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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Spencer urges expanded review of JAG Corps

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Navy Secretary Richard Spencer has called for an expanded review of the Navy's Judge Advocate General Corps to include an assessment of the Marines' Judge Advocates after a recent court-martial raised concerns about the service's ability to handle legal cases effectively.

Spencer issued a memo Wednesday that directs Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger to conduct a comprehensive review of their legal corps, calling it a "periodic review" to ensure readiness and their ability to support the Navy's mission.

Spencer's review expands upon a similar request by former CNO Adm. John Richardson, who called for a review of the leadership and performance of the Navy's JAG Corps earlier this month after the tur-

bulent court-martial of Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Edward Gallagher raised concerns about the service's legal staff.

During the Gallagher court-martial, the senior trial counsel, Cmdr. Chris Czaplak, was taken off the case in June after concerns were raised by defense lawyers about Gallagher's ability to have a fair trial when it became known Czaplak had participated in a Naval Criminal Investigative Service investigation looking into media leaks about the case. Czaplak was reassigned to a position at the Washington Navy Yard earlier this month.

At the same time that Richardson called for the review, he took over responsibility for Gallagher's case, allowing him to oversee any post-trial actions, including sentencing.

He also dismissed all charges against SEAL Lt. Jacob Portier for having a reenlistment ceremony for Gallagher next to the dead body of the Islamic State fighter who Gallagher was accused of stabbing to

death when the prisoner was being treated for injuries. Gallagher was found not guilty of the murder.

Richardson also decided not to allow any actions to be taken against Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Corey Scott, who confessed during Gallagher's trial to killing the ISIS fighter. Scott was given immunity by the prosecutors to testify at the trial.

At the end of July, Spencer rescinded several military awards given to prosecutors in the Gallagher case after President Donald Trump directed him to do so. The president had tweeted the prosecutors were "ridiculously" given the Navy Achievement Medal after losing the case.

The secretary has set up a panel of experts — supported by Navy and Marine Corps working groups — to conduct the review. The review's results are expected to be provided to Spencer within 90 days.

N. Korea touts test of 'super-large' launching system

BY KIM GAMEL
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea said Sunday that it tested a new "super-large multiple rocket launcher system" the day before, showing off its growing arsenal amid stalled nuclear talks with the U.S.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed the launch, calling it a "great weapon" and praising the "young national defense scientists" who developed it from scratch, the state-run Korean Central News Agency reported.

Tensions also rose on another front as South Korea began a two-day military exercise asserting its control over a cluster of islets that also are claimed by Japan.

The drills, conducted twice per year, followed Seoul's

announcement that it was withdrawing from a military intelligence sharing agreement with Japan due to an escalating trade spat between the two U.S. allies.

The Yonhap News Agency reported that warships and planes, as well as ground forces, descended on the largely uninhabited rocky outcroppings, which South Korea calls Dokdo and Japan calls Takeshima.

Tokyo criticized the drills as relations between the two countries have deteriorated to the worst levels in decades.

"It's an exercise to guard our sovereignty and territory," South Korean presidential spokeswoman Ko Min-jung was quoted as saying by the Yonhap News Agency.

She said the training was aimed at improving defenses against potential threats from

"all forces," not just Japan.

South Korea's military said the North had fired two projectiles that were presumed to be short-range ballistic missiles on Saturday. They flew nearly 240 miles and reached an altitude of 60 miles before splashing into the sea off the peninsula's east coast, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

KCNA said a "super-large multiple rocket launcher system" had been tested.

"The test-fire proved that all the tactical and technological specifications of the system correctly reached the preset indexes," it said.

KCNA also quoted Kim as underscoring "the need to push ahead with an indomitable offensive campaign ... to continue to step up the development of Korean-style strategic and tactical weapons for resolutely

frustrating the ever-mounting military threats and pressure offensive of the hostile forces."

Photos showed rockets blasting off from a mobile launcher as well as Kim smiling as he watched.

It was the seventh such launch in a month, dashing hopes for a resumption of stalled nuclear talks soon.

President Donald Trump has so far played down concerns about the testing activity because the missiles have been short-range.

U.N. Security Council sanctions resolutions ban the North from using ballistic missile technology.

However, Trump has suggested his red line would be a return to the long-range missile and nuclear testing that raised fears of war in 2016-17 before diplomacy gained momentum.

Top Iranian official visits G-7 in France

The Washington Post

BIARRITZ, France — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif made an impromptu visit to the city hosting the Group of Seven summit Sunday, a surprise move that caught President Donald Trump off-guard and added another element of tension to the meeting of world economic leaders.

Zarif's arrival in Biarritz appeared to be a covert initiative by French Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron, a senior European official said, and other leaders were not warned ahead of time. There was no immediate plan for him to meet anyone other than French officials, the officials said.

Trump had little to say about the unexpected guest.

"No comment," Trump told reporters when asked about news that Zarif was coming to town.

Zarif came to Biarritz on the invitation of his French

counterpart, Jean-Yves Le Drian, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi wrote on Twitter. The aim of the visit is to "continue discussions about recent initiatives between the presidents of Iran and France," he said.

He said that there would be no meetings or negotiations with the American delegation during the trip.

Zarif's only confirmed meeting in Biarritz was with Le Drian, a French diplomat said, speaking under ground rules of anonymity.

