

STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Afghan insider attack kills 2 US troops

By CARLO MUNOZ
AND ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two U.S. servicemembers were shot and killed by two gunmen wearing Afghan security forces uniforms who opened fire on their vehicle in southern Afghanistan early Wednesday, U.S. and coalition officials said.

The attack occurred on an Afghan military compound in Helmand province. It coincided with reports that Taliban insurgents had overrun the center of Musa Qala, a strategically important district center in Helmand.

“Resolute Support servicemembers returned fire and killed the shooters,” a coalition statement said.

“We are deeply saddened by the reports out of Afghanistan overnight,” said Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, Pentagon spokesman. “Two U.S. servicemembers operating in support of the Resolute Support Mission were killed yesterday when two individuals wearing Afghan National Defense and Security Force uniforms opened fire on their vehicle.”

DOD is withholding their identifications

for 24 hours, as families are notified.

Their service branches were not identified.

The coalition statement said Afghan and Resolute Support officials were “reviewing the incident.” No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

It was the third such attack suffered by U.S. and NATO forces since the official end of the coalition’s combat operations last December.

In April, Army Spc. John Dawson was killed and eight other soldiers were wounded when an Afghan soldier opened fire on American troops in eastern Afghanistan’s Nangarhar province. Dawson was the first U.S. fatality since the end of NATO’s combat mission.

In January, three American contractors were shot and killed by an Afghan soldier at the coalition’s compound at Kabul airport.

Mohammad Jan Rasolyar, deputy governor for Helmand province, said Afghan officials were still piecing together the details of Wednesday’s attack.

“We abandoned the district administrator’s office, police headquarters and the central hospital” after insurgents launched coordinated attacks against all three loca-

tions on Tuesday, Mohammad Sharif said by telephone.

Military and police forces in the besieged district are still resisting, launching sporadic counterattacks against the insurgents, he said.

But they are running out of ammunition and supplies, he said. “We have asked for help several times, but no one heard us.”

But Omar Zwaak, spokesman for Helmand governor, said military and police reinforcements had arrived from Kabul and were preparing to push Taliban fighters from their positions around the district center.

Musa Qala, a key opium-growing area, has long been a stronghold of the Taliban, who have traditionally controlled its lucrative drug trade.

Insurgents carried out a string of successful, coordinated attacks against military and police checkpoints within the district before being driven out by Afghan forces in June.

During this year’s fighting season, the guerrillas managed to overrun a handful of the country’s approximately 300 district centers and hold them for brief periods before being chased out by government reinforcements.

Suspect in '96 Khobar Towers bombing captured in Lebanon

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A man suspected in the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers residence at a U.S. military base in Saudi Arabia has been captured, a U.S. official said Wednesday.

Ahmed al-Mughassil, described by the FBI in 2001 as the head of the military wing of Saudi Hezbollah, is suspected of leading the attack that killed 19 U.S. service personnel and wounded almost 500 people. The June 25, 1996, bombing at Khobar Towers, a military housing complex, was the deadliest such attack targeting U.S. forces since the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marines’ barracks in Beirut that killed 241 American servicemen.

Saudi newspaper Asharq Alawsat, which first reported the development, said he was arrested in Beirut and transferred to Riyadh.

The Saudi Interior Ministry had no immediate comment. The U.S. official spoke on grounds of anonymity because this person was not authorized to publicly discuss the matter.

Al-Mughassil, also known as Abu Omran, is one of 13 people named in a 2001 indictment in Alexandria, Va., in connection with the bombing. Charges include murder of federal employees and bombing resulting in death. None of the 13 has yet been brought to court to face charges, according to court documents.

The lead prosecutor listed in court records from 2001 is James Comey, now the FBI director.

In the Khobar attack, militants parked a fuel trailer truck just outside the shallow perimeter of the apartment complex, 85 feet away from one of the eight-story buildings. The blast demolished one side of the building, leaving a massive crater.

