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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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US slaps N. Korea with more sanctions

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Friday that his administration will pursue one of the most aggressive sanction efforts against North Korea yet, with plans to disrupt the country's shipping companies and vessels to force Kim Jong Un's regime to rein in its nuclear weapons program.

The sanctions come after a year of tough rhetoric between the U.S. and North Korea over the regime's development of nuclear weapons, even as North Korea and South Korea have appeared to improve relations in the midst of the 2018 Winter Olympics.

"We have imposed the heaviest sanctions ever," Trump said at the end of an extended, meandering speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference held in Oxon Hill, Md. "Hopefully, something positive can happen."

The effort marks the largest package of sanctions issued yet against North Korea, White House officials said. The sanctions will isolate the country further as they aim to halt the Kim regime's ability to conduct illicit maritime activities that facilitate coal and fuel shipments, among others, a senior White House official said Friday ahead of Trump's announcement.

In all, the U.S. is sanctioning 27 shipping and trade companies, 28 vessels and one individual, totaling 56 designations that are located or registered in countries all over the world, the official said. The countries on the list are North Korea, China, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Marshall Islands, Tanzania, Panama and Comoros.

In essence, the sanctions blacklist the companies and vessels to hurt them financially by prohibiting the U.S. or its representatives from conducting business with them.

"We are putting companies and countries across the world on notice that this administration views compliance with U.S. and U.N. sanctions as a national security imperative," Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said during a news conference following Trump's announcement. "Those who trade with North Korea do so at their own peril."

The sanctions come at a tricky time. Trump's daughter and senior adviser Ivanka Trump is now leading a U.S. contingent to Sunday's closing ceremonies of the Olympics in South Korea. North Korea, which has participated jointly with South Korea in the Olympic events, has shown interest in negotiations and has conducted no new weapons testing in recent weeks.

"While we appreciate the fact that there haven't been tests, that's not exactly a ter-

rific standard," Mnuchin said.

Mnuchin also said Ivanka Trump had been informed about the sanctions ahead of her arrival in South Korea and later had a private dinner with the country's President Moon Jae-in to discuss the effort.

With Friday's announcement, the U.S. now has more than 450 sanctions in effect against North Korea, with half of them imposed in the last year, Mnuchin said.

"Today's actions will significantly hinder North Korea's ability to conduct evasive maritime acts that facilitate illicit coal and fuel transports and limit the regime's ability to ship goods through international waters," Mnuchin said. "Our actions are part of the ongoing maximum economic pressure campaign to cut off sources of revenue that this regime derives from U.N. and U.S. prohibitive trade to fund its nuclear and ballistic missile programs."

The move comes on the heels of reports in recent months that China and other countries have circumvented sanctions restricting imports of refined petroleum products to North Korea by making the transfers at sea. A U.N. Security Council resolution in September severely restricted the regime's imports of the products.

Education chief backs school choice for military kids

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Education Secretary Betsy DeVos on Thursday called for allowing military families to use federal funds to pay for private school or other educational services for their children.

The idea is part of the Trump administration's focus on expanding school choice — alternatives to traditional public schools — across the nation.

DeVos said that many active-duty military families living in bases were dissatisfied with their neighborhood schools and that was affecting their career decisions. DeVos said that one way to improve the situation was by setting up education savings accounts whereby the parents would receive government funds earmarked for

them in the public school system. They can then use this money to pay for online classes, charter school courses and other options. Similar state programs let families pay for private school, private instruction, therapy for special-needs students, textbooks and other services.

"We have an opportunity in that regard to empower them with some more of those choices," DeVos said at the Conservative Political Action Conference at Oxon Hill, Md., outside Washington. "An education savings account would afford them a much different dynamic and approach to be able to get their education in the way that best works for them."

"The support for education freedom and choice in education is broad and wide," DeVos added.

DeVos made the comments in conversation with Kay Coles James, president of The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington. The Heritage Foundation is promoting one such education-savings-accounts proposal for military families, but an Education Department spokeswoman said DeVos wasn't endorsing any specific plan.

The proposal backed by Heritage would make the funds eligible to an estimated 126,000 military-connected children across the nation if they are not happy with their neighborhood schools. Currently, there are about 400,000 students in various private-school choice programs nationwide, so the reform potentially could increase that number by nearly 25 percent.

Wildfires at Gitmo ignite minefield, force evacuation

Miami Herald

MIAMI — A wildfire ignited mines laid by the Cuban military decades ago and jumped the fence line at the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, on Thursday, threatening buildings and forcing evacuations of six neighborhoods.

“Right now, everyone is safe,” base spokeswoman Julie Ann Ripley said Thursday afternoon. Base workers were “doing a full accountability report,” a military term for checking rosters and counting heads. Navy C-12 aircraft were flying overhead, scouting the scene, but did not have the capability of dumping water onto the fires, Ripley said.

Base security officials shut down the road leading to the Detention Center Zone, cutting off the main part of the outpost from the base within the base where the Pentagon holds 41 war-on-terror detainees.