White House officials have complained for weeks that Macron was trying to forcefully broker talks between the Trump administration and Iran, which the U.S. president has branded a "number one terrorist nation."

French officials have said that Trump's "maximum pressure" approach to Iran is doomed to fail. They have sought to persuade the White House to change course and

accept a new deal with the Iranians.

As part of Trump's pressure campaign — which has involved a mix of sanctions and public threats aimed at crippling Iran's economy — the Trump administration recently imposed sanctions and travel restrictions on Zarif.

The foreign minister's plane landing in Biarritz — at the invitation of the French president during a summit of world leaders — was a symbolic illustration of how isolated the Trump administration has become in its approach to Iran.

Even as Iranian forces have stepped up their aggression by seizing several tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, European leaders have sought to maintain the nuclear deal without the U.S. Zarif's impromptu visit to the G-7 site appeared to be an unconventional gambit aimed at breaking the logjam.

Previous discussions on Iran during the summit have shown

little progress as leaders could not even publicly agree about the terms of their talks.

Trump claimed Sunday to have not discussed a joint approach to Iran, even though French officials insisted an agreement had been reached between each of the leaders Saturday night.

"I haven't discussed that," Trump said. "We will do our own outreach, but I can't stop people from talking. If they want to talk they can talk."

Trump administration officials have previously criticized the French for talking to Iran.

When leaders discussed Iran over dinner on Saturday, they broadly agreed that Iran should not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons and that they should work to deescalate the current crisis, according to officials briefed on the closed-door talks.

Macron also pushed Trump to allow Iran to export a limited amount of oil — an effort that is a nonstarter with the White House.

Coast Guard commissions new combat-ready cutters

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The U.S. Coast Guard held a dual-commissioning ceremony for two Legend-class national security cutters Saturday at U.S. Coast Guard Base Honolulu.

U.S. Coast Guard cutter Midgett arrived in Honolulu from Pascagoula, Miss., on Aug. 16, joining its sister ship, U.S. Coast Guard cutter Kimball, which has been in Hawaii since December.

This new generation of cutters is designed to perform a wide range of missions beyond the Coast Guard's traditional search and rescue work, such as homeland security and defense.

They are replacing the 378-

foot, high-endurance Hamilton-class cutters that have been in the Coast Guard fleet for more than 50 years.

National security cutters are much longer, at 418 feet, with a top speed of more than 28 knots, or about 32 mph. They have a range of 13,800 miles and hold a crew of up to 160. They can stay at sea for three months.

Two Legend-class cutters, the Bertholf and the Stratton, have tag-teamed one another the past year in deployments to the western Pacific Ocean, where they and their crews served with the U.S. Navy 7th Fleet based in Japan.

The ships have taken part in training exercises with Pacific island nations and helped enforce United Nations sanctions on certain commodities, like

coal, headed for North Korea. The Bertholf in March passed through the Taiwan Strait, along with a destroyer.

When the Kimball arrived in Hawaii last year, the Coast Guard touted the new Legend-class as ready for actual combat. They are "the flagships of the Coast Guard's fleet, capable of executing the most challenging national security missions, including support to U.S. combatant commanders," the Coast Guard said in a news release then.

They are armed with a 57-millimeter gun, which can fire more than 200 rounds a minute and can be used against a high-speed, maneuvering surface vessel. Other arms include a 20-millimeter gun and four .50-caliber machine guns.

The Midgett and its crew did

not wait for commissioning to begin proving the value of the beefed-up cutters.

During its sojourn to Hawaii, the Midgett busted two go-fast vessels in separate incidents on July 25 and 31. The crew seized a combined 6,700 pounds of cocaine, estimated to have a street value of more than \$89 million.

"The national security cutter gets you further faster and delivers more capability once on-scene than any other cutter in the history of our service," Capt. Alan McCabe, commander of the Midgett, said in a news release after the seizure. "I am incredibly proud of the crew's efforts making these two seizures possible, and we are eager to conduct future operations throughout the Pacific."

Walsh to challenge Trump as GOP nominee

Associated Press

Joe Walsh, a former Illinois congressman and tea party favorite-turned-radio talk show host, announced a challenge Sunday to President Donald Trump for the Republican nomination in 2020, saying the incumbent is unfit for office and must be denied a second term.

"He's nuts. He's erratic. He's cruel. He stokes bigotry. He's incompetent. He doesn't know what he's doing," Walsh told ABC's "This Week."

The long shot portrayed himself as a legitimate alternative in a party where he said many are opposed to Trump but are

"scared to death" of saying so publicly.

His campaign slogan: "Be brave."

Polls show Trump is backed by most Republican voters, and the lone rival already in the race is former Massachusetts Gov. Bill Weld, the 2016 Libertarian Party vice presidential nominee who is regarded as fiscally conservative but socially liberal.

Undeterred from pressing ahead with his candidacy, Walsh said, "I think this thing ... will catch on like wildfire."

The former Trump booster added: "I'm a conservative. And I think there's a decent chance to present to Republican voters

a conservative without all the baggage."

Walsh narrowly won a House seat from suburban Chicago in the 2010 tea party wave but lost a 2012 reelection bid and has since hosted a radio talk show. He has a history of inflammatory statements regarding Muslims and others and declared just before the 2016 election that if Trump lost, "I'm grabbing my musket."

