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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Helo crash on ship off Okinawa injures 7

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Five U.S. and two Japanese servicemembers were injured Wednesday when the helicopter in which they were riding made a hard landing aboard a ship off the coast of Okinawa, according to U.S. Forces Japan officials.

The Army UH-60 Black Hawk was conducting a training mission when the incident occurred at 1:46 p.m. local time, a USFJ news release said.

The Black Hawk attempted to land on the USNS Red Cloud, which was underway about 20 miles east of the island, between the northern cities of Nago and

Uruma.

Japanese officials were informed of the crash at 2:59 p.m., when U.S. military officials called to request a search-and-rescue team.

There were 17 personnel on board the Black Hawk at the time of the crash, coast guard officials said. All were rescued by 4:12 p.m.

The injured were transported to the U.S. Naval Hospital at Camp Foster, according to the USFJ news release. The extent of the injuries is not known at this time.

Among the injured were two members of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force, Japanese officials said late

Wednesday.

Japanese national broadcaster NHK showed video of the helicopter sitting on the Military Sealift Command ship, with its tail broken off and covered with an orange tarp.

Helicopter operations on Okinawa have remained a contentious issue with the island's vocal protest movement, whose members are trying to persuade the national government to scrap plans to move operations from Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in central Okinawa to a more northern part of the island.

Wednesday's incident coincided with Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga's

visit to the island for talks with Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga, a vocal opponent of the relocation plan, according to The Associated Press.

"For those who live near [U.S.] bases, it's a serious matter," Onaga said at the outset of the talks, reminding Suga of Okinawa's burden and risk of accommodating the U.S. military bases.

It's the second military aircraft to go down this week. On Tuesday, a pilot safely ejected before his F-16 fighter jet crashed in southern Germany.

Both incidents remain under investigation.

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Marines aid recovery on Saipan after Typhoon Soudelor

BY ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The military is doing its part to aid typhoon-ravaged Saipan, but residents of the U.S. commonwealth island say they remain a long way from recovery.

Typhoon Soudelor struck Saipan on Aug. 3 with estimated 120 mph gusts, heavy rains and lightning, leaving the island's 50,000 residents and tourists without water or power.

No deaths have been reported, but the island's main hospital is relying on backup generators as it treats storm-related injuries and other patients.

Damages to homes and businesses will likely add up to millions of dollars, but an accurate assessment right now isn't possible, said officials with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which includes Saipan and smaller

islands. More than 2,000 residents have registered for federal emergency assistance, said Luis John Castro, a spokesman with the governor's office.

After nine days, residents in online forums say gas lines, access to water and other necessities are improving, but frustration remains at the pace of relief.

"So many houses have been completely destroyed," Harry Blalock, a Saipan resident for 19 years, told Stars and Stripes by phone. "Roofs are gone, just blown away. It's a level of destruction I've never seen before."

More than 100 utility poles were knocked over, split or snapped like matchsticks, government officials said. While restarting electricity transmission to the hospital is a top priority, there is no timetable for power restoration to the whole island, Castro said.

Water lines are generally

inoperative, though access has been intermittently restored to some areas.

"For so many people, it's been a week and they haven't had a shower," said Blalock, who runs a local dive shop popular with military personnel.

Water became an immediate concern during the first few days, with private individuals banding together in some areas to provide to the less fortunate, Blalock said.

Days after the storm, residents on Saipan waited six hours in line for gas, which was being rationed at \$20 per vehicle, at \$4.20 per gallon. The rationing policy has since been lifted and lines were down to 30 minutes at some stores Tuesday, according to multiple residents.

The many military and peace memorials on Saipan were spared major damage, Castro said. In 1944, tens of thousands of people died in the Battle of

Saipan as the U.S. captured the island from the Japanese.

Today, the military's presence on the island is limited to a small Army Reserve base and some recruiting offices. However, thousands of servicemembers are stationed 90 miles away on Guam, and many more are stationed in Japan, which is about a three-hour flight away.