“You can’t see the fire, but you can see a lot of smoke,” American Civil Liberties Union attorney Denny LeBoeuf said by telephone soon after arriving on the base Thursday. She wondered whether the remote base, which plans extensively for Caribbean hurricanes, also had a way to evacuate war-on-terror detainees from their secret, maximum-security prison.

Ripley said the fires started Wednesday and “came over from the Cuba side. It was originally under control and contained.” But shifting winds Thursday strengthened the fire, forcing evacuations of hundreds of people from six base housing areas where some of the 5,500 people on the base live in suburban-style housing.

In an afternoon broadcast on the base station, Radio Gitmo, base commander Navy Capt. Dave Culpepper advised, “Folks probably heard in the middle of the night a bunch of ordnance going off. And of course that was the fire burning on the other side of the fence, over on the Cuban side, their mines cooking off from the heat.”

An announcement on the

DOD eyes pricey plan to replace prison

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba — The Pentagon wants \$69 million to replace the top secret prison where accused 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed and 14 other former CIA captives are kept.

The funding request, included in a massive 2019 Department of Defense budget package released Monday, warns that the current prison, Camp 7, is at risk of mechanical, electrical and secure-communications failure, which would be risky to the U.S. Army guards who work there.

Under the proposal, the “maximum-security detention facility” is expected to last for 40 years and includes a confidential, “legal visitation area.”

With its current, 15-captive population, building costs work out to \$4.6 million per prisoner.

From the Miami Herald

base’s Facebook page listed the evacuation zones as the Caribbean Circle, Kittery Beach, Nob Hill, Tierra Key, West Iguana and Villamar housing areas. Nob Hill housing is on the road to the abandoned Camp X-Ray prison; Tierra Key is on the way to the current Detention Center Zone.

Residents of those six housing areas were advised to take shelter in either the base gym or the ballroom of the Windjammer restaurant complex. Parents were alerted at 3:30 p.m. to pick up their children from an after-school program. A shelter also was opened for people to bring their household pets before heading to the gym or ballroom evacuation sites.

Mattis expected to support keeping transgender troops

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis is expected to propose to President Donald Trump that transgender members of the U.S. military be allowed to continue serving despite the president’s call last summer for a ban on all transgender service, according to two U.S. officials with knowledge of the issue.

The defense secretary was scheduled to brief the president on Wednesday, but the meeting was postponed and will occur soon, officials said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss policy deliberations. Dana White, a spokeswoman for Mattis, said the secretary will meet with Trump this week and the president will make an announcement at some point afterward.

Officials at the White House and Pentagon declined to comment on the recommendations until Mattis delivers his plan.

“This is a complex issue, and the secretary is taking his time to consider the information he’s been given,” White told reporters Thursday. “It’s an important issue, and again, he sees all of his decisions through the lens of lethality.”

Trump surprised many Pentagon officials July 26 by issuing a string of tweets in which he said he was banning all transgender people from the military despite not having a plan in place. Trump tweeted that he had reached his decision “after consultation with my Generals and military experts,” citing the “tremendous medical costs and disruption” he believed it would cause.

Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the

Joint Chiefs of Staff, moved afterward to stop any changes from taking place until a new policy was adopted, and Mattis backed that move. The Obama administration began allowing transgender people to serve openly in the military in June 2016, prompting some people to come out for the first time.

It’s unclear whether Trump will adopt Mattis’ recommendations, which the president requested in an Aug. 25 executive order. Trump directed the military at the time to “return to the longstanding policy and practice on military service by transgender individuals that was in place prior to June 2016,” but left an opening under which Mattis could advise him in writing on changing Trump’s new policy. The order gave Mattis until Wednesday to establish a plan.

It is not clear how Mattis’ recommendations will address another issue: what to do with transgender recruits.

Before the Obama administration’s policy change, the Pentagon for years considered gender dysphoria, the medical term for wanting to transition gender, a disqualifying mental illness. The policy adopted in 2016 banned the services from involuntarily separating people in the military who came out as transgender, and gave the Pentagon a year to determine how to begin processing transgender recruits.

But Mattis delayed allowing transgender recruits for an additional six months as the deadline neared. The decision “in no way presupposes an outcome,” but needed additional study, Mattis wrote at the time. Trump issued his ban on Twitter a few weeks later.

Fla. governor urges new limits on gun sales

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Florida's governor on Friday proposed banning the sale of firearms to anyone younger than 21.

Gov. Rick Scott announced the proposal as part of a plan to prevent gun violence as teachers returned to a high school where a shooter killed 17 people.

He also called for a trained law enforcement officer for every 1,000 students at every school in Florida by the time the 2018 school year begins. Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland had one armed resource officer, who never entered the school during the Feb. 14 shooting.

That failure, plus reports of a

delay in security camera footage scanned by responding police and several records about the suspect's troubled background added to what the Florida House speaker called an "abject breakdown at all levels."

The Valentine's Day shooting has reignited national debate over gun laws and school safety, including proposals by President Donald Trump and others to designate more people — such as trained teachers — to carry arms on school grounds. Gun-control advocates, meanwhile, have redoubled calls for bans or further restrictions on assault rifles.

Teachers have begun returning to the school to collect belongings from classrooms that have been off-limits since

the slayings. After an orientation Sunday for teachers and students, classes resume Wednesday.