But he has since soured on Trump, criticizing the president over growth of the federal deficit and writing in a New York Times column that the president was "a racial arsonist who encourages bigotry and xenophobia to rouse his base."

The road ahead for any Republican primary challenger will be difficult.

"Look, this isn't easy to do. ... I'm opening up my life to tweets and attacks. Everything I've said and tweeted now, Trump's going to go after, and his bullies are going to go after," Walsh said.

Asked whether he was prepared for that, Walsh replied, "Yes, I'm ready for it."

On Sunday, Walsh said he apologized for past divisive comments.

"I helped create Trump. There's no doubt about that, the personal, ugly politics. I regret that. And I'm sorry for that," he said.

Trump uses obscure law for basis of trade 'order'

Associated Press

President Donald Trump is threatening to use the emergency authority granted by a powerful but obscure federal law to make good on his tweeted "order" to U.S. businesses to cut ties in China amid a spiraling trade war between the two nations.

China's announcement Friday that it was raising tariffs on \$75 billion in U.S. imports sent Trump into a rage and White House aides scrambling for a response.

Trump fired off on Twitter, declaring American companies "are hereby ordered to immediately start looking for an alternative to China."

He later clarified that he was threatening to make use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act in the trade war, raising questions about the wisdom and propriety of making the 1977 act used to target rogue regimes, terrorists and drug traffickers the newest weapon in the clash between the world's largest economies.

It would mark the latest grasp of authority by Trump, who has claimed widespread powers not sought by his predecessors de-

spite his own past criticism of their use of executive powers.

"For all of the Fake News Reporters that don't have a clue as to what the law is relative to Presidential powers, China, etc., try looking at the Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977," Trump tweeted late Friday. "Case closed!"

The act gives presidents wide berth in regulating international commerce during times of declared national emergencies. Trump threatened to use those powers earlier this year to place tariffs on imports from Mexico in a bid to force the U.S. neighbor to do more to address illegal crossings at their shared border.

It was not immediately clear how Trump could use the act to force American businesses to move their manufacturing out of China and to the U.S., and Trump's threat appeared premature as he has not declared an emergency with respect to China.

"If I want, I could declare a national emergency," Trump told reporters Sunday during a breakfast meeting with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at the Group of Seven summit in Biarritz, France.

NJ schools warn parents of probe over lunch fees

The Philadelphia Inquirer

New Jersey public school districts are trying to force parents whose children have overdue lunch fees to pay up or else.

At first, their kids may not get a meal. Later on, parents may face a possible state probe for child abuse.

Across the region, policies by districts vary, from giving students an alternate meal such as a tuna sandwich, peanut butter and jelly or slices of cheese on bread to eventually refusing to serve students anything until the debt is paid.

The issue emerged recently in Cherry Hill, raising questions about other districts' policies.

In Gloucester County, the Washington Township School District — one of the largest in the region, with 7,400 students — is also among the systems that has adopted an even tougher policy. Parents can be reported to the state Department of Children and Families, which investigates allegations of possible neglect or abuse.

Jan Giel, a district spokesperson, said the district has

not reported any parents to the state for not paying a lunch debt. Other districts in the tri-county area that have similar provisions include Evesham, Lenape Regional, Glassboro, Gloucester Township, Harrison Township and Pennsauken.

State Department of Children and Families Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer said threatening families who cannot pay for a student's lunch bill "is a misuse and misrepresentation of the state agency charged with investigating."

In 2020, a state law will require districts to report to the state Department of Agriculture, which oversees school lunch programs, how many student meal accounts are delinquent, and whether meals were denied or other action was taken.

A packed room is expected when the school board discusses the proposal at a meeting on Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Carusi Middle School.

No action can be taken until after two public hearings, but residents will have a chance to voice their opinions.

Officials say 2 Israeli drones crash in Hezbollah stronghold

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Two Israeli drones crashed in a Hezbollah stronghold in the Lebanese capital overnight, Lebanese and Hezbollah officials said Sunday, saying the first fell on the roof of a building housing the group's media office while the second landed in a plot behind it.

The spokesman for Iran-backed Hezbollah said the group did not fire on any of the drones, which crashed amid heightened tensions between neighboring Israel and Iran and shortly after Israeli warplanes attacked targets near the Syrian capital, Damascus.

Israeli aircraft continued to violate Lebanese airspace Sunday, flying low over Beirut hours after the drones had crashed, raising fears of a wider conflict.

Hezbollah spokesman Mohammed Afif said a small, unmanned reconnaissance drone fell on a building housing Hezbollah's media office in the

Moawwad neighborhood in Dahyeh, the group's stronghold in southern Beirut.

He said a second drone, which appeared to have been sent by Israel to search for the first one less than 45 minutes later, exploded in the air and crashed in an empty plot nearby, shattering windows in surrounding buildings. He said the second drone was likely armed, judging by the damage it caused.

Residents said they heard a loud blast that triggered a nighttime fire.

"We did not shoot down or explode any of the drones," Afif told The Associated Press.

He said Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah will give the official and "appropriate" response in a previously scheduled televised appearance later Sunday.

