcome to reach a moment — Masters champion once again — that many thought would never come.

The fourth surgery to rebuild his left knee. The private affairs that became public, shattering his image. The balky back that required four more surgeries, the last one out of desperation because he could barely walk, much less play golf. And a new generation of stars he inspired who were younger, stronger and capable.

That's why Woods celebrated his 15th major like never before — fist pumps without a club in his hand, because he couldn't help himself walking off the 18th green.

"Overwhelming," he said with a voice still hoarse from all that screaming.

He went 28 majors over 11 years without winning, and no sooner did he stretch his arms into that familiar green jacket — "Ah, it fits," he said in Butler Cabin — was he asked about the 18 majors Jack Nicklaus won to set the gold standard in golf.

"I don't know if he's worried or not," Woods said. "I'm sure he's home just chilling and watching."

Whether the record is in play, Nicklaus can expect plenty of questions. For years, he could rarely get through any conversation without someone asking him whether he thought Woods could top his mark.

"I thought for a long time that he was going to win again," Nicklaus said Sunday night on Golf Channel. "The next two majors are at Bethpage, where he has won, and at Pebble Beach, where he has won. So, he has got me shaking in my boots, guys."

The last part was delivered in jest.

The first part was factual.

Woods winning his fifth Masters was not entirely out of the blue. He capped the year of his great comeback last year by winning the Tour Championship in typical Tiger fashion, by building a lead on a tough, fast course at East Lake and not giving anyone much of a chance to catch him. He also briefly led Sunday in the British Open, and was one shot behind on the back nine at the PGA Championship.

"The win at East Lake was a big confidence booster for me because I had come close last year a couple times," Woods said. "Still have to get it across the finish line, and I didn't quite do it."

So, imagine the effect of winning the Mas-

ters, especially the way this one played out. Six players had at least a share of the lead at one point on the back nine — four of them major champions — and there was a five-way tie for the lead when the final group was in the 15th fairway.

It was anyone's game until Francesco Molinari, who earlier hit 8-iron in Rae's Creek on the 12th hole for double bogey, hit a wedge off a tree limb and into the water on the par-5 15th that led to double bogey.

And then it became Woods' game — a two-putt birdie to take the lead, an 8-iron that rolled down the slope next to the hole for a signature moment at this Masters.

"Well, I can win majors now," Woods said with a laugh.

The PGA Championship is a month away at Bethpage Black, where Woods was dominant as ever in going wire-to-wire in the 2002 U.S. Open, and was right there with a chance in the 2009 U.S. Open except for a putter that refused to cooperate.

And then it's the U.S. Open in June at Pebble Beach. If the Masters is the most memorable of his 15 majors, Pebble Beach remains his greatest performance. Woods won there in 2000 by a record 15 shots, even with a triple bogey in the third round. Ten years later, he tied for fourth at the U.S. Open at Pebble, three shots behind.

The courses are familiar. Woods is familiar with winning majors.

But it's not that simple.

Woods was 24 when he won the U.S. Open at Pebble, and 26 when we won at Bethpage Black. Now he's 43.

As dynamic as this Masters was for Woods, it was hard work and he needed help — from Molinari on the 12th and 15th holes, from a couple of good bounces out of the trees. That's not unusual. Every major champion needs a break or two.

Getting to 18 is only easier because Woods is one major closer, a conversation caddie Joe LaCava said they have shared.

"We're on 14 and I said, 'Let's get to 15.' You can't be on 14 and thinking about 18," LaCava said. "But now we can start talking about 16. So we're getting closer."

Nicklaus can only watch and admire, which he has done all along. And part of him is cheering.

"I don't ever pull against anybody," Nicklaus said. "Nobody wants their record to be broken. But I certainly wouldn't want Tiger to be hurt and not to be able to do it. Of course, he is now pretty healthy and playing well. I wish him well, I always wish the guys well and I want them to play their best."

That's what Nicklaus saw at Augusta National.

And that's probably what everyone will expect from Woods the rest of the year.

Cherono wins with sprint

Associated Press

BOSTON — The two-time Boston Marathon champion turned onto Boylston Street with a sliver of a lead, leaning in front of two others with the finish line in sight.

But one of them was Lawrence Cherono, the fastest man in the field. And he used every bit of his speed.

Cherono outkicked Lelisa Desisa in a sprint to the tape, passing him just steps away from the finish line to win the 123rd Boston Marathon in 2 hours, 7 minutes 57 seconds on Monday, claiming his first major victory.

