

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, August 31, 2018

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## US Navy seizes 1,000 rifles near Yemen

By COREY DICKSTEIN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — U.S. Navy sailors seized more than 1,000 AK-47s from a small, disabled boat in the Gulf of Aden this week after boarding the vessel to determine its nation of origin, service officials said Thursday.

Sailors aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Jason Dunham on Monday observed unmarked packages being transferred onto a skiff from a small, masted sailing vessel, known as a “dhow.” U.S. sailors boarded the craft Tuesday to investigate, according to Navy officials.

The skiff was sailing in international waters near Yemen without flying a country’s flag

and determined to be “stateless,” the officials said.

Once aboard the boat, sailors discovered the cache of illicit automatic rifles, according to the Navy.

Service officials have yet to determine the original source of the weapons, which remain in American custody. The officials declined to discuss the intended destination of the rifles and said an investigation into the incident was ongoing.

The individuals aboard the skiff were brought aboard the Dunham as part of a safety-of-life-at-sea operation and transferred into the custody of the Yemeni Coast Guard, according to the Navy.

The Dunham’s commander, Cmdr. John Hamilton, said in a statement that his ship regular-

ly conducts similar operations to search vessels in the area.

Another Navy official said such a large cache of weapons is unusual to find.

“Ensuring the free flow of commerce for legitimate traffic and securing the sea lanes of communication continue to be paramount to the U.S. Navy and its regional partners and allies, and I am proud of Jason Dunham’s sailors for accomplishing the mission,” Hamilton said.

The Gulf of Aden connects the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea and is a heavily trafficked shipping route, especially for oil. In the early 2000s, it was known as a notorious area for pirate activity, and more recently, U.S. officials have said Iran has regularly used the

passage to secretly transport arms to the Houthi rebels it supports against the Yemeni government.

The civil war in Yemen has raged for more than three years and has left tens of thousands dead. The United States has supported the Saudi Arabia-led coalition backing Yemen’s U.N.-recognized government with weapons, intelligence and aerial refueling operations, according to the Pentagon.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis pledged continued support for the Saudi-led operations this week, amid calls by some lawmakers in Congress to withdraw American support, citing reports of high civilian death tolls due to Saudi airstrikes.

## Washington says goodbye to John McCain

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — It’s Washington’s turn to say goodbye to John McCain. His way.

The six-term Republican senator, who lived and worked in the nation’s capital over four decades, is lying in state under the U.S. Capitol rotunda for a ceremony and public visitation.

A light rain fell as McCain’s casket was carried into the Capitol Friday as his family watched from the steps. Family, friends, lawmakers and guests gathered in the vast Rotunda for a memorial service.

“It is only right that today, near the end of his long journey, John lies here, in this great hall, under the mighty dome, like other American heroes before him,” said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. “We thank God for giving this country John McCain.”

House Speaker Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., called McCain “one of the bravest souls our nation has produced.”

McCain, a former Navy aviator, really did “talk like a sailor,” Ryan said, drawing smiles from the crowd. “But you see, with John, it wasn’t feigned disagreement. The man didn’t feign anything. He just relished the fight.”

Vice President Mike Pence said he didn’t always agree with McCain but said his support for limited government, tax reform and the military “surely left our nation more prosperous and more secure.”

McCain “served his country honorably,” Pence said.

The ceremony was the first of two days of services in Washington honoring the Arizona senator, who served in Congress for 35 years.

On Saturday, McCain’s procession will pause by the Vietnam Memorial and head to the Washington National Cathedral for a formal funeral service. At McCain’s request, two former presidents — Democrat Barack Obama and Republican George W. Bush — will speak.

President Donald Trump, who has mocked McCain for being captured during the Vietnam War, was asked to stay away, people close to the White House and the McCain family said. However, Pence said, “As President Trump said yesterday, we respected his service to the country.”

McCain’s funeral puts him back in the spotlight a few miles from Trump’s doorstep, in the city where the senator, who died last Saturday at 81, worked and collected friends and enemies, some in both camps at

different times. The procession was highlighting what McCain found important, some of which contrast with Trump’s style and priorities.

Other officials also represented the administration in Trump’s hard-to-miss absence. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis greeted the McCain family Thursday night when the senator’s casket arrived at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland.

McCain chose a Russian dissident as a pallbearer, though Trump has professed repeatedly his affinity and admiration for Russian President, Vladimir Putin.

The procession’s pause at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where McCain’s widow, Cindy, is expected to lay a wreath, will highlight McCain’s military service and his more than five years as a prisoner of war.

# Stealth destroyer's 15-ton turbine replaced

Associated Press

BATH, Maine — Shipbuilder Bath Iron Works has replaced one of the massive turbines on the future USS Michael Monsoor, and the stealthy destroyer is scheduled to depart for San Diego in November.

The delicate operation involved lifting and maneuvering the 15-ton Rolls Royce marine turbine out of the ship, and workers had to build a rail system to assist in the removal and installation of the replacement turbine in August, officials said.

"The number of twists and turns it had to go through

represented a pretty interesting engineering evolution," said shipyard President Dirk Lesko.

Shipbuilders noticed an unusual vibration during sea trials and discovered afterward that a foreign object had damaged some of the blades after the turbine was installed, Lesko said. Although the turbine still works, the Navy decided to replace rather than repair the unit.