"Our new normal has yet to be defined, but we want to get back to it," said geography teacher Ernest Rospierski, whose classroom is on the third floor of the three-story building attacked Feb. 14. Officials have said that building will be torn down.

When the shooting occurred, the school resource officer took up a position viewing the western entrance of that building for more than four minutes after the shooting started on Feb. 14, but "he never went in," Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said at a news conference. The shooting lasted about six minutes.

The officer, Scot Peterson,

was suspended without pay and placed under investigation, then chose to resign, Israel said. When asked what Peterson should have done, Israel said the deputy should have "went in, addressed the killer, killed the killer."

Meanwhile, officials said a communication issue arose between the person reviewing the school's security footage and officers who responded to the school. Coral Springs police Chief Tony Pustizzi said Thursday that the footage being reviewed was 20 minutes old, so the responding officers were hearing that the shooter was in a certain place while officers already there were saying that wasn't the case.

Officials: New US embassy in Jerusalem to open in May

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Two Trump administration officials said Friday the new U.S. embassy in Jerusalem will open in May 2018 to coincide with the 70th anniversary of Israel declaring independence.

The officials said Congress is being notified of the impending move, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson signed off on the security plan for the new embassy on Thursday. The officials weren't authorized to discuss the plan publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, the administration is considering an offer from Republican megadonor Sheldon Adelson to pay for at least part of

the new embassy, four U.S. officials told The Associated Press.

Lawyers at the State Department are looking into the legality of accepting private donations to cover some or all of the embassy costs, the administration officials said. In one possible scenario, the administration would solicit contributions not only from Adelson but potentially from other donors in the evangelical Christian and American Jewish communities, too.

One official said Adelson, a Las Vegas casino magnate and staunch supporter of Israel, had offered to pay the difference between the total cost — expected to run into the hundreds of millions of dollars — and what the administration is able to raise.

Under any circumstance, letting private citizens cover the costs of an official government building would mark a significant departure from historical U.S. practice. In the Jerusalem case, it would add yet another layer of controversy to Trump's politically charged decision to move the embassy, given Adelson's long-standing affiliation with right-wing Israeli politics.

It's not clear if there is any precedent, nor whether government lawyers would give the green light to accept Adelson's or anyone else's donations for the embassy.

Adelson's unconventional offer was made around the time Trump announced in December he would move the embassy to the disputed city of Jerusalem.

Former Trump campaign adviser expected to plead guilty

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A former top adviser to President Donald Trump's campaign is expected to plead guilty in the special counsel's Russia probe, a person familiar with the decision said Friday.

The expected plea from Rick Gates could indicate he is planning to cooperate with special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation.

The person said Gates, a

longtime associate of former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, was expected to enter the plea as early as Friday. The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss private conversations, said Gates had informed family and friends in a letter about his decision.

It would mark the fifth publicly known guilty plea in the special counsel probe into possible collusion between the Trump

campaign and the Kremlin during the 2016 campaign.

The Gates plea would come a day after a federal grand jury in Virginia returned a 32-count indictment against him and Manafort accusing them of tax evasion and bank fraud. It was the second round of charges against the two men.

The plea also comes quickly on the heels of a stunning indictment last week that laid out a broad operation of election meddling by Russia that began

in 2014 and employed fake social media accounts and on-the-ground politicking to promote the campaign of Trump, disparage Hillary Clinton and sow division and discord widely among the U.S. electorate.

His guilty plea will almost certainly reduce the prison sentence he could have faced if convicted at trial of all counts. Gates initially pleaded not guilty and has been facing up to 12½ years in jail.

Support dog bites young girl on flight

Associated Press

DALLAS — Southwest Airlines said Thursday that a dog injured a child as passengers boarded a flight in Phoenix, an event likely to fuel the debate over the growing number of emotional-support animals on planes.

A passenger on Wednesday's Phoenix-to-Portland, Ore., flight tweeted that a dog bit a girl as she approached it, and that she screamed and cried. The man, Todd Rice, did not immediately respond to a Twitter message seeking further comment.

Southwest said the dog's teeth "scraped a child's forehead," and paramedics checked the girl, who appeared to be 6 or 7 years old.

Southwest spokeswoman Melissa Ford said the dog was in the plane's first row of seats with its owner, who said he warned the girl not to approach his dog.

Police interviewed the girl's family and the dog's owner. The family decided to remain on the plane, while the dog and its owner left and took a later flight, Ford said.

The incident happened as airlines consider new restrictions on passengers flying with emotional-support animals.

Unlike service animals such as guide dogs, support animals need no training. However, passengers can be asked to show a medical professional's note explaining why they need the animal to travel.

Southwest started reviewing its policy even before Wednesday's event, Ford said. Starting next week, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines will require more paperwork and assurances from owners of support animals.

Both Delta and United said they have seen a sharp rise in the number of support animals in the past year or so. In June, a 70-pound dog flying on Delta as a support animal bit a passenger in the face severely enough that the man required hospital care.