Desisa, the Ethiopian who won the 2013 race that was marred by the finish line bombing and claimed a second victory in '15, eased up after realizing he was beaten and finished 2 seconds back. Kenneth Kipkemai was third, another 8 seconds behind, one of seven Kenyans in the top 10.

Worknesh Degefa broke away from defending champion Des Linden and the rest of the women's pack in the Framingham flats and ran alone for the last 20 miles to her first victory in a major marathon. The 28-year-old finished in 2:23:31 to become the eighth Ethiopian woman to win the race and the third in seven years.

Kenya's Edna Kiplagat was second, reducing a gap of more than two minutes to 42 seconds at the finish. American Jordan Hasay was third and Linden was fifth.

One year after an icy rain and near-gale headwind resulted in the slowest times in four decades, race organizers again prepared for the foul New England weather. But overnight thunderstorms moved on before the runners left Hopkinton; the sun even made an appearance about halfway through.

Linden took advantage of last year's storm to splash her way to the first win for an American woman since 1985.

But with conditions back to normal, so were the results: East Africans from Kenya and Ethiopia dominating the podiums.

It's the first time the race has been run on April 15 since the 2013 attacks; officials planned a ceremony to honor those killed or maimed by the pressure cooker bombs that exploded near the finish line.

NBA roundup

Antetokounmpo, Bucks pound Pistons in opener

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Giannis Antetokounmpo ran and dunked all over the Pistons until they just shoved him to the ground.

The team with the NBA's best record wanted to show it can make a long playoff run, and the Detroit Pistons were helpless to slow them down.

"I don't know if they were ready for us," Antetokounmpo said. "But we just try to focus on ourselves. We just try to play with pace, run to our spots and try to make plays."

Antetokounmpo had 24 points and 17 rebounds in just 24 minutes, and the Milwaukee Bucks rolled to a 121-86 victory on Sunday night in the opener of their first-round playoff series.

Seven players scored in double figures for the Bucks, who led by as many as 43 points. Their 35-point margin was the third-largest in the franchise's playoff history.

The Pistons only really caught up to Antetokounmpo when center Andre Drummond shoved him to the ground with both hands late in the third quarter, after the MVP candidate grabbed an offensive rebound with Detroit trailing by 41 points.

Drummond was given a flagrant 2 foul and ejected. He blew a kiss to the Fiserv Forum crowd as he was escorted off the court.

"As a team we talked about it, to try to keep our composure whenever the opposing team tries to foul us hard or tries to hit us or play dirty," Antetokounmpo said. "Obviously, I'm not going to look to the referees for protection. I've just got to play smart and try to avoid the situations."

Eric Bledsoe had 15 points, and Brook Lopez and Khristian Middleton each added 14 for the Bucks. George Hill scored 16 points off the bench.

Rockets 122, Jazz 90: James Harden had 29 points and 10 assists to help Houston rout visiting Utah in the opener of a best-of-seven first-round playoff series.

The Rockets had a double-digit lead for most of the game, but the Jazz got within five points midway through the third quarter before Houston used a big run to pull away and sail to the victory.

Houston's starting lineup helped carry the scoring load on Sunday, with each starter scoring at least 10 points. Eric Gordon had 17, Clint Capela scored 16, Chris Paul added 14 and P.J. Tucker had 11.

Rudy Gobert had 22 points and 12 rebounds to lead the Jazz. Donovan Mitchell had 19 points, but did not have an assist as the Jazz went long stretches without scoring.

Trail Blazers 104, Thunder 99: Damian Lillard scored 30 points and third-seeded Portland opened its playoff series against No. 6 Oklahoma City with a victory at home.

Enes Kanter added 20 points and a career playoff-high 18 rebounds for the Blazers, who were making their sixth straight postseason appearance.

Russell Westbrook had 24 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his ninth career postseason triple-double. Paul George added 26 points and 10 rebounds.

Celtics 84, Pacers 74: Kyrie Irving and Marcus Morris each scored 20 points, and Boston rallied in the second half to beat visiting Indiana in Game 1 of their first-round playoff series.

Jayson Tatum finished with 15 points. Al Horford added 10 points and 11 rebounds, and Gordon Hayward had 10 points.

It was the first playoff game since 2017 for Irving and Hayward after each missed last year's postseason with injuries.