The Zumwalt-class destroyers use two main turbines similar to ones used on Boeing 777 jetliners to produce electricity that powers the ship and its sophisticated systems. Combined

with auxiliary turbines, the ship produces 78 megawatts of power, enough for a small- to medium-size city.

The Zumwalt and Monsoor are the first and second in a class of three of the stealthy destroyers. The third, the Lyndon B. Johnson, remains under construction.

The Monsoor repairs presented an inconvenience because the Navy crew is already aboard the ship, and the repairs interrupted some of their training, Lesko said.

"We tried to work around them in a way that would be minimally impactful," he said. "We were both satisfied with

how that turned out."

The destroyer, named for a Navy SEAL who threw himself on a grenade to save comrades, is due to be commissioned in January in Coronado, Calif.

The ships with an unusual, stealthy shape are the largest and costliest destroyers built for the Navy, weighing in at 15,000 tons.

They feature an unconventional wave-piercing hull and a sleek deckhouse that hides radar and other sensors inside. Heavy automation allowed the Navy to reduce the crew size by half, compared with the other destroyers in the fleet.

## Yemen rebel threats to Dubai show danger looms

BY JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — A false claim by Yemen's Houthi rebels of an attack on the world's busiest airport for international travel this week may have been quickly disproven by authorities in Dubai. That doesn't mean, however, it can be taken too lightly.

The insistence of the Houthis and hard-line media in Iran on trumpeting the falsehood serves as a warning to the city-state and other parts of the **ANALYSIS** United Arab Emirates, now engaged in the yearslong Yemen war led by Saudi Arabia.

And while a previous threat carried by Iranian media drew an immediate government response from censors, this one went by without censure.

That means as American sanctions sparked by President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal increase, so too will the threats against the U.S.-allied UAE.

The recent war of words began Monday afternoon. The Houthi-controlled satellite news channel Al-Masirah and others began claiming without

offering any evidence that they attacked Dubai International Airport, a massive transit hub in the sheikhdom that saw 88.2 million passengers last year alone.

Any attack on the airport would cause travel disruptions across the world, as the airport serves as the hub of the long-haul carrier Emirates that links the East and the West from the Arabian Peninsula.

But the Houthi claim alleged the Shiite rebels used a Samad-3 drone to bomb an airfield some 1,000 miles away from territory they control in Yemen, far beyond the believed distance one of their bomb-laden attack drones can fly. Faked satellite imagery later circulated online, as did videos of an August 2016 Emirates crash-landing at the airport that some falsely claimed showed the supposed attack.

Though quickly disproved, the claim gained immediate traction in Iran, which backs the Houthis in the conflict. While Iran directly denies arming the rebels, the United Nations and Western powers have documented arms transfers to the Houthis by Tehran of everything from Kalashnikov assault rifles to the bal-

listic missile technology used to periodically target cities as far away as the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh.

Iran's semi-official Fars news agency, long believed to be close to the country's hard-line paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, heralded the would-be attack on Monday as showing "Dubai is no longer safe." Fars alleged Dubai serves as the home of Western intelligence agencies.

"Dubai and other Emirati cities can expect the flight of Yemeni drones over them — and even Western intelligence centers are under their wings," the Fars analysis read.

Such threats against Dubai itself are rare. While the UAE's Abu Dhabi-based federal government remains highly suspicious of Iran and has worked to expand its military in recent years to counter the threat, Dubai and other northern emirates in the country of seven sheikhdoms have historic ties to Iran. Many ethnic Persians live in the UAE. The skyscraper apartments and banks of Dubai also serve as a crucial financial safe haven for the average Iranian, as well as for government and paramilitary officials to launder money.

Hard-line support only will rise in the coming months. On Nov. 4, the U.S. will re-implement sanctions on Iran's crude oil exports, which provide a needed source of hard currency for a country whose economy already is gasping for air.

Iran also could rely on its proxy allies in the region, namely the Houthis. While falsely claiming an attack on Dubai airport, the rebels can target commercial shipping and oil tankers passing by Yemen in the Red Sea. Its forces could launch missiles and other attacks. Either likely would push global oil prices higher, especially as Iranian supply gets cut out of the market.

The UAE, like other Gulf Arab monarchies, hosts thousands of U.S. troops and relies on American military support as a counterweight to Iran. Having that relationship helps limit any possible retaliation, as does its stockpile of American-made weaponry.

That being said, even a falsely claimed attack like the one this week shows real danger could loom ahead.

## US monitoring Russian shipping 'harassment' near key Ukraine port

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTT GART, Germany — Russia has delayed the transit of hundreds of commercial ships near a key Ukrainian port, a move that some analysts say amounts to a de facto blockade in an increasingly volatile region.

"Russia's actions to impede maritime transit are further examples of its ongoing campaign to undermine and destabilize Ukraine, as well as its disregard for international norms," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement Thursday.

Since April, Russia has detained ships and interrogated crews more frequently, the State Department said.

Moscow has been building up its Black Sea Fleet and overall military posture since seizing Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula in 2014, a move condemned by the United States and much of the world.

U.S. European Command said Friday it was tracking events.

