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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Iraqi troops seek US help at weapons lab

By **SETH ROBSON**

Stars and Stripes

MOSUL, Iraq — Iraqi troops mopping up the last enemy resistance in the eastern part of this city have asked for American help in disposing of chemicals in a suspected weapons laboratory captured during an advance that freed thousands from the Islamic State group's reign of terror.

The laboratory is at Mosul University, which sustained heavy damage during a battle to evict Islamic State militants from its grounds last week.

Brig. Gen. Sami Alaredhy, commander of Iraqi Special Operations Forces 3, part of

the elite Golden Division that has spearheaded the Mosul operation, said Saturday that his troops killed 23 enemy fighters and secured the lab.

"We are waiting for American chemical experts to come and deal with what's there," he said.

Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve officials did not immediately respond to questions about the laboratory.

Kurdish media reported that fighting was still going on in some parts of eastern Mosul on Sunday.

But a day earlier, the district around the university appeared secure. Nearby buildings were

pockmarked by bullet holes, and the body of a dead man, who locals said was an Islamic State fighter, lay in the street.

But university student Saad Subhi, 27, felt safe enough to go back to the campus and survey the battle damage.

The English-language student spent two years living in fear of the militants before his neighborhood was liberated Wednesday, he said as he stood in a pile of blackened rubble just inside the university's front gate.

Emotions overwhelmed the young man as he talked about what he and his family experienced during the battle to expel the militants.

"The last night under the Is-

lamic State was a terrible night," he said.

The family sheltered in a windowless room and listened to the sound of gunfire, missiles and a car bomb, fearful that the extremists would knock at the door. Neighbors had been threatened with swords and ejected from their homes before the battle. Those who argued were killed, Subhi said.

The sound of government forces moving through the street in Humvees signaled the end of the ordeal. When the knock on the door came, it was Iraqi troops rather than militants outside, he said. "We started kissing and hugging the soldiers."

US strikes may have killed 3 alleged militants

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — Suspected U.S. drone strikes have killed three alleged al-Qaida operatives in Yemen's southwestern Bayda province, security and tribal officials said, the first such killings reported in the country since Donald Trump assumed the U.S. presidency Friday.

The two Saturday strikes killed Abu Anis al-Abi, an area field commander, and two others, they said, speaking on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to release the information to journalists.

U.S. drone strikes against suspected al-Qaida targets have been commonplace in the years since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, as a retaliatory measure against the group. The use of unmanned aircraft as well as airstrikes in the Arab world's poorest country rose dramatically under President Barack Obama, with data from the Britain-based Bureau of Investigative Journal-

ism showing spikes in attacks, especially in 2012 and 2016.

On Thursday, U.S. intelligence officials said as many as 117 civilians had been killed in drone and other counterterror attacks in Pakistan, Yemen and elsewhere during Obama's presidency. It was the second public assessment issued in response to mounting pressure for more information about lethal U.S. operations overseas.

Human rights and other groups have criticized the Obama administration, saying it has undercounted civilian casualties. They also worry that Trump will more aggressively conduct drone strikes, which are subject to little oversight from Congress or the judiciary.

In the years since the drone program began, Yemen has fallen ever deeper into chaos. A two-year-old civil war began after Shiite Houthi rebels seized the capital, Sanaa, and forced President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi to flee the country,

prompting the launch of an extensive air campaign by a Saudi-led coalition that began in March 2015 aimed at restoring Hadi's government.

Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, long seen by Washington as among the most dangerous branches of the global terror network, exploited the chaos, seizing territory in the country's south and east, and the Islamic State group has also claimed attacks. The northern region remains under Houthi control.

On Sunday, Mwatana, one of Yemen's top human rights groups, released a documentary on civilian victims of drone strikes, interviewing family members who say their relatives were innocent and have had no compensation from the U.S. despite their wrongful deaths.

It cited much higher civilian death tolls than the U.S. intelligence report, saying hundreds of innocents had been killed by the U.S. strikes across the country since at least 2002.

Marine hiking to raise awareness of suicide

GAINESVILLE, Ga. — U.S. Marine Shane Stephens, a Hall County, Ga., native, is hiking nearly two dozen miles each day to raise awareness of suicides among veterans.

Each day, Stephens is hiking 22 miles, a number representing the often-cited statistic of veteran suicides each day, the Gainesville Times reported.

Stephens embarked Jan. 11 from Minnesott Beach in North Carolina and plans to end up in Camp Lejeune, N.C. He reached the halfway mark on Jan. 16, he said in a Facebook post.