The U.S. later moved its Air Force contingent to the Prince Sultan Air Base, a vast compound in a remote stretch of desert south of the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

A U.S. federal grand jury indictment named 13 Saudis and one Lebanese man in connec-

tion with the bombing, saying they were part of the Saudi Hezbollah extremist group. That group was founded by members of the desert kingdom’s Shiite minority who fled into exile in the 1980s to escape what they said was persecution by the kingdom’s Sunni majority.

The 2001 indictment placed heavy blame on Iran for nurturing the attack but stopped short of mentioning any Iranians by name or linking them directly to Khobar. However, in 2006, U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth ruled the Iranian government financed the bombing, ordering it to pay \$254 million to the attack’s victims. Iran repeatedly has denied being involved.

2 in Va. TV news crew killed on air

Associated Press

MONETA, Va. — A TV reporter and cameraman were shot to death during a live television interview Wednesday by a gunman who recorded himself carrying out the killings and posted the video on social media after fleeing the scene.

Authorities identified the suspect as a fellow journalist who had been fired from the station earlier this year. A man believed to be the gunman later crashed a vehicle after fleeing a traffic stop, and pursuing troopers found him suffering from a gunshot wound.

He was hospitalized with

life-threatening injuries and later died, officials said.

The shots rang out on-air as reporter Alison Parker and cameraman Adam Ward were presenting a local tourism story. Viewers saw her scream and run, and she could be heard saying “Oh my God,” as she fell. Ward fell, too, and the camera he had been holding captured a fleeting image of the suspect holding a handgun.

WDBJ, which is based in Roanoke, Va., and serves the southwest and central part of the state, quickly switched back to the anchor at the station, her eyes large and jaw dropping as

she said, “OK, not sure what happened there.” The station later went live again, reporting on their own station and staff as the story developed.

The suspect was identified as Vester Lee Flanagan II, 41, of Roanoke, by the Augusta County Sheriff’s Office. Flanagan appeared on WDBJ as Bryce Williams. Jeffrey Marks, WDBJ’s president and general manager, said Flanagan had to be escorted by police out of the station when he was fired. Marks described him as “an unhappy man” and “difficult to work with,” always “looking out for people to say things he

could take offense to.”

Video posted hours after the shooting on Williams’ Twitter account and Facebook page showed an outstretched arm holding the handgun and firing repeatedly at Parker as she tried to run away. The shooter appeared to walk up to the victims and stand nearby while holding the weapon. The three, in the midst of a live TV interview, do not seem to notice the gunman, who doesn’t start shooting until Ward points the camera at Parker and her interview subject, Vicki Gardner, who was in stable condition after surgery for her wounds.

Ashley Madison users sue, seek class action

LOS ANGELES — Eight people across the U.S. who registered to use Ashley Madison are suing the website for cheaters after hackers released personal and detailed information of millions of users, including financial data and sexual proclivities.

The lawsuits were filed between last month and Monday by Ashley Madison users in California, Texas, Missouri, Georgia, Tennessee and Minnesota. They all seek class-action status to represent the estimated 37 million registered users of Ashley Madison.

The lawsuits, which seek unspecified damages, claim negligence, breach of contract and privacy violations. They say Ashley Madison failed to take reasonable steps to protect the security of its users, including those who paid a special fee to have their information deleted.

A spokesman for Avid Life Media, the Toronto-based company that owns Ashley Madison, referred to previously released statements by the company calling the hack malicious and an “act of criminality.”

On Monday, Canadian police said the hack has triggered extortion crimes and led to two unconfirmed reports of suicides.

From The Associated Press

Report: DOD probing doctored-intel claims

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon inspector general is looking into allegations that Central Command officials altered intelligence assessments to provide a more optimistic account of progress in the U.S.-led campaign against the Islamic State in Iraq, it was reported Wednesday.

The New York Times cited “several” unnamed officials familiar with the inquiry as saying the investigation began after at least one civilian Defense Intelligence Agency analyst said he had evidence that CENTCOM officials were improperly reworking conclusions of intelli-

gence assessments prepared for policymakers, including President Barack Obama.

CENTCOM spokesman Col. Patrick Ryder told the Times he couldn’t comment on an ongoing IG investigation but noted that “the IG has a responsibility to investigate all allegations made, and we welcome and support their independent oversight.”