"We continue to monitor the situation with merchant traffic in the Sea of Azov," said Lt. Cmdr. Joe Hontz, a EUCOM spokesman. "We echo U.S. State Department's comments on calling on Russia to cease its harassment of international shipping in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait."

The Kerch Strait connects major Ukrainian port cities such as Mariupol along the Sea of Azov to the Black Sea and ultimately the Mediterranean Sea.

"The Russian pressure tactics in the Sea of Azov can be described best as a quasi-blockade of a vital waterway," said the Soufan Center, a New York security firm headed by former FBI special agent Ali Soufan, in a written analysis.

While blockades are regarded as an act of war, Russia's maneuvers technically stop short of a full-scale blockade because

a 2003 agreement between Kiev and Moscow allows naval boardings, the Soufan Center said.

"Because of the 2003 agreement, Russia has been quite open in its pressure against Ukraine," according to the Soufan Center analysis. "There is little practically and legally that Ukraine can do."

Besides adding anti-aircraft and anti-ship weapons systems in Crimea, Russia also recently opened a new bridge that connects Crimea to the Russian mainland. The bridge, which spans the Kerch Strait, has been condemned by the West and Ukraine as illegal.

The commercial ship detentions also demonstrate Moscow's ability to control events in the region. Achieving dominance in the Black Sea ensures Russia a link to the Mediterranean Sea and strengthens Moscow's position in an important southern European commerce zone, analysts say.

"I think the Black Sea is more strategically important to the Russians than even the Baltic Sea," retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, former U.S. Army Europe commander, told Stars and Stripes in July.

Securing NATO's eastern flank in the Baltics and Poland has been the primary focus of the United States and the alliance during the past few years. Hodges said NATO should try to further bolster its presence in the Black Sea region and consider developing a flotilla to operate there.

**'The Russian pressure tactics in the Sea of Azov can be described best as a quasi-blockade of a vital waterway.'**

**Soufan Center**  
written analysis

## Belgium, Germany take over NATO's Baltic air mission

*Stars and Stripes*

Belgian and German fighter pilots are now responsible for patrolling over the Baltics as part of a regular NATO rotation focused on protecting alliance airspace.

The Belgian air force F-16 pilots began their mission leading NATO's air-policing effort Friday, taking over for Portugal. They will operate out of a base in Siauliai, Lithuania.

The German fighters, who began their leg of the mission at Amari Air Base in Estonia on Thursday, will augment the Belgian forces.

This is the 48th rotation of detachments contributing to

NATO's Baltic air-policing mission, which was set up in 2004 to help the small Baltic nations, which don't have their own fighter aircraft.

The focus of the mission is to track and intercept Russian aircraft flying near NATO territory. Russia's 2014 invasion of Ukraine has raised tensions between Moscow and the West, and NATO has seen an uptick in the number of unidentified Russian aircraft operating near the Baltics.

Scrambles and intercepts are standard air-policing procedure when an unknown aircraft approaches NATO airspace.

## China says it's not planning to send troops to Afghanistan

*Associated Press*

BEIJING — China on Thursday denied reports that it plans to deploy troops to Afghanistan, saying the neighbors are engaged merely in "normal military and security cooperation."

Defense Ministry spokesman Col. Wu Qian said reports in Hong Kong's South China Morning Post newspaper and elsewhere that hundreds of People's Liberation Army soldiers are to man a base in eastern Afghanistan are "simply not true."

China shares a narrow border with Afghanistan in the remote Wakhan corridor region and is wary of the country's violence and chronic instability overflowing into its restless Xinjiang region.

However, Wu said China, like other nations, is helping Afghanistan increase its defense capabilities, particularly in the

area of counterterrorism.

"China and Afghanistan have normal military and security cooperation," he told reporters at a monthly briefing.

Afghanistan's ambassador to China, Janan Mosazai, said this week that Beijing is helping Afghanistan set up a mountain brigade to bolster counterterrorism operations, but that no Chinese troops would be stationed in the country.

"While the Afghan government appreciates this Chinese assistance and our two militaries are working in close coordination on utilizing this assistance, there will be no Chinese military personnel of any kind involved in this process on Afghan soil," Mosazai said.

China has sought to increase its presence in Afghanistan, including in dialogue with the Taliban, after 17 years of Western involvement that has left the country still at war.

# Trump cancels pay raise for federal workers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is canceling pay raises due in January for most civilian federal employees, he informed Congress on Thursday, citing budget constraints. But the workers still could see a slightly smaller boost in their pay under a proposal lawmakers are considering.

Trump said he was nixing a 2.1 percent across-the-board raise for most workers as well as separate locality pay increases averaging 25.7 percent.

“We must maintain efforts to put our Nation on a fiscally sustainable course, and Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases,” Trump said.

The president last year signed a package of tax cuts that is forecast to add about \$1.5

trillion to federal deficits over 10 years.

As workers across the country head into the Labor Day weekend, Trump cited the “significant” cost of the federal workforce, and called for their pay to be based on performance and designed to recruit, retain and reward “high-performing Federal employees and those with critical skill sets.”

At the same time, Trump planned during a Friday appearance in Charlotte, N.C., to direct the Labor and Treasury departments to issue regulations designed to make it easier for small businesses to pool resources so they can offer retirement savings plans to their workers, administration officials told reporters.