The Sasebo, Japan-based USS Ashland arrived on Saipan on Aug. 8 with 21,000 gallons of drinking water and other relief supplies, according to Navy statements. Marines with the Okinawa-based 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit have been taking the water and supplies to local distribution centers. The Marines have also set up a desalinization plant in Garapan, the island's main village. However, communications and logistical problems have hampered some aid distribution.

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Retired generals, admirals push Iran deal

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Three dozen retired generals and admirals released an open letter Tuesday supporting the Iran nuclear deal and urging Congress to do the same.

Calling the agreement “the most effective means currently available to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons,” the letter said that gaining international support for military action against Iran, should that ever become necessary, “would only be possible if we have first given the diplomatic path a chance.”

The release came as Secretary of State John Kerry said U.S. allies were “going to look at us and laugh” if the United States were to abandon the deal and then ask them to back a more aggressive posture against Iran.

Not only would U.S. global credibility be undermined, Kerry said, but also the dollar’s position as the world’s reserve cur-

rency would be threatened.

Pointing to efforts by Russia and China to join forces with rising, nonaligned powers, Kerry said in a public question-and-answer session at Reuters news service headquarters in New York that “there’s a big bloc out there, folks, that isn’t just sitting around waiting for the United States to tell them what to do.”

Kerry and President Barack Obama, who is vacationing on Martha’s Vineyard, are using the August congressional recess to counter claims made by opponents of the deal during recent hearings.

Signers of the military letter include retired general and flag officers from every branch of service. They include four-star Marine Gens. James Cartwright, former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Joseph Hoar, former head of the U.S. Central Command; and Gens. Merrill McPeak and Lloyd Newton, of the Air Force.

“There is no better option to prevent an

Iranian nuclear weapon,” the letter said. “Military action would be less effective than the deal, assuming it is fully implemented. If the Iranians cheat, our advanced technology, intelligence and the inspections will reveal it, and U.S. military options remain on the table.”

Retired Navy Rear Adm. Harold Robinson, a rabbi and former naval chaplain who chairs the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, also signed.

He said he spoke out to demonstrate that “those of us who love Israel in the United States are not of one mind and one voice on this matter. I thought it was important to represent some of the diversity within the American Jewish community.”

The Israeli government is adamantly opposed to the agreement, and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee has been in the forefront of a campaign to build public opposition in this country.

Texas policeman fired after killing student

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — An unarmed, black college football player tried to smash through the locked glass door of a North Texas car dealership showroom to escape an officer in training, then turned and headed toward the officer and was fatally shot, the police chief said.

Called to the scene of a suspected burglary last week, officer Brad Miller pursued Christian Taylor, 19, into the showroom without telling his supervising officer, Arlington Police Chief Will Johnson said Tuesday as he described the encounter.

Johnson said Miller, 49, has been fired for causing a deadly confrontation that put him and other officers in danger.

Inside the showroom, Miller ordered Taylor to get to the ground. Instead, Taylor cursed at the officer and advanced toward him. When Taylor was about 10 feet away, the officer fired, Johnson said.

Taylor continued moving, so Miller’s training officer, Cpl. Dale Wiggins, shot Taylor with a Taser.

Miller then fired three more times. At least two bullets struck Taylor, killing him, according to the chief, who said the interaction early Friday lasted only seconds.

F/A-18C catches fire on the USS Truman

BY TARA COPP

Stars and Stripes

A Navy F/A-18C refueling aboard the USS Harry S. Truman caught fire late Tuesday, injuring the pilot and a sailor on deck, the Navy said Wednesday.

The fire was quickly extinguished; the pilot ejected and landed on the flight deck. He was treated and taken to New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington, N.C., with nonlife-threatening injuries, the Navy said. A sailor on deck was also injured and sent to New Hanover with nonlife-threatening injuries.

Naval Air Force Atlantic spokesman Cmdr. Mike Kafka said the cause of the fire and the pilot’s decision to eject will be part of the Navy’s investigation.