Ex-SEAL Mo. governor defiant after indictment tied to affair

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens remains defiant, even amid calls for impeachment or resignation, after a St. Louis grand jury indicted him for felony invasion of privacy, alleging the Republican took a compromising photo of a woman during an extramarital affair the year before he was elected.

St. Louis Circuit Attorney Kim Gardner on Thursday announced the indictment that followed an investigation launched in January, a day after Greitens admitted to an affair with his St. Louis hairdresser that began in March 2015.

In a statement, Greitens, 43, said he made a mistake but "did not commit a crime." He accused Gardner, a Democrat who also was elected in November 2016, of playing politics.

"With today's disappointing and misguided political decision, my confidence in our prosecutorial system is shaken, but not broken," Greitens said. "I know this will be righted soon. The people of Missouri deserve better than a reckless liberal prosecutor who uses her office to score political points."

Gardner's spokeswoman, Susan Ryan, responded, "Despite the Governor's personal attacks, the Circuit Attorney believes the courtroom is the appropriate place to argue the facts, not the media."

A few lawmakers from both parties suggested that Greitens should consider resigning, just as they did after he admitted to the affair on Jan. 10.

House Republican leaders announced they were forming a group of lawmakers to investigate the charges "and answer the question as to whether or not the governor can lead our state while a felony case moves forward." Dowd said the governor welcomes the review.

The joint statement from House Speaker Todd

Richardson, Speaker Pro Tem Elijah Haahr and Majority Leader Rob Vescovo did not specifically mention impeachment, a process that must begin in the House with an investigation.

But for some lawmakers, impeachment is on the table.

"Gov. Greitens has to go," said Democratic state Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, of St. Louis. "Missourians thought they voted for a person of character and integrity, and instead they got a liar and alleged criminal."

The indictment states that on March 21, 2015, Greitens photographed a woman identified only by her initials "in a state of full or partial nudity" without her knowledge or consent. The indictment said Greitens "transmitted the image contained in the photograph in a manner that allowed access to that image via a computer."

Soon after the affair began, the woman's husband secretly recorded a conversation in which she described the incident. She said Greitens bound her hands and blindfolded her in his St. Louis home, took a photo of her partially nude, and then warned her to remain silent.

"I saw a flash through the blindfold and he said, 'You're never going to mention my name,'" she said.

Greitens repeatedly has denied blackmailing the woman, but repeatedly has refused to answer questions about whether he took a photo.

Greitens was taken into custody in St. Louis and was released on his own recognizance. He is due in court for his first hearing March 16 before Circuit Judge Rex Burlison. He could face up to a four-year sentence if convicted.

Greitens, the father of two young boys, came into office as a political outsider, a brash Rhodes Scholar and former Navy SEAL officer who was wounded in Iraq, emerging as the winner in a crowded and expensive GOP primary.

Las Vegas airport lets people dump pot

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — What happens in Vegas really can stay in Vegas.

Tourists catching flights out of Sin City now can dump their leftover legal marijuana into metal containers set up at the airport.

The 10 green bins dubbed "amnesty boxes" prevent federal transportation agents from finding pot on passengers during security screenings.

The drug is legal in Nevada but is still banned by the U.S. government.

The containers were installed last week following a county ban on marijuana possession and advertising at McCarran International Airport, aiming to keep it in compliance with federal law. They are bolted to the ground and are designed so marijuana and prescription drugs can only be dropped in, not taken out.

"The amnesty boxes are of-

fered as a way to help people comply with this ordinance," airport spokeswoman Christine Crews said in an email.

Transportation Security Administration agents normally hand over marijuana-related cases to local law enforcement. Las Vegas police Officer Aden Ocampo-Gomez said no citations have been issued stemming from the airport's ban on marijuana possession and advertising, passed in September.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police use Taser on sword-wielding man

VA ALEXANDRIA — A northern Virginia man has been charged after police say he swung two samurai-style swords at officers.

Fairfax County Police on Tuesday announced charges against Eric Perez, 19, of Alexandria. He is charged with counts including brandishing and disorderly conduct.

Police said they received a call Saturday night in the Alexandria section of the county about a man yelling and knocking over trash cans.

According to police, Perez started swinging the swords when police arrived.

Police said they tried to persuade him to drop the swords. When that failed, they used a Taser.

Perez then was arrested and received medical treatment.

Police: Drunken driver caught after 2 crashes

NJ POINT PLEASANT BEACH — Authorities say a New Jersey man was driving drunk and on a fast-food run when he tried to elude police and eventually collided with two police cars.

Police responding to reports of a possible drunken driver in Point Pleasant Beach saw Donald Wilson Jr., 38, leaving a McDonald's parking lot early Tuesday.

Authorities said the Point Pleasant man swerved repeatedly as he headed northbound on Route 35 and refused to stop for police. Wilson eventually went back to the restaurant, where they said he hit a telephone pole and two police cars before he was arrested.

Wilson and some officers involved in the crashes were treated at a hospital for minor injuries.

Police: Man gets into car with teen inside, drives

VT SOUTH BURLINGTON — Police in Vermont say a man got into a parked car left running outside a convenience store with a 17-year-old passenger and drove it through the parking lot before he was confronted by the store clerk and the teen's father.