Most small businesses say high costs discourage them from offering plans like 401(k)s, the officials said.

Democrats criticized Trump for moving

to cancel the scheduled pay raise, citing tax cuts he signed into law last December. That law provided steep tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest Americans, and more modest reductions for middle- and low-income individuals and families.

“Trump has delivered yet another slap in the face to American workers,” said Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez.

Under the law, the 2.1 percent raise takes effect automatically unless the president and Congress act to change it. Congress is currently debating a proposal for a slightly lower, 1.9 percent across-the-board raise to be included in a funding bill that would require Trump’s signature to keep most government functions operating past September.

## Funds for homeless veteran to be turned over

Associated Press

MOUNT HOLLY, N.J. — A couple who raised more than \$400,000 for a homeless veteran after he used his last \$20 to fill up the gas tank of a stranded motorist in Philadelphia must now turn over what’s left of the cash.

A New Jersey judge issued the order Thursday during a hearing on the lawsuit brought by Johnny Bobbitt, who worries Mark D’Amico and Katie McClure have mismanaged a large part of the donations raised for him on GoFundMe.

The couple deny those claims, saying they’re wary of giving Bobbitt large sums because they fear he will buy drugs.

The judge ordered the couple to transfer the money into an escrow account by the

end of business Friday and hire a forensic accountant to review the financial records within 10 days.

The money will be transferred to an account controlled by Bobbitt’s lawyers but can’t be used until the judge determines how it will be managed. The judge didn’t appoint a guardian to oversee the fund, but one could be appointed later.

McClure set up the online fundraiser page as a way to give back to Bobbitt, who came to her aid when she ran out of gas on an Interstate 95 exit ramp late one night. It raised more than \$400,000 in funds donated by more than 14,000 people.

Bobbitt walked a few blocks to buy McClure gas. She didn’t have money to repay him at the time, but sought him out days later to give him the money, and visited him

a few more times to bring food and water. They later appeared on shows like “Good Morning America” and were interviewed by the BBC.

But the relationship has gone sour.

McClure and D’Amico have repeatedly denied any wrongdoing or misusing any of the money. D’Amico has said Bobbitt spent \$25,000 in less than two weeks in December on drugs, in addition to paying overdue legal bills and sending money to his family.

The couple also bought Bobbitt a camper with some of the funds and parked it on land McClure’s family owns in Florence. But Bobbitt became homeless again after D’Amico told him in June that he had to leave the property.

## At least 7 killed as Greyhound bus, semitrailer crash

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — A blown tire on a semitrailer may be to blame for a deadly head-on crash with a commercial passenger bus along Interstate 40 in New Mexico near the Arizona border, according to authorities.

At least seven people were killed, and many of the 49 passengers aboard the Greyhound bus were injured, although authorities couldn’t immediately provide an exact count of how many were hurt or their conditions.

New Mexico State Police said the semi was headed east on the freeway Thursday afternoon when one of its tires blew, sending the rig, which was carrying produce, across the median and into oncoming traffic, where it slammed into the Greyhound heading to Phoenix from Albuquerque, N.M.

The National Transportation Safety Board and New Mexico state police are investigating.

At least nine bus passengers were being treated at University of New Mexico Hospital. UNM officials didn’t release any de-

tails about the patients’ conditions.

Passing motorists described a chaotic scene, with passengers on the ground and people screaming.

Eric Huff was heading to the Grand Canyon with his girlfriend when they came across the crash. The semi’s trailer was upside down and “shredded to pieces,” and the front of the Greyhound bus was smashed, he said, with many of the seats pressed together. Part of the side of the bus was torn off, he said.

“It was an awe-inspiring, terrible scene,” he said

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## 'Monsignor Meth' gets additional prison time

**CT** HARTFORD — A Connecticut Roman Catholic priest who ran a methamphetamine ring has been sent back to prison for nine months for failing another drug test while on supervised release.

Kevin Wallin asked a federal judge in Hartford on Thursday to continue his supervised release so he could begin long-term residential treatment for substance abuse. But Judge Alfred Covello sent Wallin back to prison. Covello warned Wallin earlier this year that he faced more prison time if he failed another drug test.

Wallin resigned as a pastor in the Bridgeport diocese in 2011, and proceedings are underway to permanently remove him from the priesthood. He was dubbed "Monsignor Meth" in some media reports. He was sentenced to more than five years in prison in May 2015 for selling meth and freed on supervised release in November 2016.

## Woman steals from funeral attendees

**PA** CANONSBURG — Police in western Pennsylvania said they've arrested a woman suspected of stealing items from the vehicles of people attending a funeral.

Canonsburg police said Wednesday that police took Sabrina Hancock, 24, into custody after receiving a tip she was in the area. The Observer-Reporter reports Detective Michael Ledger said Hancock initially denied involvement in the thefts, but said she later admitted to the thefts.

Police said a number of people had items stolen from their cars while they were attending a Monday morning funeral mass.

## Jail cook pleads guilty to sex with inmate

**ND** RUGBY — A Towner man accused of having sex with a female inmate at the jail in Rugby while working there as a cook has pleaded guilty to misdemeanor adultery.

Authorities say Marcelo Lara, 51, had consensual sex with the 33-year-old female inmate in the walk-in cooler at the Heart of America Correctional Center. The woman had been allowed to help prepare jail meals while she was incarcerated, and Lara was her supervisor.