"I felt led to do this. I felt that it was laid upon my heart, and I was not going to ignore that. So here I am, on the side of the road," he told the Georgia newspaper.

He said his mission was inspired by friends who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, who call in the middle of the night "suffering with their demons."

From The Associated Press

Drills begin amid N. Korea threats

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The United States, South Korea and Japan kicked off naval missile-defense drills Friday, joining forces to counter the growing threat from North Korea.

The three-day exercise began amid fears that the North could test-fire an intercontinental ballistic missile or stage another provocation in connection with Donald Trump's inauguration ceremony on Friday.

The Yokosuka, Japan-based guided-missile destroyer USS Stethem, Japan's JDS Kirishima and South Korea's Sejong the Great participated in missile detection and tracking drills in the waters off the divided peninsula and Japan.

No missiles were fired as the Aegis-equipped ships faced simulated targets in waters within the 7th Fleet area of operations, said Lt. Josh Kelsey, a U.S. Naval Forces Korea spokesman.

"The U.S. Navy continually seeks every occasion to strengthen relationships and interoperability with participating allies and partners while further developing maritime capabilities and capacity," he said in a statement.

Relations between South Korea and Japan have been soured by longtime disputes, including a spat over a statue put up in front of the Japanese consulate in the port city of Busan that commemorates wartime sex slaves called "comfort women."

But the three countries have agreed to boost diplomatic and military cooperation against North Korea, which has shown alarming progress in its nuclear weapons program.

USS Bush finally deploys

By CHRIS CHURCH
Stars and Stripes

USS George H.W. Bush strike group sailors and their families finally said goodbye on Saturday after an extended maintenance period caused a monthlong postponement of its deployment to the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

The Norfolk, Va.-based carrier's delay highlights the Navy's continuing struggle to maintain readiness more than two years since the introduction of the Optimized Fleet Response Plan, which is meant to get the fleet back on track after years of high demand.

Since introducing OFRP in 2014, the Navy has been working to integrate its carrier force into the plan, which realigns the fleet's maintenance, training and deployment cycles into 36-month rotations.

The Bush will be the second carrier strike group to deploy under the model. USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and its strike group were the first, completing a deployment in December. It also was the first carrier to hit the deployment goal of seven months set in 2014.

But even with these successes, the Navy still struggles with meeting maintenance timelines, which can have ripple effects for the fleet.

Bush's delayed deployment was the result of the extension of its scheduled maintenance from eight to 13 months, U.S. Fleet Forces Command said in a statement to Stars and Stripes.

"The cause of that extension was shipyard and contractor performance and the quality of the repair on several pieces of equipment," the command said.

After the extension, Navy officials deter-

mined there wouldn't be enough time for training before the deployment unless they compressed Bush's training cycle — much as they did before the Eisenhower's deployment — and deployed the Bush later.

Some experts wonder whether the OFRP can achieve its aims.

"OFPR has always been, for me, an aspirational goal," said Bryan McGrath, a retired naval officer and managing director of the FerryBridge Group, which specializes in national security and defense consulting.

If the president and command authorities need the forces, they will be given, "irrespective of the Navy's desires for regular maintenance cycles," McGrath said. "Because the demand has not fallen — while the fleet size has — the 'no-margin-for-error' approach to maintenance is doomed to fail."

The U.S. and its allies have covered several carrier gaps in the Middle East in recent years without any serious consequences.

Ike's return from deployment in December left the Middle East without a U.S. aircraft carrier and its accompanying ships. That means the U.S. and its allies had to fill the gap with other platforms and capabilities to support the air campaign against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, not to mention maritime security operations in a vital theater for maritime commerce.

The Navy should try to maintain OFRP to get carriers to a consistent maintenance schedule, while also mitigating carrier gaps by exploring other options, said Bryan Clark, a senior fellow for the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, an independent, nonprofit institute focused on national security strategy.

Timberlake takes command of 3rd Marine Division

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The outgoing commander of the nation's only forward-deployed Marine division had a message for America's adversaries during a change-of-command ceremony Friday on Okinawa: "Take caution."

Maj. Gen. Richard Simcock II, who passed 3rd Marine Division leadership to Maj. Gen. Craig Timberlake under overcast skies on the Camp Court-

ney parade grounds, said the division's quality gives him confidence in America and the U.S. military's future, despite the growing militaries of potential adversaries within the region.