The pilot was taking part in night flying training operations with Strike Fighter Squadron 106 when the incident occurred around midnight Tuesday. The Truman, operating off the coast of Virginia in the Atlantic Ocean, temporarily suspended training operations after the incident.

It’s the third mishap this week for military aviation. An Army UH-60 Black Hawk made a hard landing onto the USNS Red Cloud off Okinawa on Wednesday, injuring seven servicemembers. On Monday, an Air Force F-16 crashed in Germany. The pilot safely ejected and was treated for minor injuries.

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Cuban dissidents not invited to embassy event

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration doesn’t plan to invite Cuban dissidents to Secretary of State John Kerry’s flag-raising at the U.S. Embassy in Havana on Friday, vividly illustrating how U.S. policy is shifting focus from the island’s opposition to its single-party government. Instead, Kerry intends to meet more quietly with prominent activists later, officials said.

The Cuban opposition has occupied the center of U.S. policy toward the island since the nations cut diplomatic relations in 1961. The Cuban government labels its domestic

opponents as traitorous U.S. mercenaries. As the two countries have moved to restore relations, Cuba has almost entirely stopped meeting with American politicians who visit dissidents during trips to Havana.

That presented a quandary for U.S. officials organizing the ceremony to mark the reopening of the embassy. Inviting dissidents would risk a boycott by Cuban officials including those who negotiated with the U.S. after Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro declared detente on Dec. 17. Excluding dissidents would certainly provoke fierce criticism from opponents of Obama’s new policy.

NFL stars mix it up at camp

Associated Press

NFL training camps are in full swing. There's never a shortage of desperation, heat or testosterone this time of year, and that leads to plenty of fisticuffs, on and off the field.

Usually, high-profile players manage to stay above the fray.

This summer, a few have made headlines, including Cam Newton, Dez Bryant and Geno Smith.

Newton disregarded his protective red jersey and went after a cornerback during practice. Bryant did his best Floyd Mayweather impersonation after getting tangled up with a defensive back. While both escaped injuries in those skirmishes, Smith will miss 6-10 weeks with a broken jaw after getting punched by a now ex-teammate in the locker room.

The danger with these routine fights is losing a player to an unnecessary injury, which is why it is news when a star is involved.

Bills coach Rex Ryan has two simple pieces of advice for his players — first, don't hit a guy with a helmet on; second, don't hit a guy with his helmet off.

"So in other words, don't fight," Ryan said after starting receiver Robert Woods and cornerback Stephon Gilmore came to blows. "You know, that's what I'd prefer. Sometimes I know it gets heated, every now and then it's just like a little thing and you just let it go."

The problem is some don't let it go. It makes it easier to hang onto those grudges with no rules governing fights in

training camp. No NFL-imposed fines, no suspensions.

"You go against the same bodies, run the same plays," said Panthers Pro Bowl tight end Greg Olsen. "We know what the defense is going to run, they know what (the offense) is going to run. It's frustrating. It's hot. You've been out there every single day. You get fatigued. Your emotions run hot. It's just normal."

Most training camp "fights" end almost as soon as they begin with teammates stepping into break things up.

Of course, there are exceptions.

The Washington Redskins and Houston Texans went all in this week, engaging in a bench-clearing brawl after which coaches abandoned joint practice plans.

Cowboys coach Jason Garrett said skirmishes have always been a part of training camp — and he doesn't necessarily see that changing.

"That's the nature of it, you try to create competitive situations on your team and sometimes you have these guys competing to win and these kinds of things happen," Garrett said.

But star players like Newton and Bryant don't have anything to prove.

Competing, though, is part of what makes them who they are.

Many camp fights are the result of trash talk.

Newton did it.

So did Bryant and his sparring partner, cornerback Tyler Patmon. They had been jawing at each other for several plays before exchanging closed-fist blows.