Lara initially was charged with felony sexual abuse of a ward, which carries a maximum punishment of five years in prison. The Minot Daily News reports he reached a deal with prosecutors and pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor that carries a maximum sentence of one year.

Lara's wife signed a complaint for adultery earlier this summer.

## Parcel not put on porch due to bear

**NC** ASHEVILLE — A North Carolina woman says a delivery person didn't deliver a package to her front porch because a bear had been in the driveway.

News outlets reported "Bear in driveway" was written on a UPS receipt that Marcy Lanier posted on Facebook on Friday. The UPS delivery person had left the note and the package in the Asheville woman's mailbox instead of leaving the package on the front porch as usual.

Lanier told WLOS-TV she saw humor in the receipt and didn't blame the delivery person for staying safe. The post has been shared more than 2,000 times but with all the excitement, Lanier hadn't yet

gotten the chance to open the package.

## Snake surprises supermarket shopper

**NY** PITTSFORD — A western New York woman shopping for groceries says she was surprised to find a snake in her shopping cart while picking out produce.

Laura Walitsky said she was at a Wegmans supermarket in Pittsford on Monday evening when her daughter spotted the hitchhiking reptile wrapped on the bottom of her cart. The Rochester Democrat & Chronicle reported the woman then walked the cart outside and had her daughter tell customer service there was a snake on the shopping cart.

Walitsky was able to flag down two employees, who removed the snake and placed it in a nearby wooded area. A Wegmans spokesperson said in a statement that "this was an isolated incident."

## Suspect coated in paint after truck crash

**PA** LANCASTER — Police said a man driving a stolen truck carrying a load of white paint crashed into a number of cars and flipped the vehicle, spilling the buckets all over the road; the suspect, covered head-to-toe in paint, fled but returned as police arrived.

Police in Lancaster said the man shoved an officer and as they tried to handcuff him, he was so slippery that he got out of the cuffs and attempted to flee again. He was caught and secured, but officers also were covered in paint as a result of the struggle.

The truck was reported stolen from Delaware. The suspect, Roberto Ramirez, 29, of Wilmington, Del., was charged

Tuesday after being treated at a hospital overnight.

## Teens accused in port-a-potty blaze

**MD** RIDGELY — Authorities in Maryland said two teens lit a port-a-potty on fire and caused other damage to the neighborhood.

Citing a Maryland State Fire Marshal release, WBOC-TV reported that a 15-year-old and a 16-year-old are charged with arson in connection with the destruction of the portable plastic commode Wednesday.

The release says a neighbor saw the fire, but it had been extinguished before Ridgely firefighters arrived. Investigators determined that the fire had been set intentionally.

Both were released into their parents' custody.

## Cops: Boy threatened to 'blow up' student

**FL** NICEVILLE — A 14-year-old middle school student in Florida's Panhandle is accused of threatening to blow up another student's home.

Okaloosa County Sheriff's officials said in a news release that the student made the threat while in a classroom at Ruckel Middle School on Monday.

According to sheriff's deputies, the student asked someone in the classroom for the other student's address. Investigators said the boy told the witness that he planned to "stab" the victim and to "blow him up."

Investigators said the boy told the witness he knows how to make "C4" explosives and had them at his house.

From wire reports

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# No. 21 UCF picks up where it left off

Associated Press

EAST HARTFORD, Conn. — No. 21 UCF has a new coaching staff — and an offense very similar to the one that helped the Knights go undefeated a year ago.

McKenzie Milton threw for 346 yards and tied a career high with five touchdowns as the self-proclaimed defending national champions routed UConn 56-17 on Thursday night to extend the longest winning streak in the nation to 14 games.

The reigning American Athletic Conference offensive player of the year completed 24 of 32 passes and ran for another 50 yards on seven carries. Sophomore receiver Tre Nixon, a transfer from Mississippi, caught five passes for 101 yards and scored on plays of 34 and 11 yards.

Backup quarterback Darriel Mack Jr. came on in the fourth quarter and broke a 70-yard touchdown run down the left sideline, making him the team's leading rusher.

It was the first game for coach Josh Heupel, who took the reins after Scott Frost left for Nebraska.

"I don't know if we're going to miss a beat," Milton said. "The schematics are a little different, but we're going to score a

lot of points no matter what."

UConn quarterback David Pindell was a bright spot for the Huskies, throwing for 266 yards and a touchdown and running for another 157 yards and a score.

But the Huskies had 30 freshmen and sophomores on their two-deep, and more than a dozen players saw their first live-game action on Thursday night.

"I thought we had some young men who played a bit tentative for their first time and just didn't let it go," coach Randy Edsall said. "Now they understand how hard it is"

**Injury:** The game was marred by what appeared to be a serious injury to UCF defensive back Aaron Robinson on the opening kickoff.

The sophomore transfer from Alabama appeared to collide head-first with another UCF player while making the tackle. He had to be cut from his shoulder pads and was taken off the field on a stretcher, giving the crowd the thumbs-up sign as he was wheeled to an ambulance. Heupel said Robinson is expected to be fine, but will be kept overnight at a local hospital for observation.