A Defense Department spokesman echoed Ryder’s statement, saying the inspector general operates independently of DOD. Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, the DOD spokesman, told reporters Wednesday that intelligence analysts routinely provide defense officials “dif-

fering views” on reports.

“The Secretary [of defense] counts on independent intelligence and analysis from a variety of sources to help him make critical decisions about the nation’s security,” Davis said, adding that he could not further discuss the nature of intelligence gathering and analysis.

The Times reported that the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the matters were classified, said the investigation will try to determine whether CENTCOM officials had altered conclusions of draft intelligence assessments and then passed them along.

Conviction overturned, yet seaman’s in prison

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — A Navy enlisted man whose rape conviction was reversed six weeks ago remains imprisoned in South Carolina, caught amid the military’s accelerating campaign against sexual assault.

Now, in an unusual move, attorneys for Seaman Dustin M. Clark are urging the same military appeals court that threw

out his 2014 conviction to order his immediate release. The 23-year-old Missouri native has already done too much time for a crime he didn’t commit, his attorneys say.

“It’s outrageous,” David P. Sheldon, one of Clark’s attorneys, said in an interview.

It’s rare for a military appeals court to reverse a conviction because of “factual insufficiency,”

as the U.S. Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals did with Clark’s conviction July 14. This means the appellate judges thought prosecutors failed to prove their case. The government, though, apparently wants to keep Clark incarcerated at the Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston pending further review, a process that Sheldon estimates could last 10 months.

Marshall eyes end to playoff drought

Associated Press

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. — Brandon Marshall has spent the month of January at home each of the past nine years, watching other players make postseason runs.

The New York Jets wide receiver wants to know how it feels.

Despite being on some solid teams during his NFL career, Marshall has never made the playoffs. He has played in 136 regular-season games, the league's longest active streak without a postseason appearance.

Marshall wants to change all that in a big way with the Jets, who have missed the playoffs the past four years and haven't been to a Super Bowl since winning it in 1969.

"It would mean the world to me," Marshall said. "I definitely want to win. I don't know how I would move forward without a championship. You know, 45 years old, sitting on a porch, just thinking about would've, could've. That's going to be hard even though I'm going to be happy with my family and our foundation and some business things I'm involved in.

"I'm not going to be one of those guys that has a hard transition, but if I don't win, it's going to be tough."

Marshall is 31 and has been traded three times despite some monstrous statistical seasons that have made him one of the league's top receivers during the past decade.

He has caught 100 or more passes five times, and had a streak of seven straight seasons with 1,000 or more yards receiving snapped last year when he had 721 on 61 catches in 13 games with Chicago.

While injuries affected him last season, some fans and media wondered if his best days were behind him. His reputation for being a talented but disruptive presence had some questioning if he was the type of player a team could still build around. Or, if he was even worth the potential headache.

There were also whispers about his focus, whether his weekly appearances in New York on Showtime's "Inside The NFL" — something he'll do again this season — were distracting him from his duties on the field.

"The only thing that affects me is when my integrity is questioned," he said, "and anything that disrupts what we're trying to do with our cause."

Early in his career, Marshall was known as much for his troubles off the field as he was for his accomplishments on them with five arrests between 2004 and 2009, and domestic violence charges filed against him.

Marshall knows people still bring up those issues, but he insists that's all in his past.

"All I can do is look at myself in the mirror and be the best guy I can be every day," he said. "That's what's in my heart. It's who I am. You win some days, you lose some days. People want to judge me, that's on them."

Four years ago, Marshall announced at a news conference that he was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder.

He has spent a lot of his time outside of football trying to spread awareness and understanding about the illness, establishing The Brandon Marshall Foundation to further the cause.

On the field, Marshall has been rejuvenated by the trade in March to New York, taking on a leadership role

with the Jets. Coach Todd Bowles and receivers coach Karl Dorrell got to know Marshall when they were together in Miami from 2010-11.

"He's a professional," Bowles said of Marshall. "I don't have to keep him focused. Brandon comes to work every day. He's one of the first ones in the building."