"I do not believe that our power is on the downhill slide," Simcock, who's heading to Marine Forces North, told Stars and Stripes on Thursday. "I do not believe that the best days of the United States are behind us. I speak so confidently about

that because of the 10,000 young men and women that I've commanded for the last year and a half. That's what makes me optimistic."

Simcock spent his time in command working on improving amphibious operations with the Navy, fostering regional partnerships, introducing new combat systems and increasing material and supply readiness.

At the military's current capability level, Simcock said, adversaries would be foolish to think

the U.S. is weak or vulnerable.

Simcock thanked the Marines under his command for their service and said if he could have hand-picked anyone in the Marine Corps to take over the division, it would have been Timberlake, a Kentucky native who served as 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade's commander on Okinawa until 2013. He recently held a leadership role with the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Sig Sauer wins contract to replace sidearm

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

Firearms-maker Sig Sauer has won a \$580 million contract to supply the Army with its next standard sidearm, based on the firm's P320 pistol.

The contract for the so-called Modular Handgun System, which includes the handgun, accessories and ammunition, is slated to run for 10 years.

"The P320 is the first modular pistol with interchangeable

grip modules that can also be adjusted in frame size and caliber by the operator," the company said on its website.

Soldiers will begin using the Sig Sauer pistols this year.

The award follows an industry-wide competition and replaces the Beretta USA-made M9 9-millimeter pistol, which has been in service since 1995, the Army said Thursday.

The P320, first marketed in 2014, is striker-fired, meaning it has no external hammer. Its

internal polymer spring-loaded firing pin is a highly sophisticated version of the launcher on a pinball machine that propels the ball into play.

All Army-issued P320 pistols, which can be outfitted with silencers, will be produced at Sig Sauer's New Hampshire facilities, the company said.

Complaints about the underperforming M9 have circulated among soldiers for years.

Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, who was an Army transportation

company commander in Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, browbeat the pistol during a nomination hearing last week for incoming Defense Secretary James Mattis.

Ernst said she and her fellow soldiers were assigned both the M9 sidearm and an M16 rifle "because the joke that we had in the military was that sometimes the most effective use of an M9 is to simply throw it at your adversary."

Army trains more Afghan air controllers to fill need

BY E.B. BOYD

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — "What do you have for your final attack headings?" a U.S. Army trainer asked an Afghan soldier getting ready to call in a practice airstrike at a live-fire range south of Kabul one recent morning.

The soldier offered up his calculations, preparing to radio the information to a waiting attack helicopter buzzing overhead. The trainer stopped the student and told him he had calculated the attack incorrectly. "That's reciprocal; that's coming towards us."

The Afghan military doesn't have enough tactical air coordinators to direct strikes to support troops on the ground, and it's working hard to train more. This live-fire exercise was part of a course designed by the NATO coalition to get more coordinators ready for this year's fighting season.

Ground-based forward air controllers are considered essential in a guerrilla war in which government troops frequently have to deal with surprise attacks or ambushes and often require quick air action to avoid being overrun. When NATO ground forces were still on the front lines, strikes from U.S. and other coalition aircraft often made the difference in combat operations. But when

NATO drew down its forces at the end of 2014, coalition aircraft were pulled back, and the Afghan military was forced to rely on its own air force.

In the two years since, the Taliban have taken back more territory than they've ever held since 2001. The situation became so dire that last summer, then-President Barack Obama reversed U.S. policy and again authorized American aircraft to provide offensive support to Afghan troops.

NATO officials believe that strengthening the Afghan air force, including deploying more tactical air coordinators on the ground, will help the government troops seize the initiative in the 16-year-old war.

The job is complicated. Tactical air coordinators must calculate the coordinates of enemy positions and communicate with aircraft in combat, making sure pilots know where friendly forces are and warning them about any hazards.

Aaron, a civilian contractor who had served as a joint tactical air controller in the Marine Corps and who agreed to be identified by first name only, conceded that the ATAC program is only in its infancy. But he said he was optimistic.

"The fact that [the Afghan military] has air power and the Taliban don't is huge," he said. "That's going to be the key to victory."

Taliban hint at opening, yet ask Trump to remove troops

BY E.B. BOYD

AND ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two days after President Donald Trump took office, the Taliban asked him to remove all American troops from Afghanistan but hinted at a willingness to work with the U.S.

The insurgent group posted a statement on its website Sunday calling on Trump to "put an end to the invasion." But it also asked him to "help countries with their development" rather than with "bloodshed and destruction."