**Efficiency:** UCF was 9-for-11 on third down and converted its only attempt on fourth down. The Knights had touchdown drives of 61, 81, 76, 74, 65, 73, and two of 90

yards all while having the ball for less than 22 minutes

**First game:** Heupel said he felt surprisingly calm in his first game as a head coach. The team gave him a game ball in the locker room.

"You work for eight months for something and you want it to bear good fruit and tonight it did," he said.

**Poll implications:** Despite opening with a conference win on the road, UCF's poll position likely will only be impacted by losses higher up in the rankings.

## The takeaway

**UCF:** Heupel's fast-paced offense is advertised, putting up 652 yards and scoring eight touchdowns on 11 drives, with each scoring drive taking less than 3 minutes off the clock.

"I'm a big fan of coach Huep's system," Milton said. "I think it exposes defenses and I think it's going to be very good for UCF."

**UConn:** The Huskies seem to have found their quarterback in Pindell. In addition to completing 27 of 41 passes and running 22 times, he had another 50-yard touchdown run called back because of a holding penalty. The Huskies put up 486 yards of offense.

# Umpire's Kyrgios visit draws criticism at US Open

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Nick Kyrgios was losing big at the U.S. Open on Thursday, and barely even trying. Didn't move while so-so serves flew by for aces. Casually put groundstrokes into the net. Double-faulted without caring.

The crowd began booing. The chair umpire, Mohamed Lahyani, decided to intervene. In an unusual sight for Grand Slam tennis, Lahyani clambered down out of his seat during a break between games, stood with hands on knees, and spoke with the 30th-seeded Kyrgios, saying, among other things, "I want to help you."

It all seemed like an impromptu intervention for the mercurial Kyrgios, right out there on Court 17 at Flushing Meadows, N.Y., and it raised questions about whether Lahyani overstepped his duties as someone who's primarily there to keep score and keep order. Kyrgios went from

trailing by a set and a break at the time to wresting control of the match — setting up a third-round showdown against Roger Federer — by coming back to beat Pierre-Hugues Herbert 4-6, 7-6 (6), 6-3, 6-0.

"This was not his job," Herbert said, adding that he thinks Lahyani should be sanctioned in some way. "I don't think he's a coach, he's an umpire, and he should stay on his chair for that."

The U.S. Open's referee and chief umpire were reviewing what happened, as was the Grand Slam Board. Chair umpires are never made available to the media, but tournament referee Brian Earley said Lahyani explained that he left his perch "to make sure he could communicate effectively" with Kyrgios in a noisy arena.

According to Earley, the official said he wanted to check whether Kyrgios needed medi-

cal attention and to warn the player that Lahyani "would need to take action" if the "seeming lack of interest in the match continued."

During an occasionally confrontational and sarcastic exchange with reporters, Kyrgios laughed at the suggestion that he had received coaching or a pep talk from Lahyani.

"I mean, like, I don't have a coach. I haven't had a coach for, like, years. Of course he wasn't coaching me. Like, what are you talking about?" Kyrgios said.

"He said he liked me. I'm not sure if that was encouragement. He just said that it's not a good look," Kyrgios said of his chat with Lahyani. "Look. I wasn't feeling good. I know what I was doing out there wasn't good. I wasn't really listening to him, but I knew it wasn't a good look."

It was, to be sure, the most conversation-worthy topic on

Day 4 at Flushing Meadows, where the most notable result was No. 2 seed Caroline Wozniacki's 6-4, 6-2 loss to Lesia Tsurenko of Ukraine at night.

Wozniacki, who won the Australian Open in January and is a two-time finalist in New York, is the third top-10 woman already out of the draw, including No. 1 Simona Halep.

Past U.S. Open champions Novak Djokovic and Marin Cilic won at night, as did 2006 titlist Maria Sharapova, who took the last three games to beat Sorana Cirstea of Romania 6-2, 7-5 in a match that ended after midnight.

Djokovic wasted a third-set match point and was pushed to a fourth before defeating American Tennys Sandgren 6-1, 6-3, 6-7 (2), 6-2.

"I just lost it mentally," Djokovic said about his issues in the third set. "Those things happen, I guess."

# Mayfield sharp as Browns crush Lions

Associated Press

DETROIT — Even if he doesn't play again for a while, Baker Mayfield has given Cleveland a glimpse.

Mayfield threw for 138 yards in a dominant first half for the Browns, who wrapped up the preseason with a 35-17 victory over the Detroit Lions on Thursday night. Mayfield completed a 41-yard pass to Devon Cajuste on the first play from scrimmage, and the top overall pick in this year's draft looked sharp throughout his two quarters directing the offense.

"I just think he improved every week," coach Hue Jackson said. "I thought tonight, making plays down the field with the ball, the accuracy of the ball. Throwing the ball away in some key situations in the scoring zone I thought was huge. I think he's growing every day."

With Tyrod Taylor atop the depth chart at quarterback, the Browns are likely to bring Mayfield along slowly. This was a nice note for the rookie to finish on before the start of the regular season.

"Came out fast, we set the tone. Played well early," said Mayfield, who made his first start of the preseason. "We wanted to stress that, and we made sure of that."

Nick Chubb and Matthew Dayes ran for touchdowns for Cleveland in what was generally a battle of backups.