NHL roundup

Blue Jackets on brink of sweeping Lightning

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Sergei Bobrovsky has the Columbus Blue Jackets on the brink of sweeping a playoff series that hardly anyone thought they could win.

The Russian goalie shut the door when the Tampa Bay Lightning made a desperate late surge on Sunday night, preserving a 3-1 win and giving Columbus a 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference quarterfinal against the NHL's best team.

The Blue Jackets will try to finish the sweep — and win a playoff series for the first time in franchise history — in Game 4 at home on Tuesday night.

Matt Duchene, Oliver Bjorkstrand and Cam Atkinson scored, and Bobrovsky had 30 saves, 16 of them in the final period.

"You don't get to this time of year without a really good goalie to get in, and you don't win playoff games without your goalie, so I thought he stood really big in those 10, 12 minutes there where they turned it up," Columbus coach John Tortorella said. "Bob doesn't say anything. He just goes about his business. The way he prepares is second to none. We're going to need him, because there's going to be another push in Game 4."

Without their top scorer, the suspended Nikita Kucherov, and injured defenseman Victor Hedman, the Lightning, who finished with a league-best 62 wins, couldn't find any momentum until late, and then Bobrovsky rose to the challenge.

Columbus has commanded the series since falling behind 3-0 in the opening period of Game 1, only to rally to win that one 4-3. The Blue Jackets pummeled the Lightning 5-1 in Game 2, and solidly outplayed them for most of the game Sunday.

Teams have come back from a 3-0 deficit to win a playoff series just four times. The last

time was in 2014, when the Los Angeles Kings dug out of the hole in the first round against San Jose and eventually won the Stanley Cup.

Islanders 4, Penguins 1: Jordan Eberle scored for the third straight game, Robin Lehner stopped 25 shots and visiting New York stunned Pittsburgh to take a 3-0 lead in its best-of-seven, first-round playoff series.

Brock Nelson added his second goal of the playoffs, Leo Komarov scored the first post-season goal of his career and Anders Lee also scored for the Islanders, who have pushed the star-laden Penguins to the brink of elimination.

Garrett Wilson scored Pittsburgh's lone goal, a first-period deflection past Lehner that gave the Penguins just their second lead of the series.

Matt Murray finished with 32 saves for the Penguins, who need a win in Game 4 on Tuesday to avoid being swept for the first time since the 2013 Eastern Conference finals against Boston.

Golden Knights 6, Sharks 3: Mark Stone had three goals and two assists, Paul Stastny collected two goals and three assists and host Vegas captured another high-scoring matchup with San Jose to take a 2-1 lead in the first-round playoff series.

The Golden Knights and Sharks scored 15 times while splitting the first two games in San Jose.

Jets 6, Blues 3: Kyle Connor scored twice, Patrik Laine had a goal and an assist, and visiting Winnipeg beat St. Louis to climb back into its playoff series.

The Jets dropped the first two games by one goal, but got back on track in St. Louis. Kevin Hayes, Brandon Tanev and Dustin Byfuglien also scored, and Connor Hellebuyck made 25 saves.

Rockies' German Marquez tosses 1-hitter

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — German Marquez almost did more than merely end Colorado's losing streak. He came close to putting himself in the record book.

Marquez pitched a one-hitter, nicked only by Evan Longoria's single with one out in the eighth inning, and the Rockies stopped an eight-game skid by beating the San Francisco Giants 4-0 Sunday.

"That was a gem today, it really was," Rockies manager Bud Black said. "I was really proud of German. From the first pitch on there was a great intent and he built momentum

as the game went on. He had life to the fastball and the breaking pitches were outstanding."

Marquez (2-1) struck out nine and walked none while throwing 105 pitches in the first complete game in the majors this season. It was the first-ever complete game for Marquez in 156 pro starts, including 69 in the big leagues, and the first complete game one-hitter in Rockies' history.

Ubaldo Jimenez pitched the only no-hitter for Colorado in 2010 at Atlanta.

"I looked up in the sixth and they still had no hits," Marquez said through a translator. "That's when I knew I had all my pitches working. I knew

today especially with the losing streak the team needed me. I was happy to go out there and provide that."

Marquez had allowed just one runner, hitting Kevin Pillar with a changeup to begin the sixth inning, and was in complete control heading into the eighth.

Brandon Crawford opened the eighth with a hard, one-hopper that deflected off third baseman Nolan Arenado's glove. Arenado quickly grabbed the ball out of the air and zipped a throw to retire Crawford.