A regular highlight of camp has been Marshall working against cornerbacks Darrelle Revis and Antonio Cromartie in drills. Marshall had fans oohing Monday when he made a one-handed grab of a pass from Ryan Fitzpatrick, beating Revis on the play.

"Every single day, those guys, — Darrelle, especially, and Cromartie, even Buster (Skrine) — they force you to look at the game differently," Marshall said.

"From my releases, to the top of my routes, it's a chess match. Before, it was like, this is what I do and I just have to get better at that. Now, I have to go outside my comfort zone and figure out different ways to win, and I really believe that I'm better than I've ever been because of the competition every single day.

"You get exposed if you go out there and don't put your best foot forward. You may not get off the line of scrimmage against those guys. I don't want to be on camera and the kids in the stands laughing at me."

The skeptics and doubters aside, Marshall remains driven. He'll let everyone keep talking, and he'll respond with his play on the field.

"Man, I'm getting better every year," Marshall said. "I was talking to Coach Dorrell yesterday and I told him I feel like I'm breaking through my potential. It's weird because I'm 31 years old and it's year 10, but I honestly feel great."

Scandrick out for season

Associated Press

Orlando Scandrick's season is over before it started after the Dallas cornerback tore two ligaments in his right knee in practice at training camp Tuesday.

A person with knowledge of the injury told The Associated Press that an MRI exam revealed tears to the anterior cruciate ligament and medial collateral ligament. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the team had not announced the injury.

Video showed Scandrick's leg bending awkwardly under rookie receiver Lucky Whitehead at the end of a play in Oxnard, Calif. Scandrick, who was carted off the field, had recently returned to practice after sitting out with soreness in his left knee.

"He said immediately, 'It's my ACL. I know it. It's gone,'" Cowboys secondary coach Jerome Henderson said.

The other defensive backs formed a circle for a prayer when practice ended.

"I heard it in his voice," said cornerback Morris Claiborne, a top-10 pick in 2012 who has had injury issues, including a torn patellar tendon in his left knee that limited him to four games last year. "After just sitting there and looking at him and just holding his hand, squeezing. I know that feeling."

Whitehead said he bent down when he thought Scandrick was going to hit him as the receiver came out of a route.

"I kind of felt it," Whitehead said. "I heard him make a noise."

Scandrick became the team's best cornerback as Brandon Carr struggled in coverage the past two seasons and Claiborne underperformed when he made

it to the field. The eighth-year player has 48 starts among his 102 games, with a career-high two interceptions each of the past two seasons.

His injury will test a position that has much more depth than it did going into training camp last year. The Cowboys picked up fourth-year player Corey White on waivers from New Orleans, and he has been solid in camp along with undrafted second-year player Tyler Patmon.

Dallas also drafted Byron Jones in the first round this year.

"It's next man up if he is out," Henderson said of Scandrick. "You hate that it happens to such a great player. We have to keep moving."

Tony Romo was among several Cowboys who tweeted their support of Scandrick not long after practice ended. "Sending prayers out to Orlando Scandrick," Romo wrote. "Fear he has a torn acl. Your (sic) the best bud."

The Cowboys have brought Claiborne along slowly in camp, keeping him out of both preseason games even though he reported to California much further along than expected in his recovery. And Jones returned to practice Tuesday after an injury earlier in camp to his left shoulder, the same one that required surgery when he was at Connecticut.

"Injuries are a part of football, but it's an awful feeling when it happens to one of your guys," Jones said. "I just hope the best for him. He's a veteran, been here a long time. He was looking forward to the season."

All-Pro receiver Dez Bryant had his most extensive work at practice since injuring a hamstring Aug. 2. He missed the off-season in a contract stalemate.

Big 12 ADs support transfer restrictions

Associated Press

Big 12 Conference athletic directors are unanimously backing a proposal that would prohibit schools from accepting transfers who were disciplined for violent acts at their previous schools.

In a text to The Associated Press, Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby said Tuesday that conference ADs meeting in New Orleans "supported a policy draft similar to that of the [Southeastern Conference]." Bowlsby said the draft would still need to be refined and submitted to a joint council of faculty athletic representatives and athletic directors for approval.