The Lions closed out an uninspiring preseason under new coach Matt Patricia. They were booed off the field at halftime by the sparse crowd at Ford Field with the score 25-0.

"We obviously didn't play very well," Patricia said. "We have to do a better job of coaching and playing, but the positive is that we had some things come

up now instead of in the regular season. That gives us a chance to work on them between now and the first game."

Jake Rudock did little to distinguish himself in the competition to back up quarterback Matthew Stafford. When Rudock was taken out late in the second quarter, the Lions had been outgained 261-40 and had only two first downs.

Matt Cassel took over at quarterback and led Detroit down the field in the 2-minute drill. Then, defensive lineman Nate Orchard made a leaping interception near the line of scrimmage and ran it back 64 yards for a touchdown with 28 seconds left in the half.

Cleveland went for 2, and the Lions were called for roughing the passer. Detroit was then called for having 12 men in formation. Dontrell Hilliard eventually ran the ball in to make it 25-0.

Dayes had 77 yards on eight carries, although he ended up with an ankle issue. His touchdown came from 42 yards out in the second quarter.

The Lions had 2 yards rushing in the first half.

Rudock returned to the game in the second half, but it was more of the same for Detroit until the Lions finally scored a couple of touchdowns in the fourth quarter.

"At this point, there's nothing I can do. I can say that I'm not going to worry about it, but it is human nature," Rudock said. "There are 90 guys in here, and there are only going to be 53 here. Obviously, I want to be one of them, but I've done what I can. Now it is out of my hands."

The Lions were outscored 68-16 in the first half this preseason.

## NFL preseason roundup

# Rookie Jackson leads Ravens on 3 scoring drives

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Ravens rookie quarterback Lamar Jackson ran for a touchdown, backup Robert Griffin III spent the entire game on the sideline and Baltimore beat the Washington Redskins 30-20 Thursday night to complete its third consecutive unbeaten preseason.

Jackson played the first half and led Baltimore (5-0) on three scoring drives. The 2016 Heisman Trophy winner and first-round draft pick is sure to make the team, but coach John Harbaugh has not yet revealed whether he will keep Griffin, who's currently No. 2 on the depth chart behind starter Joe Flacco.

Griffin, a five-year veteran, went 27-for-41 during the preseason and showed no rust after sitting out last year.

**Colts 27, Bengals 26:** Matt

Barkley's left knee was injured by a low hit after he threw a pass, giving Jeff Driskel the inside track for host Cincinnati's backup quarterback role.

**Dolphins 34, Falcons 7:** Brock Osweiler made a strong final bid for Miami's backup quarterback job, leading three first-quarter touchdown drives against host Atlanta.

**Eagles 10, Jets 9:** Christian Hackenberg had a rough audition for an NFL roster spot, tossing two interceptions, but defending Super Bowl champion and host Philadelphia rallied.

**Jaguars 25, Buccaneers 10:** Fourth-stringer Tim Cook ran for a pair of second-half touchdowns, and Carroll Phillips returned a fumble for another TD to help visiting Jacksonville.

**Patriots 17, Giants 12:** Third-stringer Danny Etling tossed a 1-yard touchdown pass

to Ralph Webb early in the second half and iced the game for visiting New England with an 86-yard run late in the game.

**Vikings 13, Titans 3:** Rookie Daniel Carlson kicked field goals of 39 and 22 yards, and Kyle Slotter added a 24-yard touchdown pass in the fourth quarter for visiting Minnesota.

**Steelers 39, Panthers 24:** Josh Dobbs put together a compelling case to be on someone's NFL roster next week, throwing for a touchdown and running for another.

**Texans 14, Cowboys 6:** Rookie running back Terry Swanson rushed for a 37-yard touchdown run late in the fourth quarter to lift host Houston.

**Bills 28, Bears 27:** AJ McCarron made a shaky case for a roster spot, leading a surge for visiting Buffalo in the fourth quarter after struggling for most of the game.

**Saints 28, Rams 0:** Camer-

on Meredith caught two passes for 72 yards and a touchdown in host New Orleans shutout of Los Angeles.

**Chiefs 33, Packers 21:** Rookie safety Armani Watts intercepted two passes, while Makinton Dorleant returned another pick for a touchdown for host Kansas City.

**Broncos 21, Cardinals 10:** Paxton Lynch made his case for backup quarterback — or at least staying on Denver's roster — with a near-perfect second half against host Arizona.

**Chargers 23, 49ers 21:** Roberto Aguayo kicked a 26-yard field goal on the final play to lift Los Angeles over host San Francisco.

**Raiders 30, Seahawks 19:** E.J. Manuel made a strong bid to be Oakland's backup quarterback, throwing for 255 yards and three touchdowns against host Seattle.

# Peralta, Diamondbacks edge Dodgers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — It had been nearly four months since the Diamondbacks and Dodgers played each other.

Not much has changed. Arizona remains the dominant team.

David Peralta hit a three-run homer in the fifth inning and the NL West leaders won 3-1 on Thursday night in the opener of a pivotal series.

"This is a tight division right now and to be able to start out like this and put a little bit more of a gap between us is huge," winning pitcher Robbie Ray said.

The loss dropped the Dodgers two games behind Arizona and snapped their five-game winning streak, which they had put together against last-place San Diego and Texas. Los Angeles struck out 15 times, in-

cluding four by Chris Taylor.