There was no immediate Israeli comment on the drone incident or Hezbollah's remarks.

AP journalists on the scene Sunday said the 11-floor building that houses Hezbollah's

media office as well as nearby buildings suffered minor damage and broken glass. On the second floor, where the group has its offices, shattered glass littered the floors and some of the desks were overturned. A portrait of Nasrallah was on a desk littered with glass.

A Lebanese army statement said an Israeli drone came down while the other exploded in the sky over Beirut, causing material damage.

Israeli warplanes regularly violate Lebanese airspace and have struck inside neighboring Syria from Lebanon on several occasions, angering Hezbollah and Lebanese officials, who have complained to the United Nations.

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri described the crash of the two drones as a violation and "aggression" against Lebanese sovereignty. He said the developments overnight constitute a threat to regional stability and an attempt to escalate the situation.

Airports in Britain to have 3D bag screenings

Associated Press

LONDON — Putting small containers of liquids in plastic bags could soon be a thing of the past for airline passengers in Britain after the government announced plans Sunday to introduce 3D screening equipment for carry-on luggage at all major airports.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said in a statement that the new technology will improve security and could also mean "an end to passengers having to use plastic bags or rationing what they take away with them."

Under current security restrictions, passengers are not allowed containers carrying more than 3.38 fluid ounces of liquids in their carry-on luggage and the containers have to be in a clear plastic bag.

The screeners already are being used in trials at London's Heathrow Airport, and they will progressively be rolled out to other British airports by Dec. 1, 2022, the government said.

Hong Kong police draw guns during nighttime protest

Associated Press

HONG KONG — Hong Kong police drew their guns Sunday night after protesters attacked officers with sticks and rods, and police brought out water cannon trucks for the first time, an escalation in the summer-long protests that have shaken the city's government and residents.

The day's main showdown took place on a major drag in the outlying Tsuen Wan district following a protest march that ended in a nearby park. While a large crowd rallied in the park, a group of hard-line protesters took over a main street, strewing bamboo poles on the pavement and lining up orange and white traffic barriers and cones to obstruct police.

After hoisting warning flags, police used tear gas to try to disperse the crowd. Protesters responded by throwing bricks and gasoline bombs toward the police. The

result was a surreal scene of small fires and scattered paving bricks on the street between the two sides, rising clouds of tear gas and green and blue laser lights pointed by the protesters at the police.

The protesters eventually decided to abandon their position. Two water cannon trucks and a phalanx of police vehicles with flashing lights joined riot police on foot as they advanced up the street. They met little resistance.

Television footage showed a water cannon being fired once, but perhaps more as a test as it didn't appear to reach the retreating protesters.

Prior to the skirmishes, tens of thousands of umbrella-carrying protesters marched in the rain. Many filled Tsuen Wan Park, the endpoint of the rally, chanting, "Fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong," the South China Morning Post newspaper reported.

The march in Hong Kong's New Territories started near the Kwai Fong train station, which has become a focal point for protesters after police used tear gas there earlier this month. Police with riot gear could be seen moving into position along the march route.

A large group clashed with police Saturday after a march in the Kowloon Bay neighborhood, building barricades and setting fires in the streets. Police said they arrested 29 people for various offenses, including unlawful assembly, possession of offensive weapons and assaulting police officers.

The clashes, while not as prolonged or violent as some earlier ones, ended a brief lull in the violence. The protests had turned largely peaceful the previous weekend after weeks of escalating violence.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

\$10K reward offered in killing of burros

CA LOS ANGELES — Someone has been killing the wild burros in the Mojave Desert, and the Bureau of Land Management is offering up to \$10,000 to anyone who can help catch the culprit or culprits.

Over the past three months, 42 burro carcasses containing gunshot wounds have been found along a 60-mile stretch of Interstate 15, the main highway linking Los Angeles to Las Vegas.

The animals are protected under federal law. Anyone found guilty of harassing, branding or killing one faces a fine of up to \$2,000 and a year in jail.

The reward offer is in addition to others of \$2,500, \$5,000 and \$1,000 offered, respectively, by the American Wild Horse Campaign, Return to Freedom and The Cloud Foundation organizations.

Kickball match leads to mayor-umpire spat

SC MONCKS CORNER — A disagreement during a kickball game between the mayor of a town and an umpire led to a city official asking that the umpire be assigned elsewhere.

The (Charleston, S.C.) Post and Courier reported Moncks Corner Mayor Michael Locklear has been accused of behaving unprofessionally at the Aug. 6 game.

Locklear admitted he yelled at umpire Graylenn Moran Jr. when Moran called Locklear's adult son out at home plate. Moran said the mayor stormed out to the plate and "went crazy" on him.

Charleston Officials SC CEO

William Hamm said Moncks Corner Recreation Director Becky Ellison asked that Moran not be used for any more of the town's kickball games.

Bee not seen in 100 years is spotted

WI MADISON — A rare bee not seen in more than a century has turned up in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.

U.S. Forest Service scientists found the bee in July while surveying pollinators as part of an inventory of native bees in the Great Lakes region. It's known commonly as a cuckoo bee, but its scientific name is a mouthful: *Epeoloides pilosulus*.