Police said they jailed Jamie Bunnell, 34, early Tuesday in South Burlington on a charge of operating without an owner's consent. He faced arraignment, and it wasn't immediately known if he had an attorney. Bunnell was described as a transient.

Police said a customer had pulled up to the Champlain Farms, got out and left the car running with his daughter in the front seat. They said Bunnell got in and drove 30 to 50 feet before he was stopped. Bunnell told police he wanted to drive to his hotel.

Bride gets stuck in hotel elevator

RI PROVIDENCE — One bride says she almost missed her wedding reception after getting stuck in an elevator in Rhode Island.

Melissa Rodger said she was heading to the 18th floor of the Providence Biltmore hotel Saturday when the elevator stopped within four feet of its destination. She said a bridesmaid alerted her husband shortly afterward that a "situation" was going on.

The fire department was called to the scene and pried the doors open to get Rodger out.

The process took about 45 minutes.

Rodger said the reception started about 20 minutes late, but everything else ran smoothly.

College gets virtual cadaver for classes

MI DEARBORN — A Detroit-area college will use a virtual cadaver to teach students how to perform human dissections.

The biology department at Henry Ford College in Dearborn will use an Anatomage Table as part of its curriculum for the winter 2018 semester.

The school says the software for the virtual dissection system delivers a high level of image detail not present in plastic anatomical models and sometimes even actual cadavers, as organs and tissues can become too degraded for dissection.

The life-sized virtual cadaver can be switched from male to female. Users can zoom in on areas of interest and use their fingers to slice through any combination of muscle and bone.

Charges dropped for man who shot neighbor

NY MAYVILLE — An upstate New York hunter who fatally shot a neighbor he mistook for a deer is no longer facing charges.

According to the Democrat & Chronicle, Chautauqua County District Attorney Patrick Swanson said the manslaughter charge against Thomas Jadowski has been dismissed.

County Judge David Foley had an issue with how the prosecutor instructed grand jury members during questioning. Swanson said he expects to decide within a week whether to present the case to another grand jury.

Rosemary Billquist, a hospital worker and hospice volunteer, was shot Nov. 22 while walking her dogs in a field behind her home.

Jadowski heard Billquist cry out after firing, ran to her,

called 911 and administered first aid until emergency responders arrived.

Group tweaks lobster emoji after complaints

ME AUGUSTA — After an outcry, the organization that controls the release of emojis has added two more legs to the forthcoming lobster emoji to make it anatomically correct.

The Portland Press Herald reported soon after the Unicode Consortium released proposed images of 157 new emojis to be made available this year, Maine residents took umbrage at the lobster emoji's eight legs instead of the correct 10.

Emojipedia Chief Emoji Officer Jeremy Burge wrote Monday the consortium had heard people's complaints and is releasing updated designs for the lobster emoji, alongside updates for a skateboard and DNA emoji.

Judge won't dismiss lawsuit over ear-biting

MA SALEM — A judge has refused to dismiss a negligence lawsuit against a Massachusetts restaurant for its alleged role in an attack on a police officer who had a piece of her ear bitten off.

The Salem News reports that the judge last week found that Salem's Tavern in the Square could be liable for Officer Jessica Rondinelli's injuries because she was acting as a rescuer when she arrested a 19-year-old woman who had been drinking at the establishment. That woman was convicted of assault and battery for biting the officer's ear.

The judge concluded that the law imposes a duty of care on officers responding to calls stemming from negligence.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Men's Hockey

Germany knocks off Canada

Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — Canada's topsy-turvy Olympics was dealt a heavy blow Friday night as Germany shocked the two-time defending Olympic champions 4-3 in the men's hockey semifinals.

The loss came a day after Canada's women's hockey team was denied a fifth straight gold in a shootout against the rival Americans and amid the despair of having no chance at medals in men's or women's curling.

"They came out ready to play," Canada forward Rob Klinkhammer said. "We didn't. They were the better team."

Without NHL stars Sidney

Crosby and Drew Doughty, elite goaltender Carey Price — and certainly don't forget Stanley Cup-winning coach Mike Babcock — Canada was skated out of the building by coach Marco Sturm's team that now faces an even stiffer test in the favored Russians in Sunday's final.

After winning back-to-back gold medals in Vancouver in 2010 and Sochi in 2014, and three of the past four dating to 2002, Canada's self-described band of journeymen will play the Czech Republic for bronze on Saturday.

"We did not match their work ethic," Canada forward Derek Roy said. "It stings a lot.

It is not a good feeling to lose a game like that."

Canada has only settled for a bronze medal twice in 21 previous Olympic men's hockey tournaments and took home gold or silver in each of the six games with women's hockey.

OAR (Russia) 3, Czech Republic 0: Veteran goaltender Vasily Koshechkin stopped all 31 shots he faced to put the Russians into the gold medal game at the Olympics with a victory over the Czech Republic.

Koshechkin is 3-1-0 after getting the nod to start over NHL prospects Ilya Sorokin and Igor Shestryokin and will almost certainly start the final Sunday against Canada.