The SEC earlier this year passed a rule preventing schools from accepting transfers who have been dismissed from another team for "serious misconduct," defined as sexual assault, domestic violence or other forms of sexual violence. The rule applies to university or athletics department discipline and does not take into account whether a legal case has been made or pending.

SEC officials were prompted to act after Alabama accepted transfer defensive lineman Jonathan Taylor, who was dismissed by Georgia last year after he was arrested for domestic violence. Taylor was arrested again for domestic violence earlier this year, and then dismissed by Alabama. The accuser in that case later recanted and the case was dropped.

Just in the past week, Baylor coach Art Briles has come under scrutiny for allowing a player who was convicted of sexual assault last week to transfer to the school in 2013 after he was dismissed from Boise State for disciplinary issues.

Sam Ukwuachu, who played defensive end for Boise State as a freshman in 2012 and transferred to Baylor after being dismissed from the Broncos, was sentenced last week to six months in jail and 10 years of probation for assaulting a Baylor women's soccer player. At his trial, his former girlfriend at Boise State testified he hit and choked her.

Ukwuachu, 22, was never charged or arrested for assaulting his girlfriend at Boise State. It is unclear if Broncos coaches knew about those allegations. Boise State did not at the time specify why Ukwuachu was dismissed.

Briles said he spoke with then-Boise State coach Chris Petersen, now with Washington, about Ukwuachu's troubles but was never told specifically about acts of violence toward women. Petersen last week said he "thoroughly apprised Coach Briles of the circumstances surrounding Sam's disciplinary record and dismissal."

Later Tuesday, Boise State released a statement saying allegations by Ukwuachu's girlfriend that he assaulted her when they were students there were never reported to school officials.



Ship's Store official new car program

Exclusive Navy at-sea offers:

www.navyauto.com or nasinfo@navyauto.com

IndyCar heads into finale reeling from driver's death

Associated Press

When Tony Kanaan arrived home following the IndyCar race at Pocono Raceway, his wife asked him why he continued to race in a series that has such high risk.

Justin Wilson had been airlifted out of the track earlier that day after being hit in the head with a piece of debris from another car. He was in a coma, fighting for his life, and Kanaan's wife was one of many who wondered why the drivers were putting their lives on the line week after week. Lauren Kanaan pointed out that her husband had won the Indianapolis 500, accomplished all of his goals, and earned a very nice living in 18 years of American open-wheel racing.

His answer was simple.

"No one puts a gun to our heads and makes us do this," Kanaan said. "We're not rich, but we certainly won't starve if I don't do this. But I do it because I can't live without it."

That's the mentality of drivers, and none put themselves in as much danger as they do in the IndyCar Series. Wilson died Monday night from his injuries, just four years after Dan Wheldon was killed in the

IndyCar season finale in a horrific crash.

Wilson's death from what by all accounts was simply a fluke accident has again thrust the series into the spotlight for all the wrong reasons, and it comes as IndyCar heads into Sunday's season finale looking to crown a new champion.

Six drivers are eligible for the title, including points leader Juan Pablo Montoya, who returned to IndyCar last season after stints in NASCAR and Formula One. His comeback year has included a second win in the Indianapolis 500, 15 years after his first victory.

It could be overshadowed by Wilson's death in a year IndyCar has seemingly bounced from one crisis to another.

IndyCar had to cancel its opener in Brazil over a promoter issue. The season began with a good race in Florida, but it was marred by the debut of the cars' new aerodynamic bodykits, which proved too brittle for even the slightest contact. The streets of St. Petersburg were littered with broken parts and pieces, and a chunk of debris sailed over the grandstands and struck a pedestrian. IndyCar required Honda and Chevrolet to make structural upgrades.

Two weeks later, the inaugural race in New Orleans was a rainy, caution-filled train wreck. And the lead-up to the showcase Indianapolis 500 was marred by three accidents in which cars went airborne, and a fourth incident in which James Hinchcliffe nearly bled to death when his leg was punctured by a broken piece of a crashed car.