The bee was once widespread in eastern and central America but was thought to have gone extinct. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported it was then found in 2002 in Nova Scotia, Canada — and only two such bees have been found since, in Connecticut in 2006 and New York in 2014.

Arrest warrant issued for ice cream licking

TX PORT ARTHUR — An arrest warrant has been issued for a man who authorities said posted social media video of himself licking ice cream from a carton and returning it to a supermarket freezer.

The warrant charges D'Adrien Anderson, 24, with criminal mischief, a misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$4,000 fine.

The incident happened Aug. 19 at a Walmart in Port Arthur. Authorities said store surveillance cameras showed the man finally take the Blue Bell ice cream out of the freezer and buy it, which isn't captured in the video.

Police say \$37K in sound gear stolen

VT COLCHESTER — A Vermont police department is investigating the theft of about \$37,000 worth of equipment stolen from a music center during the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival.

The Tuesday night or Wednesday morning burglary at the Elley Long Music Center in Colchester occurred when at least one person broke into an engineering room and stole a case of audio equipment.

Hospital dresses babies as 'Oz' figures

PA PITTSBURGH — A Pittsburgh's hospital's obstetrics department became Ozstetrics as the staff dressed up four newborns as characters from "The Wizard of Oz."

Allegheny Heath Network's West Penn Hospital wanted to honor the 80th anniversary of the film. The hospital posted photos on social media.

The babies were dressed as Dorothy, Scarecrow, the Cowardly Lion and the Tin Man.

The hospital said the babies will soon learn there's no place like home.

Sheriff arrested on theft, ethics charges

AL ATHENS — Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall announced Thursday that Mike Blakely, the longtime sheriff of Limestone County, has been indicted on 13 charges, including illegally taking money from his campaign account and law enforcement funds, using his position to obtain interest-free loans and other charges.

The attorney general said the charges cover a range of con-

duct over multiple years.

State authorities said the sheriff, 68, surrendered Thursday and was released on \$49,000 bond.

The Alabama Ethics Commission in October referred a complaint against Blakely to state investigators.

Goodwill store gets cigar box with a gun

IN ANDERSON — A Goodwill store said it discovered an old unloaded revolver inside a cigar box among the items given by an anonymous person.

The gun was turned over to police. Maj. Joel Sandefur told The (Anderson) Herald Bulletin that he's heard similar stories about unusual donations to thrift shops, but typically not guns.

Sam Perry, a spokesman for the Goodwill store, said "a sword, a spear" — they've seen it all. The store doesn't accept firearms.

Town is fighting rat infestation

ME HARTLAND — Officials in a Maine town say they are trying to stop a rat infestation that has plagued their community for more than six months.

Hartland residents say garbage and manure left at one home attracted dozens of rats.

Resident Michelle Cole told WGME that rats have bitten her dog three times. The rats have also bitten several neighbors.

Neighbors voiced their concerns at a town council meeting.

WABI reported that the home is located next to Somerset Elementary School, so the town is aiming to solve the problem before the school year begins.

From wire reports

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Colts QB Luck announces retirement

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Andrew Luck watched one last game from the sideline Saturday.

Then he said goodbye to the NFL.

The Indianapolis Colts quarterback heard boos as he walked away from the field, then walked to the podium and made the surprise decision official. The oft-injured star is retiring at age 29.

"I'm in pain, I'm still in pain. It's been four years of this pain, rehab cycle," Luck said. "It's a myriad of issues — calf strain, posterior ankle impingement, high ankle sprain. Part of my journey going forward will be figuring out how to feel better."

Luck wasn't planning to make the announcement following Saturday's 27-17 loss to the Chicago Bears. But when ESPN first reported the news during the fourth quarter, Luck changed the plan for a Sunday afternoon announcement.

Instead, he held a 25-minute impromptu news conference.

At times he sounded wistful. At others, his voice cracked with emotion.

One thing was clear: The endless barrage of injuries stripped away his joy for the game and prompted him to walk away so he could enjoy the life he wants.

"There's no doubt when you hear him

talk about the cycle of pain and injury and rehab, you can hear that," coach Frank Reich said. "There's a saying in football that everyone knows and everybody lives by, it's next man up and even though this situation is unique, no one is exempt."

That task now falls to Jacoby Brissett, a fourth-year player whom the Colts acquired in a cutdown weekend trade two years ago.

He went 4-11 as a starter in the 2017 season after taking over for opening day starter Scott Tolzien.

But the Colts had already been preparing for the possibility Luck might not be ready for the Sept. 8 season opener against the Los Angeles Chargers. Luck was diagnosed with a strained left calf in March and team officials kept him out of all of the team's offseason workouts.

He returned to limited action when training camp opened in late July. After three practices, though, the lingering pain near his ankle forced him back into rehab. He hadn't practiced with the team since, though he did throw passes in pregame warmups before last week's preseason game.

"I had a thought that it might be my last time throwing at Lucas Oil as a current member of the Colts team," Luck said.

"And I wanted to make sure I could go out and enjoy it."

It wasn't just the leg.

He played with shoulder pain for most of 2015 and 2016, and his 2015 season ended when he suffered a lacerated kidney. He missed all of 2017 following shoulder surgery and then the happy-go-lucky former Stanford star dealt with more pain and more endless months of rehab.

"I am going to retire," Luck said. "This is not an easy decision. It's the hardest decision of my life. But it is the right decision for me."