Medals roundup

Canadians take home gold, silver in skicross

Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — Kelsey Serwa turned to best friend and Olympic roommate Brittany Phelan in the starting gate before the women's skicross final and went through the ritual one more time. The Canadian teammates bumped fists then began chanting "Here we go!" in an over exaggerated accent that would sound right at home back in The Great White North.

"That's what we need to get fired up," Serwa said with a laugh.

Serwa sprinted to gold and Phelan made a daring pass midway down the course in the final to earn silver to cap a dominant performance by the Canadians in a discipline where they have set the standard. Two days after Brady Leman claimed the top of the podium in the men's event, Serwa and Phelan gave the Canadian women their second straight 1-2 Olympic finish. Fanny Smith of Switzerland took the bronze.

Biathlon: As Fredrik Lindstroem cruised to the finish line to secure gold for Sweden in the men's biathlon relay, the stadium announcer at the Alpensia Biathlon Center belted out "the king is on fire!"

Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf was in the stadium screaming and shouting as the Swedes crossed in 1 hour, 15 minutes, 16.5 seconds — more than 55 seconds ahead of Norway at the Pyongchang Olympics. Germany took bronze.

Speedskating: Dutchman Kjeld Nuis won his second gold medal, becoming the first speedskater to win two golds at the Gangneung Oval.

Nuis finished 0.04 seconds faster than Havarud Lorentzen.

Nuis won in 1 minute, 7.91 seconds. South Korea's Kim Tae-yun took bronze.

Zagitova helps Russians to first gold

Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — A few years back, Alina Zagitova nearly was sent home from training for not working hard enough.

Now, she heads home with Olympic gold, the first for the Russians at the Pyeongchang Olympics.

A grateful nation — upset that their flag, anthem and dozens of athletes were banned from the games because of a doping scandal — can thank the 15-year-old who beat the 18-year-old who had inspired her to become a figure skater, Evgenia Medvedeva. And thank their coach, Eteri Tutberidze, who gave the less-than-diligent Zagitova one more chance to prove herself when she wanted to quit.

"My hands were shaking, but my body was doing everything I'd trained to do," Zagitova said Friday after a rare tie in the free skate earned her the top spot because she beat Medvedeva in the short program two days earlier, when both women broke the previous world record score. "I can't believe I am the champion."

Kaetlyn Osmond, who had considered quitting the sport, won bronze to give Canada four overall medals in figure skating.

Other than Mirai Nagasu's triple axel, it was not a memorable Olympics for the American women. They finished ninth, 10th and 11th, their weakest showing since World War II. Sixth place had been the low point.

Nagasu, fourth at the Vancouver Games in 2010, became the first American woman to land that 3½-revolution jump in an Olympics, helping the United States take the team bronze.

2nd Russian fails doping test

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — A second Russian athlete has failed a doping test at the Pyeongchang Games, a day before the International Olympic Committee's executive board is to decide whether to reinstate the country for Sunday's closing ceremony.

Russian Bobsled Federation president Alexander Zubkov told The Associated Press on Friday that a drug-test sample that pilot Nadezhda Sergeeva gave on Sunday was positive.

The Russian delegation at the Pyeongchang Olympics said in a statement that the substance found was trimetazidine, a medication used for angina sufferers that is listed by the World Anti-Doping Agency as a banned substance affecting the metabolism.

Sergeeva's crew finished 12th in the women's bobsled competition on Wednesday, after she had given the sample that later came back positive.

The Russian team was barred from the Olympics in December for doping at the Sochi Games, but the IOC invited 168 athletes from the country to compete under the Olympic flag.

— Associated Press

From there, it was downhill. She never got elevation for the triple axel Friday and ended up 10th. She was one spot in front of Karen Chen, the 2017 U.S. champion. Bradie Tennell, this year's winner at nationals, was ninth.

NBA roundup

Wiz top new-look Cavs

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Bradley Beal scored 18 points, Kelly Oubre Jr. added 17 and tried to untie the sneakers of one of Cleveland's new players, and the Washington Wizards withstood a late assault by LeBron James to beat the new-look Cavaliers 110-103 on Thursday night.

The Wizards nearly blew a late 11-point lead as James scored 14 straight points to pull the Cavs within 106-103. But Beal hit a driving layup and James missed a free throw and committed a lane violation while intentionally missing the second one and the Wizards held on.

Washington is 8-2 since star guard John Wall went down with a knee injury. Tomas Satoransky, who has been starting in Wall's spot, added 17 points and eight assists.

James, back from winning MVP honors at the All-Star Game, scored 32 — 14 in the fourth — for the Cavs, who dropped to 2-1 since acquiring four new players before the trade deadline. J.R. Smith added 15 for Cleveland.

The Wizards spoiled the home debuts for Larry Nance Jr., George Hill, Rodney Hood and Jordan Clarkson, four new faces the Cavs are hoping can get them back to the NBA Finals.

Warriors 134, Clippers 127: Stephen Curry swished a beautiful buzzer-beater from way back early and hit another timely three-pointer late on the way to scoring 44, and Golden State returned from the All-Star break to hold off visiting Los Angeles.

Kevin Durant had 21 points and eight assists, Klay Thompson added 19 points, and Draymond Green contributed 13 points, seven rebounds, six assists and two steals.