It led to frantic rule changes before the race in which Honda grudgingly agreed to design changes it felt only the Chevrolet cars needed.

One month later, the rules package for Fontana, Calif., was so aggressive that drivers openly complained the racing was too dangerous. The track won't return to the schedule next season, and IndyCar has since implemented a conduct policy that prohibits drivers from speaking negatively about the series.

The 2016 schedule has yet to be released and owners have complained that the season is too short. The series doesn't seem viable with an offseason stretching nearly seven months. By comparison, NASCAR will have a dozen more races after IndyCar shuts its season this weekend.

Bolt, Gatlin meet again for world crown

Associated Press

BEIJING — Usain Bolt and Justin Gatlin set up the sequel to their world championship sprint showdown on Wednesday, both winning their semifinal heats in the 200 meters.

After Bolt edged the American by .01 second in Sunday's 100 final, he will be seeking his record 10th world title overall on Thursday at the Bird's Nest.

Bolt was grinning widely after crossing in 19.95 seconds, coasting for about 60 meters and checking the stadium screens high up in the stands to see if someone could come close. As usual, none did.

In the previous semifinal heat, Gatlin, unbeaten over two years in the 200, ran 19.87 seconds but worked a little longer than Bolt before easing up.

The two topped the qualifying times, with no one else breaking the 20-second barrier.

On a night when javelin thrower Julius Yego and steeplechaser Hyvin Kiyeng Jepkemoi extended the surprising lead of the Kenyans in the medals table to six gold, two of their teammates were provisionally suspended following initial positive doping tests.

The IAAF said it targeted Joyce Zakary, a 400-meter runner, and hurdler Koki Manunga for testing after competing in Beijing. Zakary ran a national record in the women's 400 but the 29-year-old Kenyan did not start in the semifinals. Manunga failed to reach the semifinals in the women's 400 hurdles.

Jepkemoi won a three-way sprint to the line to take the gold medal in the 3,000-meter steeplechase ahead of Habiba Ghibri of Tunisia and Gesa Krause of Germany. After a tight last lap, all three finished within .14 seconds of each other.

On the field, Yego set the best javelin mark in 14 years with a throw of 92.72 meters, good enough for an African record on top of gold.

In the most competitive final in history with five throwers surpassing 87 meters, Ihab Abdelrahman El Sayed of Egypt took silver with a throw of 88.99 and 2007 world champion Tero Pitkamaki of Finland took bronze with 87.64.

The 400 final also had its superlatives. Wayde van Niekerk blasted out of the blocks and never looked back to finish in 43.48 seconds and become the fourth best performer of all time. He was later taken away on a stretcher and brought to the hospital.

"He's OK. It's just exhaustion," South African team leader Peter Lourens said.

Behind him, LaShawn Merritt, the defending champion and 2008 Olympic champion, set a personal best of 43.65 but it still was only good enough for silver. Kirani James of Grenada took bronze.

With Yarisley Silva of Cuba clearing 4.90 meters to win the pole vault ahead of Fabiana Murer of Brazil and Nikoleta Kyriakopoulou of Greece, the Americans were locked out of a medal. Jenn Suhr, the Olympic champion, and Sandi Morris finished in a share of fourth place after failing to clear 4.80.

And Zuzana Hejnova of the Czech Republic kept the United States from gold in the 400 hurdles. The U.S.'s Shamier Little got silver behind Hejnova, edging teammate Cassandra Tate.

In the medal standings, Kenya leads with six gold and 11 overall halfway through the championships, while the United States is back in fifth with one gold and nine overall.

Astros rough up Yankees in rout

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Carlos Gomez was up to his old antics, and that didn't sit well with the New York Yankees in the middle of a blowout.

Gomez and Evan Gattis each homered and drove in four runs, sending Dallas Keuchel and the Houston Astros to a 15-1 rout that briefly got testy Tuesday night.

Keuchel (15-6) held the Yankees scoreless for the second time this season and became the first 15-game winner in the American League. Gomez busted out of a hitting slump and rankled the Yankees with his flashy style.

"If you misunderstand the way I play the game, it's your fault," Gomez said. "I don't care how the other team feels. I only care how my team feels. And the only thing I know is like, every time I come here, all my teammates love me."