Luck's former coach Chuck Pagano made his first return to Lucas Oil Stadium since he was fired as the Colts' head coach following the 2017 season. Luck did not play that season because he was recovering from surgery on his throwing shoulder.

He returned last season and led the Colts back to the playoffs for the first time in four years, winning the league's Comeback Player of the Year award.

Reich had said he hoped to have an answer about Luck's availability for the Sept. 8 season opener after the third preseason game. This might not have been the one he wanted — and certainly didn't expect.

"Teams win, don't write the end of the story yet," Reid said. "I'm telling you — the story's not over yet."

NFL preseason roundup

Garoppolo bounces back, leads 49ers past Chiefs

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — San Francisco quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo was impressive in his return to Arrowhead Stadium, and Kansas City counterpart Patrick Mahomes may have been even better, as the 49ers beat the Chiefs 27-17 in their third preseason game Saturday night.

Garoppolo was 14-for-20 for 188 yards while playing the entire first half in a much better showing than his preseason debut against Denver. Garoppolo led San Francisco deep into Kansas City territory four times, throwing a nice TD pass to Matt Breida and getting two field goals from Robbie Gould.

It was an encouraging night for Garoppolo on another front:

He was able to put to rest any lingering memories from last season, when he tore up his knee during a Week 3 game against the Chiefs.

Cowboys 34, Texans 0: Deshaun Watson didn't get the longer preseason look he wanted in a loss to Dallas.

Houston couldn't get its quarterback off the field fast enough, especially after running back Lamar Miller sustained what coach Bill O'Brien called a serious knee injury on the second play.

Watson didn't return for a second series after getting dropped twice in three plays.

Saints 28, Jets 13: Drew Brees threw a 19-yard touchdown pass to Michael Thomas to cap his only drive in his preseason debut, and New Orleans

won at New York.

Vikings 20, Cardinals 9: Dalvin Cook had an 85-yard touchdown run for host Minnesota, the highlight of a rough first half by the first-team offense in a win over Arizona.

Rams 10, Broncos 6: Brandon Allen passed for 162 yards, and Jalen Greene caught a 4-yard touchdown pass from John Wolford with 12:38 to play in host Los Angeles' victory over Denver.

Both coaches sat nearly all of their starters for the final NFL preseason game at the 96-year-old Coliseum, and neither team managed a touchdown before Wolford led a 52-yard drive spanning the final two quarters and capped it with a sharp pass to Greene.

Wolford, who went 6-for-12

for 64 yards, is competing for the Rams' No. 3 quarterback spot with Allen, who had the job last season. Allen went 12-for-19 and mostly looked sharp while Jared Goff and backup Blake Bortles watched from the sideline.

Almost every Rams player expected to make a significant contribution this season skipped this game in keeping with coach Sean McVay's total disinterest in risking his starters' health in exhibitions.

Seahawks 23, Chargers 15: Russell Wilson directed a pair of first-half touchdown drives, going 6-for-9 for 73 yards, and Seattle beat host Los Angeles. Wilson has led the Seahawks to a pair of TDs and a field goal in five possessions in two preseason games.

Lightning strike injures 6 at Tour Championship

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Six people were injured Saturday when lightning struck a 60-foot pine at the Tour Championship where they were taking cover from rain and showered them with debris, Atlanta police said. They been treated and released.

The third round of the season-ending PGA Tour event had been suspended for about 30 minutes because of storms in the area, and fans were instructed to seek shelter. The strike hit the top of the tree just off the 16th tee and shattered the bark all the way to the bottom.

Brad Uhl of Atlanta was among those crammed under a hospital tent to the right of the 16th hole that was open to the public.

“There was just a big explosion and then an aftershock so strong you could feel the wind from it,” Uhl said after the last of the ambulances pulled out of the golf course. “It was just a flash out of the corner of the eye. It was raining and everyone was huddled near the tree.”

Uhl said the people on the ground were moving around before the ambulances arrived.

Atlanta Police spokesman James H. White III said five men and one female juvenile had sought shelter beneath a tree. Lightning struck the tree and all six were injured. He said they were taken to hospitals for further treatment, all of them alert, conscious and breathing.

Ambulances streamed into the private club about 6 miles east of downtown Atlanta, where 30 players are competing for the FedEx Cup and its \$15 million prize. The players already had been taken into the clubhouse before lightning hit, and before long East Lake was hit with a ground-shaking clap of thunder.

Justin Thomas, who had a one-shot lead through five holes when play was halted, said players were eating in the clubhouse when “it felt like the entire clubhouse shook” from the thunder clap.

“The first I heard anything was from one of my friends who came out to watch,” Thomas said. “He said, ‘Dude, I think someone got struck by lightning right next to us.’ And then word started spreading.”

Thomas said he had left tickets for another friend who was on the opposite side of where the tree was hit.

The PGA Tour canceled the rest of golf Saturday, with the round to resume at 8 a.m. Sunday, followed by the final round.

Franks struggles, but Gators' defense rules Hurricanes

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Feleipe Franks was clutch one minute and confused the next, showing the kind of inconsistency that got him benched five times in two years.

His job might be in jeopardy again if not for Florida's defense.