Curry shot 14-for-19, including 8-for-11 from deep, in his third 40-point game of the season.

Tobias Harris scored 22

points, Danilo Gallinari wound up with 15 and DeAndre Jordan had 14 points and 14 rebounds for Los Angeles, which had won five of six.

Thunder 110, Kings 107: Russell Westbrook made a three-pointer as time expired, lifting Oklahoma City over host Sacramento.

The Thunder blew a 23-point lead and trailed 105-102 with 4½ minutes remaining before closing the game on an 8-2 run.

Westbrook finished with 17 to help Oklahoma City to its second win in three games against Sacramento this season.

76ers 116, Bulls 115: Ben Simmons scored 32 points, making two free throws with 5.6 seconds left to complete his team's rally from five points down in the final minute, and visiting Philadelphia beat Chicago.

Joel Embiid had 30 points and 13 rebounds, and Simmons added 11 assists and seven rebounds as Philadelphia won its sixth straight and snapped a four-game road losing streak.

Hornets 111, Nets 96: Dwight Howard grabbed a season-high 24 rebounds and added 15 points, Kemba Walker scored 31 and host Charlotte beat Brooklyn.

Dante Cunningham had 22 points and 12 rebounds for the Nets, who lost their eighth straight game and fell to 19-41.

D'Angelo Russell, starting for the Nets for the first time since November knee surgery, scored 19 points on 7-for-16 shooting.

Knicks 120, Magic 113: Trey Burke came off the bench with a season-high 26 points and six assists to help visiting New York break an eight-game losing streak.

Tim Hardaway Jr. had 23 points and six assists for the Knicks, who won for the first time since Jan. 30 and the first time since losing Kristaps Porzingis for the season to a torn ACL.

Roundup

Trocheck's late goal lifts Panthers past Capitals

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Vincent Trocheck scored the winning goal with 19.1 seconds left to lift the Florida Panthers over the Washington Capitals 3-2 on Thursday night, hours after victims of last week's shooting at nearby Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School were honored with a somber video tribute.

With the score tied at 2, Trocheck redirected a shot by Jonathan Huberdeau past goaltender Braden Holtby during a power play.

Nick Bjugstad scored the tying goal for the Panthers late in the third period, and Maxim Mamin got his first NHL goal. Roberto Luongo made 33 saves in his third game since returning from a groin injury.

Andre Burakovsky had a goal and an assist, and Lars Eller also scored for the Capitals. Holtby stopped 30 shots but lost his fifth straight.

Before the game, the arena video screen showed the names and faces of each of the 17 students who were killed on Valentine's Day in nearby Parkland. The darkened ice was then illuminated with 17 circles of light, with a student's name inside each one.

Luongo, a Parkland resident, gave an emotional speech about the bravery of those who lost their lives trying to save others and how inspiring the students have been coping with the tragedy. Players from both teams stood for the ceremony, some wiping tears from their eyes.

It was the first home game for the Panthers since the tragedy. They had been on a road trip in Canada for the past 11 days.

Florida players will wear Marjory Stoneman Douglas logos on their helmets and MSD uniform patches for the remainder of the season.

Lightning 4, Senators 3: Nikita Kucherov had two assists to reach 80 points this season

and visiting Tampa Bay defeated Ottawa.

Tyler Johnson, Victor Hedman, Vladislav Namestnikov and Brayden Point scored for the Lightning (41-17-3), who leapfrogged expansion Vegas to regain the top spot in the overall NHL standings with 85 points.

Flyers 2, Blue Jackets 1: Nolan Patrick scored the go-ahead goal midway through the third period and Petr Mrazek made 19 saves in his debut with his new team, leading streaking Flyers over visiting Columbus.

Predators 7, Sharks 1: Pekka Rinne made 33 saves in his 300th career win and host Nashville routed San Jose.

Wild 4, Devils 2: Joel Eriksson Ek and Chris Stewart scored in a 39-second span during their team's three-goal second period, and visiting Minnesota rallied from two down to beat New Jersey.

Maple Leafs 4, Islanders 3 (SO): Tyler Bozak scored the shootout winner and host Toronto edged New York.

Sabres 3, Red Wings 2 (OT): Marco Scandella scored with a second left in overtime, lifting visiting Buffalo over Detroit.

Canadiens 3, Rangers 1: Antti Niemi made 31 saves and host Montreal beat struggling New York to snap its six-game losing streak.

Stars 2, Kings 0: Tyler Seguin broke a scoreless tie with 8:27 remaining and visiting Dallas defeated Los Angeles in a matchup of teams fighting for a Western Conference playoff spot.

Oilers 3, Avalanche 2 (OT): Connor McDavid scored at 2:19 of overtime and had an assist to lead host Edmonton past Colorado.

Flames 5, Coyotes 2: Jon Gillies rebounded from a first-minute goal to make 35 saves in his first NHL start of the season, helping visiting Calgary beat Arizona.

Top 25 roundup

No. 23 Houston struggles in loss to Memphis

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Houston struggled offensively, and its usual tough defense was missing in the second half.

It looks as if it might be a short stay in the Top 25 for the Cougars.