Arizona leads the season series 9-4.

Ray (4-2) gave up one run and four hits in 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings. He struck out nine and walked two to earn his first victory since June 23 at Miami. The left-hander hadn't figured into a decision in seven consecutive starts since July 20, the longest streak in franchise history by a starter.

"That is about as connected as I have been all year," Ray said. "I felt in control of the game. I felt like my pitches were crisp. There was good separation between my curveball and my fastball and I kept them off-balance the whole game."

Brad Boxberger got the final two outs in the ninth to earn his 31st save in 37 chances. He struck out Taylor and got Yasiel Puig on a called third strike.

Peralta sent his 26th homer

into right field on the first pitch from Rich Hill with two outs, giving Arizona a 3-0 lead.

"I thought it was just going to hit the wall," Peralta said. "It was a low line-drive but it worked out our way this time."

Hill (6-5) allowed three runs and six hits in five innings. The left-hander struck out seven and walked none in his first loss since July 10.

"Just a bad pitch. Poor choice on my part and it cost us the game," Hill said of Peralta's homer. "These games are huge right now."

The Dodgers' lone run came on Manny Machado's 33rd homer in the sixth, his fourth in his last five games.

The Dodgers went 0-for-5 with runners in scoring position and stranded six.

"We did exactly what we wanted to at the plate," Machado said. "Sometimes you fail."

Arizona's defense turned three double plays, including in the sixth when pinch-hitter Cody Bellinger lined to first, where Matt Kemp was doubled off.

Los Angeles had the potential go-ahead run at the plate in the bottom of the eighth, but Kemp grounded into an inning-ending double play with runners on the corners.

Puig contributed to a 1-2-3 inning in the second when he was safe at first on an error by Paul Goldschmidt only to get tagged out attempting to advance on the play.

Dodgers reliever Caleb Ferguson pitched out of a bases-loaded jam in the eighth. After giving up three consecutive one-out singles, he struck out John Ryan Murphy and pinch-hitter Christian Walker lined out to right to end the inning.

## MLB roundup

### Bradley, Red Sox rally in ninth to beat White Sox

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a sacrifice fly in Boston's four-run seventh inning and a tiebreaking single in the ninth, helping the Red Sox beat the Chicago White Sox 9-4 on Thursday night.

Ian Kinsler sparked the winning rally with a one-out single off Thyago Vieira (1-1) for the last of his three hits. Blake Swihart then walked before Bradley drove in Kinsler with a liner into right field.

Major league-leading Boston poured it on from there. Andrew Benintendi added another RBI single and J.D. Martinez hit a three-run drive for his 39th homer, making it 9-4 and sending much of the crowd of 18,015 to the exits.

Mookie Betts also homered as the Red Sox (93-42) earned their third straight win and increased their AL East advantage to 8½ games over the New York Yankees.

**Brewers 2, Reds 1 (11):** Lorenzo Cain hit a home run off the top of the left-field fence in the 11th inning and Milwaukee, a day after winning a slugfest that went extras, edged host Cincinnati.

NL batting leader Christian Yelich went 0-for-4 with a bases-loaded walk for Milwaukee.

**Indians 5, Twins 3:** Jason Kipnis hit a three-run homer that broke a sixth-inning tie and sent host Cleveland over Minnesota.

Mike Clevinger (10-7) allowed two unearned runs in 6<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings. The right-hander struck out nine and gave up four hits.

**Tigers 8, Yankees 7:** Victor Martinez hit his second home run of the game and Niko Goodrum followed with a homer off Dellin Betances (4-4) in the ninth inning, rallying visiting Detroit past New York.

The Tigers, last in the majors in home runs, connected five

times and ended a five-game losing streak.

**Cardinals 5, Pirates 0:** Harrison Bader and John Gant (6-5) hit back-to-back home runs, Gant pitched into the sixth inning and host St. Louis beat Pittsburgh.

The Cardinals have won 17 of 21 and took their 10th consecutive series, their longest series winning streak since 2009.

**Cubs 5, Braves 4:** Tommy La Stella hit the first pinch-hit homer of his career against his former team, carrying visiting Chicago over Atlanta in a matchup of NL division leaders.

After Atlanta went ahead with a three-run fifth, La Stella launched a two-run shot off Mike Foltynewicz (10-9) that nearly reached the Chop House restaurant above the right-field seats.

**Angels 5, Astros 2:** Andrew Heaney (8-8) threw six score-

less innings, Andreton Simons capped a four-run sixth inning with a three-run double and visiting Los Angeles beat Houston.

Heaney scattered five hits with six strikeouts to earn his first road win since Sept. 2, 2015, at Oakland.

**Padres 3, Rockies 2 (13):** Franmil Reyes homered with two outs in the 13th inning to give host San Diego a victory over Colorado.

Reyes connected off Bryan Shaw (4-6) for his 12th homer. It was only the sixth hit for San Diego.

**Mariners 7, Athletics 1:** Wade LeBlanc (8-3) pitched seven scoreless innings, Mitch Haniger hit his 23rd home run and visiting Seattle jumped on Oakland early and held on for a victory.

Robinson Cano had two hits and an RBI after being dropped down a spot in the batting order after second baseman Jean Segura was scratched.