Franks made up for three inexcusable turnovers by accounting for three touchdowns, doing just enough to help the eighth-ranked Gators beat rival Miami 24-20 Saturday night in a wild opening game of the college football season.

“Last five minutes of the game, I aged 10 years,” Florida coach Dan Mullen said. “That was exhausting.”

Franks threw for 254 yards and two scores and ran for another as the Gators won for just the second time in their last nine meetings with the Hurricanes. Franks also threw two interceptions — both horribly inaccurate passes — in the fourth quarter.

He looked anywhere from good to great, from lost to downright awful.

He dropped in a perfect pass to Josh Hammond that gained 65 yards and set up the go-ahead score in the fourth and later in the quarter threw right to a defender. He also fumbled in the first half while deciding what to do on a read-option play.

Florida's defense bailed Franks out time and time again, finishing with a staggering 10 sacks and 16 tackles for a loss.

Miami converted a fourth-and-34 play with 1:30 remaining when Marco Wilson was flagged for pass interference. The Hurricanes moved the chains again thanks to another pass interference call against Trey Dean. One official threw one more flag in the end zone with 20 seconds to play, but it was picked up following a discussion.

The Hurricanes failed to score, and they needed a touchdown after Bubba Baxa missed a 27-yard field goal attempt wide right early in the fourth.

“We don't have the maturity level to see a victory through,” first-year Canes coach Manny Diaz said. “That's a maturing process we have to go through.”

Franks took a knee to run out the clock, celebrated with teammates and then ran toward the tunnel and punted the ball into the stands. At least this one didn't count as a turnover — or result in a penalty.

The teams combined for five turnovers — Florida had four — and 225 yards in penalties.

Miami got to break out its revised Turnover Chain after each of Florida's gaffes and was able to debut its Touchdown Rings following both trips to the end zone.

“We wanted to spice it up,” Diaz said. “The 305 (chain) came out really well. We talked about offense wanting something else, wanting something different. Hopefully we'll see a lot more of them.”

Miami's Jarren Williams completed 19 of 29 passes for 214 yards and a touchdown in his first career start. DeeJay Dallas ran for 95 yards, including a 50-yard scamper that put the Canes up 20-17 early in the fourth.

Gutsy calls

Florida converted all four of its fourth-down tries, but none of them was more important than Mullen's fake punt early.

Punter Tommy Townsend ran for 6 yards on a fourth-and-3 play from the Florida 28. Kadarius Toney turned a screen pass into a 66-yard score on the next play.

The Gators scored again after Jeff Thomas muffed a punt. Van Jefferson recovered for Florida, and Franks found Lamical Perine over the middle for an 8-yard touchdown three plays later.

Woe-lines

Both offensive lines struggled. Miami started two freshman offensive tackles, and it showed in giving up double-digit sacks. Florida had four new starters and finished with just 52 yards on the ground.

Pregame suspensions

Florida suspended four players for the opener, including safety Brad Stewart and defensive tackle Tedarrell Slaton. The Gators also held out receiver Rick Wells and walk-on defensive back Pat Mooror for not living up to “the Gator Standard.”

Miami, meanwhile, suspended sophomore cornerback DJ Ivey for a “violation of team rules.” The Hurricanes also were without backup safety Bubba Bolden, who did not suit up for Saturday night's game.

Spurrier & Meyer

Former Florida coaches Steve Spurrier and Urban Meyer watched the game from a luxury suite alongside Gators athletic director Scott Stricklin. Spurrier serves as an ambassador to his alma mater. Meyer, who won two national championships at Florida (2006, 2008) and another at Ohio State (2014), is still receiving paychecks from the Buckeyes because he's co-teaching a character and leadership class there.

So Meyer wearing a blue Gators polo was met with some raised eyebrows. Meyer also works as a Fox Sports analyst.

Nats beat Cubs, win 4th straight

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Trea Turner's renewed focus on the little things is producing big results.

Turner reached base four times and scored twice, Yan Gomes and Howie Kendrick each drove in two runs and the surging Washington Nationals beat the Chicago Cubs 7-2 on Saturday.

Turner got Washington off to a quick start, going 2-for-3 with two walks and a stolen base to extend his streak of reaching base safely to 31 games, the longest current streak in the majors.

"He's taking his walks," Nationals manager Dave Martinez said. "The biggest thing, with two strikes, he's figuring out a way to put the ball in play. It's been working. When he gets on base, he creates havoc. Usually when he's on there, especially early, he tends to score."

Washington has won four straight and six of seven to extend its lead over Chicago for the top NL wild-card spot to three games. The Nationals have scored a total of 97 runs in their last nine games.

Anthony Rendon stretched his hitting streak to 11 games and drove in a run.

A day after losing to the Nationals 9-3, the Cubs dropped a second consecutive game at Wrigley Field for the first time since June 25-26 against Atlanta. First baseman Anthony Rizzo exited in the fifth inning with tightness in his middle back — he missed time in May with back trouble.

Washington starter Joe Ross, who had to leave his last start after being hit in the right shin by a comebacker, allowed two runs on six hits in 4¹/₃ innings. Five Nationals relievers combined to hold Chicago to one hit over the final 4²/₃ innings.

Wander Suero (4-7) got the final two outs of the fifth to get the win.