Longoria followed with a grounder in the hole, just beyond Arenado's dive. The

Gold Glover took off his mitt and slammed it to the ground, shouting that the no-hit bid had been broken up.

"I was just frustrated, I wanted him to get it so bad," Arenado said. "This year's been tough and it was really cool to see him go out there and pitch like that. He did an unbelievable job."

The 24-year-old Marquez made his second start since signing a \$43 million, five-year contract.

"He's going to throw a lot of games like that, that's how good his stuff is," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "We just had our hands full today."

Roundup

Dodgers rout Brewers, snap six-game skid

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Ross Stripling pitched as though he had somewhere else to be.

The former All-Star threw 88 pitches in a career-high eight innings to rescue an overworked bullpen, inducing soft contact rather than dazzling with high velocity, and the Los Angeles Dodgers routed the Milwaukee Brewers 7-1 Sunday to snap a six-game skid.

Stripling joked about getting everyone home in time for dinner and the final season premiere of HBO's "Game of Thrones."

"It's what I ordered," manager Dave Roberts said. "Ross was really good. He mixed up his pitches really well, got ahead of hitters."

Stripling became the first Dodgers starter to throw eight innings this season when the bullpen has been stressed in the first full month.

"In an ideal world they'd all go eight," Roberts said. "Ross understood our situation and was efficient."

The Dodgers' rotation has been without Clayton Kershaw and Rich Hill since the season began. Hyun-Jin Ryu got hurt earlier in the week when the team lost four straight in St. Louis, putting more pressure on the bullpen. Kershaw was due back Monday and Hill appears to be close behind.

"I don't think any of us got more than five innings," Stripling said of the St. Louis series. "To get through eight, definitely

proud of that."

Joc Pederson and Alex Verdugo homered to help the Dodgers avoid back-to-back sweeps for the first time since 2017 when they last dropped seven games in a row.

Los Angeles leads the National League with 35 home runs and has homered in 15 of 17 games.

Red Sox 4, Orioles 0: David Price pitched seven stellar innings with seven strikeouts, Xander Bogaerts hit a three-run homer and drove in every run, and host Boston beat Baltimore.

Phillies 3, Marlins 1 (14): Jean Segura's two-run homer to left in the 14th inning put Philadelphia on top, and the Phillies beat host Miami in the longest game of the young season for either team.

White Sox 5, Yankees 2: Tim Anderson hit his first career grand slam and Carlos Rodon pitched Chicago over scuffling host New York.

Royals 9, Indians 8: Pinch-runner extraordinaire Terrance Gore stole a base and then scored on Hunter Dozier's single in the ninth inning, lifting host Kansas City over Cleveland to complete a three-game sweep of the AL Central favorites.

Braves 7, Mets 3: Julio Teheran out-pitched Jacob deGrom, Josh Donaldson and Nick Markakis homered, and host Atlanta beat New York.

Astros 3, Mariners 2: Gerrit Cole struck out 11 in six innings, Aledmys Diaz homered and Houston completed a three-game

sweep of host Seattle.

Cardinals 9, Reds 5: Marcell Ozuna hit two home runs and Matt Carpenter connected for a tiebreaking drive in the seventh inning that sent St. Louis over Cincinnati for a split of their two-game series in Monterrey, Mexico.

Rays 8, Blue Jays 4: Pinch-hitter Guillermo Heredia homered to cap a five-run burst in the eighth inning and Tampa Bay beat host Toronto for its fifth straight series victory to start the season.

Pirates 4, Nationals 3: Rookie Jason Martin hit a tiebreaking double in the top of the ninth inning against host Washington's shaky bullpen, then Felipe Vazquez escaped a bases-loaded jam Pittsburgh a win.

Twins 6, Tigers 4: Jose Berrios (2-1) pitched into the seventh inning for his first win since opening day, Trevor Hildenberger struck out two with the bases loaded for his first save and host Minnesota beat Detroit to complete a two-game sweep.

Rangers 8, Athletics 7: Danny Santana had a two-run, pinch-hit triple and scored the go-ahead run on Delino DeShields' bunt single during a four-run eighth inning, lifting host Texas.

Diamondbacks 8, Padres 4: Zack Greinke pitched seven strong innings and helped himself with two hits, pinch-hitter David Peralta connected for a three-run homer and host Arizona beat San Diego to stop a four-game losing streak.