"He wasn't going to back down, I wasn't going to back down," Bryant said. "At

the end of the day, we shook hands. We hugged. We respect one another."

Chiefs wide receiver Jason Avant doesn't think camp fights are necessarily a bad thing.

"Guys want to make the team and sometimes tempers flare," Avant said. "But you need it, because no one is going to pay your rent if you get cut from the team."

An overabundance of testosterone can also be an issue off the field.

That seems to be the situation involving Smith. Jets coach Todd Bowles said what happened was not football related and "something very childish."

But Smith isn't the first player to take a cheap shot to the head.

In 2003, Raiders linebacker Bill Romanowski ripped off tight end Marcus Williams' helmet and punched him in the face, shattering his eye socket and ending his NFL career.

Five years later, Panthers wide receiver Steve Smith punched a helmetless Ken Lucas in the face twice while the cornerback was kneeling on the sideline between plays. Lucas needed surgery to repair a broken nose; Smith was sent home from camp early and suspended by the team for two games without pay.

Still, Olsen said more often than not it's all forgotten by the next day.

"In the inner circles of football locker rooms, on-field fights are really not that big of a deal," Olsen said. "They're inevitable. Once they're broken up, everyone goes their separate ways and it's over."

Just not when franchise players are involved, or get injured.

Jets move on without QB Smith

Associated Press

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. — It took just one destructive punch to rattle an entire franchise.

Geno Smith's jaw is broken, Ikemefuna Enemkpali is out of a job and the New York Jets are trying to quickly move forward from one of the most stunning — and embarrassing — moments in team history.

Coach Todd Bowles delivered the jolting news Tuesday before practice that Smith would be sidelined at least 6-10 weeks with a broken jaw after being punched by Enemkpali in the locker room before the team's morning walkthrough.

"It was something very childish," Bowles said, "and he got cold-cocked, sucker-punched — whatever you want to call it — in the jaw."

Smith, entering his third season, will require surgery to repair the injuries and will be sidelined for the rest of the summer and likely for the first few games of the season.

The regular-season opener against Cleveland on Sept. 13 is five weeks away.

Enemkpali, an outside linebacker in his second season, was immediately released by the Jets. He also could face discipline from the NFL under its personal conduct policy. An NFL spokesman said Wednesday that the league is reviewing the situation.

"The team knows this is something we don't tolerate, something we can't stand," Bowles said. "You don't walk up to another man and punch him in the face."

But now, the Jets are trying to move forward without Smith, who was having a good camp, and turn to veteran Ryan Fitzpatrick as they prepare for their pre-season opener at Detroit on Thursday.

Here are some things to know about what's next for the Jets:

Fitz magic: The acquisition of Fitzpatrick from Houston in March by general manager Mike Maccagnan looks even more shrewd now, and not only because he's an experienced backup with 89 NFL starts under his belt.

Fitzpatrick has played in offensive coordinator Chan Gailey's system, putting up solid numbers under him in Buffalo from 2010-12.

Establishing chemistry: Smith took just about every snap with the first-team offense throughout training camp, so Fitzpatrick needs to get work in with the players he'll now be throwing and handing off to.

That means extra work in particular with receivers Brandon Marshall and Eric Decker, who were developing a solid rapport this summer with Smith.

Up for grabs: Bowles wouldn't commit to Fitzpatrick as the starter for the rest of the season or to Smith reclaiming his job when he's healthy, but indicated that a player could lose his starting spot due to injury.

"If the other guy is playing well and the boat is going right and there are no waves and everything is going and we're 4, 5, 6, 7-and-0," Bowles said, "yeah, you're not coming back to start."

Panthers' Newton: 'No regrets' about clash

Associated Press

SPARTANBURG, S.C. — Cam Newton is defending his role in a scuffle with Carolina Panthers teammate Josh Norman that put the star quarterback at risk of unnecessarily getting injured.

Newton said Tuesday he would do it again.