No. 23 Houston, which entered the AP poll this week for the first time this season, gave up a season high in points and suffered through a dismal second-half shooting performance in a 91-85 loss to Memphis on Thursday night, ending a five-game winning streak.

Jimario Rivers and Raynere Thornton each scored 21 points as Memphis (17-11, 8-7 American Athletic Conference) earned its third straight victory. Rivers also grabbed nine rebounds and Thornton made four three-pointers.

Rob Gray had 30 points and seven assists for Houston. Armoni Brooks and Corey Davis Jr. each scored 15 points.

The Cougars (21-6, 11-4) shot 32.3 percent from the field in the second half.

“We just missed a lot of open shots,” Houston coach Kelvin Sampson said. “The same shots we’ve been making almost all year, didn’t go in. But give Memphis credit for making theirs. They made a lot of shots tonight.”

Memphis claimed its biggest victory of the season, holding on after leading scorer Jeremiah Martin left in the first half with a lower-body injury.

“I’m really proud of how our guys competed, especially without Jeremiah,” Memphis coach Tubby Smith said. “But it just raised up everyone else’s level of play and their intensity. We had good balance throughout the lineup.”

The Tigers shot 61 percent from the field in the second half, including 4-for-8 from three-point range.

Houston led 43-37 at the break, but fell apart in the second half.

No. 6 Gonzaga 77, San Diego 72: Killian Tillie scored 17 points, Rui Hachimura added 16 and the visiting Bulldogs beat the Toreros to clinch at least a share of the West Coast Conference title.

Gonzaga (26-4, 16-1 WCC) defeated San Diego (17-12, 8-9) for the eighth straight game and for the 19th time in their last 20 meetings.

No. 9 Purdue 93, Illinois 86: Carsen Edwards scored career-high 40 points and Dakota Mathias added 18 to help the visiting Boilermakers outlast the Illini.

Purdue (25-5, 14-3 Big Ten) was without its second-leading scorer Vincent Edwards but had no problem scoring.

No. 11 Cincinnati 77, Connecticut 52: Gary Clark scored 10 of his 17 points during his team’s decisive spurt, and the host Bearcats shook off consecutive losses by beating the short-handed Huskies for the fifth straight time.

Cincinnati (24-4, 13-3 American Athletic) recovered from a loss at Houston that ended its 16-game winning streak and a 76-72 loss to Wichita State that snapped its 39-game winning streak at home.

No. 14 Arizona 75, Oregon State 65: Deandre Ayton had 19 points, 12 rebounds and three blocks, and the visiting Wildcats, minus one of their star players, beat the Ducks in overtime.

Rawle Alkins added clutch scoring with 16 points and eight rebounds, and Dusan Ristic had 14 points for Arizona (22-6, 12-3 Pac-12), which was without guard Allonzo Trier.

No. 22 Saint Mary’s 75, Pepperdine 61: Jordan Ford had 18 points and a career-high 10 rebounds, and the host Gaels rolled past the Waves.

Calvin Hermanson scored 14 points and Tanner Krebs added 12 for Saint Mary’s (26-4, 15-2 West Coast Conference). Jock Landale scored 10 points and grabbed six rebounds.

Briefly

FBI documents list range of payments to top players

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Bank records and other expense reports that are part of a federal probe into college basketball list a wide range of impermissible payments from agents to at least two dozen players or their relatives, according to documents obtained by Yahoo Sports.

Yahoo said Friday that the documents obtained in discovery during the investigation link current players including Michigan State’s Miles Bridges, Duke’s Wendell Carter and Alabama’s Collin Sexton to potential benefits that would be violations of NCAA rules. According to the report, during the past several years, players and family members received

cash, entertainment and travel expenses from former NBA agent Andy Miller and his agency, ASM Sports.

NCAA president Mark Emmert said in a statement Friday the allegations “if true, point to systematic failures that must be fixed and fixed now if we want college sports in America.”

A balance sheet from December 2015 lists several payments under “Loan to Players,” including \$43,500 to Dallas Mavericks guard Dennis Smith, who played one season at North Carolina State in 2016-17. Another document says Smith received a total of \$73,500 in loans, and indicated options to recoup the money after Smith didn’t sign with ASM.

No runner-on-2nd rule for spring games

TAMPA, Fla. — A proposal collapsed that would have put a runner on second base to start the 10th inning of spring training games, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The players’ association refused to sign the spring-training deal Wednesday, the person added. Major league spring training games start Friday.

Management thinks the union backed off because players were upset Commissioner Rob Manfred described new pace-of-game rules that apply to the regular season as an agreement, the person said.

The union makes the distinction it did not agree to the rules but instead will not challenge MLB’s decision to unilaterally impose them. The new rules include a general limit of six mound visits without a pitching change.

Union head Tony Clark says in an email to the AP that “to suggest that this didn’t get done based on recent commentary alone is grossly misleading.”

Baseball experimented with the rule last year in the Gulf Coast and Arizona leagues, putting a runner on second base starting in the 10th. Extra-inning games in those leagues averaged 27 minutes longer than nine-inning games, down from 43 minutes for all other minor leagues.