"Since we started winning quite a bit, the bullpen's been huge for us," Turner said.

MLB roundup

Turner powers Dodgers past Yanks

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Kenley Jansen escaped a bases-loaded jam in a bizarre ninth inning that saw both managers on the field trying to figure out what happened, and the Los Angeles Dodgers held off the New York Yankees 2-1 Saturday.

Jansen struck out Mike Tauchman and pinch-hitter Gary Sanchez to end a matchup between the teams with the best records in baseball.

But it was the play right before that to load the bases that left most everyone in the ballpark wondering what was going on.

There were runners at first and second with one out when Gio Urshela hit a grounder to third baseman Justin Turner, who looked to start a game-ending double play. Second baseman Max Muncy caught Turner's flip but then got wiped out by Brett Gardner's hard slide for an apparent forceout.

Gleyber Torres, who started the play on second, rounded third and then headed home with Muncy down on the ground, trying to score the tying run. Instead, Torres was stopped by the umpires because time had been called. The strange sequence set off a 2-minute replay review. Gardner was called safe at second, beating the throw with a hard but legal slide.

Turner hit a two-run homer in the third for the Dodgers. Jansen earned his 27th save.

Red Sox 5, Padres 4: Brock Holt homered on All-Star closer Kirby Yates' first pitch of the ninth inning to lift Boston to a win at San Diego.

The Red Sox blew a 4-0 lead before Holt put them ahead again by hitting his third homer of the season to open the ninth. The ball sailed over right fielder Hunter Renfroe and into the Home Run Deck. Yates dropped to 0-4.

Orioles 7, Rays 1: Pedro Severino hit his first career grand slam, Hanser Alberto and Jonathan Villar homered on successive pitches and host

Baltimore beat Tampa Bay.

John Means (9-9) allowed one run and five hits over seven innings. He struck out seven and walked none.

Michael Brosseau homered for the Rays.

Pirates 14, Reds 0: Josh Bell topped 100 RBIs for the first time in the majors, hitting a three-run homer as host Pittsburgh routed Cincinnati.

After Colin Moran gave the Pirates a 7-0 lead with a pinch-hit grand slam in the sixth inning, Bell lined a fastball from Kevin Gausman into the left-field bleachers in the seventh to reach 102 RBIs.

Phillies 9, Marlins 3: Corey Dickerson had four hits and five RBIs as Philadelphia won at Miami. Zach Eflin pitched six solid innings for his first win since June 24. Eflin (8-11) allowed two runs, six hits and struck out two. Three Phillies relievers allowed one run — on Jorge Alfaro's homer — over the final three innings.

Indians 4, Royals 2: Franmil Reyes hit a three-run homer to help host Cleveland beat Kansas City in a game in which the Indians lost third baseman Jose Ramirez to a right wrist injury. Reyes' 30th homer of the season highlighted a four-run third inning against the Royals' Glenn Sparkman (3-9).

Astros 5, Angels 2: Alex Bregman hit his career-high 32nd homer and Wade Miley earned his seventh straight win as host Houston beat Los Angeles.

The AL-West leading Astros tied the New York Yankees for the best record in the AL at 84-47. The Angels lost their fourth in a row.

Giants 10, Athletics 5: Stephen Vogt's three-run homer highlighted an eight-run eighth and broke it open against his former club, Kevin Pillar hit a tiebreaking, two-run double in San Francisco's biggest inning of 2019, and the Giants won at Oakland.

Blue Jays 7, Mariners 5: Bo Bichette and Teoscar Hernandez hit solo home runs, and

Toronto spoiled Felix Hernandez's return to the mound, winning at Seattle.

Felix Hernandez struck out four over 5²/₃ innings and allowed just three hits in his first appearance since May 11. However, Toronto took advantage of Seattle's bullpen and rallied with a four-run seventh inning to snap a six-game losing streak.

Cardinals 6, Rockies 0: Harrison Bader homered, Dakota Hudson allowed just two hits over six innings, and host St. Louis defeated Colorado.

Hudson (13-6) extended his consecutive scoreless innings streak to a career-high 18²/₃ as the Cardinals won their third straight and sixth in their last seven games.

Brewers 4, Diamondbacks 0: Eric Thames and Trent Grisham hit back-to-back homers, Keston Hiura knocked in two runs and Chase Anderson pitched five strong innings as host Milwaukee blanked Arizona. With the win, the Brewers pulled within two games of Chicago in the race for the second NL wild-card spot.

Braves 9, Mets 5: Newly signed Francisco Cervelli had three hits and three RBIs in his Atlanta debut, and the Braves won at New York for their seventh straight.

Ronald Acuna Jr. hit a tie-breaking single in the eighth, and Billy Hamilton dashed home with another run on the play thanks to a mental lapse by the Mets.

Twins 8, Tigers 5: Miguel Sano's three-run homer capped a five-run rally in the fifth inning, Jake Cave and Max Kepler also connected and AL Central-leading Minnesota beat visiting Detroit. Cave hit a two-run homer in the sixth off Matt Hall. Kepler had three hits, including his 35th home run and sixth leadoff shot of the season.

Rangers 4, White Sox 0: Willie Calhoun and Danny Santana homered, rookie Kolby Allard pitched into the seventh inning and Texas won at Chicago.