"I have no regrets of things that I've done," Newton said. "It's been whispered about 'franchise quarterback doing this or doing that.' What's the blueprint of a franchise quarterback? Leading your team. I'm not going to let anyone dictate how I play."

Most quarterbacks around the league, including Newton, wear a red jersey at

practice designed to protect them from contact and reduce the risk of injury.

They normally keep a distance from fights.

Newton, however, took matters into his own hands on Monday after Norman stiff-armed him during an interception return. An angry Newton turned and ran down Norman near the goal line after the play had been blown dead by coaches. The two players got into a scrap and wound up at the bottom of a pile of players — Newton without his helmet.

They eventually had to be separated by teammates.

Although linebacker Thomas Davis yelled at the fifth-year quarterback for being "stupid," a defiant Newton defend-

ed his actions during an 11-minute press conference Tuesday.

"Do what (again)? Practice hard? Yes. I practice hard each and every day," Newton said.

Newton has drawn criticism for putting himself at risk of injury after signing a \$103 million contract extension this offseason.

Newton said he has spoken to Norman and the rest of the team and there are no hard feelings.

Norman didn't address the media.

Pro Bowl tight end Greg Olsen said the entire event has been overblown by the media, claiming critics are always looking for ways to judge Newton.

Timberwolves' Saunders is being treated for lymphoma

MINNEAPOLIS — Flip Saunders had quite a challenge on his hands when he returned to Minnesota two years ago to take over the moribund Timberwolves.

Just as it appeared the franchise was starting to turn the corner, a new challenge has presented itself. And he plans to take this one on with as much determination and confidence as he has any other.

Saunders announced Tuesday that he is being treated for Hodgkins lymphoma, and his doctors consider it "very treatable and curable."

Saunders was diagnosed with a cancer of the immune system two months ago and has been undergoing chemotherapy. He plans to remain the Timberwolves' head coach and top executive while being treated.

The 60-year-old Saunders returned to the Timberwolves as team president in 2013. Last year, he replaced the retired Rick Adelman on the bench and the team finished 16-66.

From The Associated Press



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Indians outlast Yankees in 16

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — A lost weekend at home was followed by a long night on the road.

Right now, nothing is going the New York Yankees' way.

Michael Brantley ripped an RBI single off Mark Teixeira's glove with one out in the 16th inning to lift the Cleveland Indians to a 5-4 victory over the skidding Yankees, who lost their fourth straight and had their lead in the AL East over Toronto trimmed to one-half game.

Brantley hit his hard shot off Branden Pinder (0-2) that first baseman Teixeira couldn't handle and easily scored Jose Ramirez from second base. Brantley's clutch hit ended the 5-hour, 4-minute game and triggered just the second walk-off winning celebration by the Indians this season.

Austin Adams (2-0) worked a perfect inning and combined with seven other Cleveland pitchers to record 16 strikeouts.

The first four hitters in New York's lineup — Jacoby Ellsbury, Brett Gardner, Alex Rodriguez and Teixeira — went a combined 1-for-25.

Stephen Drew and Carlos Beltran homered for the Yankees, who have hit a rough patch at the wrong time.

"It's baseball," said manager Joe Girardi, whose team was swept three straight by Toronto last weekend. "That's it. If you're ready to give up, give up. I'm not ready to give up."

New York, which led the second-place Blue Jays by seven games on July 28, went ahead 4-2 in the 10th on pinch-hitter Chase Headley's two-out, two-run single off Bryan Shaw. But for one of the first times all season, the Yankees' reliable bullpen

couldn't protect the lead as Andrew Miller blew his first save in 25 tries this season.

The Yankees came in with their bats sound asleep, and Indians starter Carlos Carrasco kept them that way.

The Bronx Bombers were shut out in consecutive games over the weekend by Toronto, and Carrasco blanked them for the first five innings, running New York's scoreless drought to 31 innings — the club's longest since 1991 — before Drew opened the sixth with his 14th homer.