Gomez jawed with the Yankees after flipping his bat aside in frustration when he flied out in the sixth inning. He turned toward the New York dugout and appeared to say "shut up" several times.

"Some of our guys took exception to it and I think they took even a little more exception when he started yelling at our dugout," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "Just got a little heated."

"I just told him, 'Play the game right,'" Girardi added. "Show a little professionalism to the pitcher."

On his way back across the field, Gomez stood nose to nose with young catcher John Ryan Murphy before they were separated.

Both benches and bullpens emptied, but the teams quickly went their respective ways without any pushing or shoving.

His next time up, Gomez launched a three-run homer into the Yankees' bullpen in right-center to cap a six-run seventh.

"He's a guy you love on your team and if

he's on another team, I can see why some guys don't like him," Keuchel said. "He's playing hard and we love that. We'll enjoy that every game and hopefully he can lead us to a playoff berth."

Keuchel yielded three hits in seven innings with nine strikeouts and no walks. He struck out 12 in a six-hit shutout at home against the Yankees on June 25.

New York scratched out a run in the ninth this time against Vince Velasquez.

In a lopsided matchup of AL division leaders, the most effective Yankees pitcher was backup infielder Brendan Ryan. He worked two scoreless innings in his first major league appearance on the mound and was the only New York hurler who didn't give up multiple runs.

Cubs 8, Giants 5: Kyle Schwarber, Miguel Montero and Starlin Castro all hit home runs in support of another solid outing from Jake Arrieta, and Chicago beat host San Francisco for their sixth straight win.

Blue Jays 6, Rangers 5: Troy Tulowitzki had a game-tying RBI single in the ninth inning before Adrian Beltre's throwing error allowed another Toronto run to score as the AL East-leading Blue Jays rallied for a victory over host Texas.

Angels 8, Tigers 7: Albert Pujols homered and Los Angeles scored three times on wild pitches in a victory over host Detroit.

Indians 11, Brewers 6: Josh Tomlin shook off three home runs and lasted six innings to win his season debut at home and Michael Brantley homered twice, leading Cleveland to a win over visiting Milwaukee.

Twins 11, Rays 7: Brian Dozier, Miguel Sano and Eddie Rosario all homered as Minnesota beat host Tampa Bay for the Twins' fifth straight win.

Mets 6, Phillies 5: Michael Cuddyer hit a go-ahead two-run, pinch-hit single

in the sixth inning and Noah Syndergaard finally won on the road as New York beat host Philadelphia for its fifth straight victory.

Nationals 8, Padres 3: Stephen Strasburg allowed two hits over six innings, Ryan Zimmerman hit a grand slam and host Washington beat San Diego.

Rockies 5, Braves 1: Chad Bettis pitched five solid innings in his return from the disabled list and visiting Colorado scored four unearned runs, taking advantage of three errors by Atlanta third baseman Adonis Garcia in a victory over the Braves.

Dodgers 5, Reds 1: Alex Wood took a shutout into the sixth inning, and Justin Turner and Jimmy Rollins each hit two-run home runs as Los Angeles snapped its five-game losing streak with a win over host Cincinnati.

Marlins 5, Pirates 2: Major-league batting leader Dee Gordon tied a career high with four stolen bases, had two infield hits and scored twice, helping host Miami beat Pittsburgh.

Royals 3, Orioles 2: Kendrys Morales hit a solo homer, Mike Moustakas and Eric Hosmer also drove in runs and Kansas City leaned on its bullpen to beat visiting Baltimore.

White Sox 5, Red Sox 4: Rookie Trayce Thompson drove in three runs, including a go-ahead, two-run double, and host Chicago beat Boston.

Cardinals 9, Diamondbacks 1: Tommy Pham had his second career three-hit game, Jaime Garcia pitched six strong innings and visiting St. Louis cruised past Arizona.

Mariners 6, Athletics 5: Austin Jackson's bases-loaded, two-run single in the fifth inning capped Seattle's rally from a five-run deficit and led the Mariners past visiting Oakland.