It was the first run allowed by Carrasco in 22 innings, and the right-hander was six outs from his 12th win before Beltran turned on one of his fastballs in the eighth to tie it 2-2.

Carrasco finished with a no-decision despite his third straight powerful outing. The right-hander has allowed only three runs and seven hits in his past 26 innings.

British Open champ Johnson overshadowed at PGA event

Associated Press

SHEBOYGAN, Wis. — Zach Johnson is looking for his second straight major victory at the PGA Championship.

The British Open champion still might have the least intriguing story line in his opening-round threesome when the tournament begins Thursday at Whistling Straits.

He might not even be the biggest draw among players named Johnson.

Fans will surely flock around the first tee to watch Rory McIlroy, the world's No. 1 player, return from an ankle injury. Joining McIlroy and Johnson will be Jordan Spieth, who won the Masters and U.S. Open. Spieth is about as big a name as there is these days in the game.

What Johnson is trying to accomplish this week is rare. Winning the final two majors of the year has been done six times dating to the start of the Masters in 1934, and four times in the last 15 years. McIlroy accomplished the feat last season.

"To me, it's just a great opportunity, that's all," Johnson said. "I'm excited about Thursday and Friday. I get to play with two good friends."

It's a threesome comprised of the winners of the last five majors.

Yet Dustin Johnson is getting more attention than Zach.

The PGA Championship is at Whistling Straits for the first time since 2010, when Dustin Johnson drew a two-shot penalty on the final hole after grounding his 4-iron in the sand to the right of the fairway, not aware he was in a bunker. He had a one-shot lead at the time.

Johnson missed a 7-foot par putt to slip into a playoff — until the penalty dropped him into fifth.

Zach Johnson was asked about that, too, on Tuesday. They had neighboring lockers.

"I consoled him the best I could. What do you say? He was upset, clearly, as he should be. But his attitude was actually pretty good," he said.

The leader in driving distance, Dustin Johnson has had at least a share of the lead in four rounds at the majors this year. His game makes him a contender at Whistling Straits.

But Zach Johnson is proof that it's not just about length off the tee.

"I think ultimately it comes down to driving it well, getting it in play and Zach Johnson has showed that at the British," said Steve Stricker, from Wisconsin. "That was a bombers' course, and he drove it well and putted well."

Mariners edge Orioles as home teams get rare sweep

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Austin Jackson hit a bases-loaded single in the 10th inning to give the Seattle Mariners a 6-5 victory over the Baltimore Orioles on Tuesday night, marking the first time since baseball expanded to 30 clubs that all 15 home teams won on the same day.

Jackson's single off reliever T.J. McFarland (0-2) down the right-field line scored Logan Morrison from third and finished off the major league schedule for the night.

Nelson Cruz and Mark Trumbo homered for the Mariners. Cruz extended his hitting streak to a career-high 21 games, matching Troy Tulowitzki for the longest streak in the majors this season, but exited before the seventh with neck spasms.

The last time home teams went undefeated on a day with more than one game was an 8-0 record on Aug. 28, 2008 — although road squads were 7-0 on April 2, 2013, according to STATS. Arizona and Tampa Bay joined the majors in 1998, bringing the total to 30 teams.

STATS said the best performance by home teams had been 11-0, accomplished six times — three in the 1800s. The most recent occasion was Sept. 16, 1989.

Cardinals 4, Pirates 3: Carlos Martinez was strongest at the end of his eight innings and Jason Heyward had two hits

and two RBIs, helping host St. Louis edge Pittsburgh in a matchup of the National League's top two teams.

Rookie Stephen Piscotty singled in the go-ahead run on consecutive at-bats in the fifth inning. Kolten Wong had his first multihit game of the month.

Trevor Rosenthal struck out the side in the ninth for his 34th save in 36 chances.

Cubs 6, Brewers 3: Anthony Rizzo and Jorge Soler each drove in two runs, Dan Haren picked up his first victory for the Cubs and host Chicago won for the 11th time in 12 games.

Dodgers 5, Nationals 0: Yasiel Puig drove in a career high-tying five runs with a homer and a triple, Zack Greinke pitched six sharp innings and Los Angeles defeated visiting Washington to snap a season-worst four-game skid.

Blue Jays 4, Athletics 2: Jose Bautista hit a solo home run, Drew Hutchison pitched seven strong innings and Toronto won its ninth straight game, beating visiting Oakland.

Royals 6, Tigers 1: Lorenzo Cain went 4-for-4 with a home run and Yordano Ventura pitched six scoreless innings as host Kansas City defeated Detroit.

Mets 4, Rockies 0: Matt Harvey pitched four-hit ball for eight innings, Ruben Tejada had a go-ahead single in the sixth and New York beat visiting Colorado

for the eighth straight time at Citi Field.

Twins 3, Rangers 2: Eduardo Escobar's two-out double in the ninth inning drove in the winning run, capping a late rally by host Minnesota.

Giants 3, Astros 1: Madison Bumgarner pitched a five-hitter with 12 strikeouts, Brandon Belt broke up a pitcher's duel with two solo homers, and San Francisco beat visiting Houston.

White Sox 3, Angels 0: Carlos Rodon threw seven scoreless innings, Trayce Thompson hit his first career home run and host Chicago beat Los Angeles.

Padres 11, Reds 6: Colin Rea pitched well into the sixth inning in his major league debut and Jedd Gyorko homered and drove in four runs as host San Diego beat Cincinnati.

Rays 2, Braves 0: Erasmo Ramirez pitched efficiently into the eighth inning for his first win in more than a month, Kevin Kiermaier hit a two-run homer and Tampa Bay beat visiting Atlanta.

Marlins 5, Red Sox 4 (10): Dee Gordon tripled to lead off the 10th inning and scored on a walk-off base hit by Justin Bour to lift Miami to a come-from-behind win over visiting Boston.

Diamondbacks 13, Phillies 1: David Peralta hit a grand slam in an 11-run second inning and tied a career high with five RBIs, leading host Arizona to a victory.

US men's Olympic basketball team starts with minicamp

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Kevin Durant, Carmelo Anthony and Chris Paul were in the gym. LeBron James could join them Wednesday.

Dwight Howard came back in hopes of playing in another Olympics. Stephen Curry showed up to register his interest in playing in his first.

Though still nearly a year away, it's clear the U.S. has plenty of players who want to go to Rio de Janeiro.

The two-time defending gold medalists opened a brief, light minicamp Tuesday

under coach Mike Krzyzewski with nearly three dozen of the NBA's best players who want to be considered for the 12 spots on the final roster.

Gone are the days when the Americans couldn't even find enough interested players in an Olympic year. Even though some of them still aren't even healthy enough to compete, 34 accepted an invitation.

Durant and Anthony, whose seasons were cut short by injuries, participated in drills that were little more than shooting. Anthony and James could make U.S. history if they play in a fourth Olympics in 2016. Along with Paul, they could become the first men's basketball three-time gold

medalists.

Only James, Dallas' Chandler Parsons and Paul George, who broke his foot playing in a U.S. scrimmage last summer, weren't in the gym on the campus of UNLV on Tuesday, though Colangelo said James was expected Wednesday. Krzyzewski said NBA Finals MVP Andre Iguodala was excused while on his honeymoon.

The remaining players were a mix of those who haven't cracked a U.S. roster yet to those who have been done it multiple times.

That includes Paul, who just recently returned from the NBA's game in South Africa and said he, James and Anthony

have talked about making history in Brazil.

"It's something that could be pretty special and all of us are here for the opportunity to be part of the team next summer," Paul said. "I'm here just like the rest of the guys to show Coach K my commitment."

His service to the U.S. team could help separate him from a point guard field that includes the likes of Curry, John Wall, Russell Westbrook, Kyrie Irving and Mike Conley.

Derrick Rose is apparently out of the picture after declining his invite.