The call for foreign forces to leave Afghanistan is consistent with past Taliban demands. But the mention of development appeared to be new. In recent months, the group has expressed support for infrastructure and humanitarian projects inside the country.

A Taliban spokesman was not immediately available to clarify the message's intent.

The Taliban have been leading an insurgency to regain control of Afghanistan since they were removed from power after the U.S.-led invasion in 2001.

Afghanistan's government has been trying to get the group to the negotiating table since 2008. The two parties held direct talks in July 2015. Since

then, the Taliban have been emboldened by their success in regaining large amounts of territory, and they now refuse to negotiate until their preconditions, including the removal of all foreign forces, are met.

Sunday's statement said that responsibility for finding a solution to the conflict was a burden that Trump now carried. "You have spent more than a trillion dollars here," the message said, "but you haven't achieved anything other than killing innocent Afghans and destroying their orchards and villages."

U.S. policy has shifted since the invasion from trying to defeat the Taliban militarily to supporting an Afghan-led political solution.

The Trump administration has not yet articulated a position on Afghanistan. One of the key issues the president faces is whether to keep, increase or decrease the current U.S. troop level of 8,400.

The Taliban on Sunday advised the new president not to send in more troops. "This issue can't be solved by increasing the number of soldiers. It wasn't solved that way in the past," the group said, referring to the fact that NATO at one point had more than 150,000 troops in the country.

Severe weather in Ga.; at least 7 killed

Associated Press

ATLANTA — A powerful tornado ripped through a mobile home park in southern Georgia early Sunday, destroying half of its structures and killing seven people. Another four people died in neighboring counties, bringing the weekend death toll from severe weather in southeastern U.S. to 15.

No respite from the specter of tornadoes was in sight for the Georgia-Florida line, however. The National Weather Service said Sunday that southern Georgia, northern Florida and the corner of southeastern Alabama could face “intense and long track” tornadoes, scattered damaging winds and large hail.

“A severe thunderstorm and tornado outbreak is expected today across north

Florida and south Georgia, with the significant severe threat also expected to extend southward into central Florida and northeastward into South Carolina this evening,” the weather service’s storm prediction center.

Catherine Howden of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency said earlier Sunday that the deaths occurred in Cook, Brooks and Berrien counties in southern Georgia near the Georgia-Florida line. Another 23 people were injured.

She said the deaths were related to severe weather but could not specify whether tornadoes were the cause. Tornado warnings had been issued for parts of Georgia overnight.

Cook County Coroner Tim Purvis said an apparent tornado “leveled” numerous mobile homes before dawn Sunday in the

park near Adel. He said emergency responders were still searching for survivors hours later.

Purvis estimated the park has about 40 mobile homes total and roughly half of them were destroyed.

Brooks County Coroner Michael Miller said two people died after their mobile home got struck by an apparent tornado, which he estimated moved the home roughly 100 yards.

“A tornado hit a mobile home, picked it up and put it in the middle of Highway 122,” Miller said. “I don’t know if it rolled or was lifted, but it blocked the entire highway.”

He said the storm struck about 4 a.m. Sunday, and both people inside the home were pronounced dead at the scene.

Officials in Berrien County could not be reached for comment.

Ice, lack of equipment hamper responders’ search of Italian hotel

Associated Press

FARINDOLA, Italy — Rescuers digging through an Italian hotel buried by an avalanche reported hearing no signs of life Sunday from the 24 people still missing inside and appealed for equipment to help them penetrate the ruins where they say air pockets might be sustaining more survivors.

Rescue crews last reported hearing voices from the snow-entombed Hotel Rigopiano on Friday, when four children and five adults were located alive in small spaces that contained enough air for them to breathe.

Among them were Vincenzo Forti and Giorgia Galassi, a couple who huddled with another woman in the gap where a girder split a sofa and ate dirty ice to stay hydrated, a friend of the couple told reporters at Pescara hospital Sunday.

Five people have been confirmed dead in the avalanche that hit the resort on Wednesday evening while its guests were waiting for a snow plow to clear the road so they could evacuate.

The number of people thought to be still inside the hotel was

increased from 23 to 24 Sunday, officials said. One of the rescued survivors told authorities about a young Senegalese worker at the resort who had not been included in previous counts.

Rescuers told reporters Sunday they have detected other air pockets in the hotel wreckage. But they haven’t been able to reach all those areas yet.

Impassable mountain roads have left crews without equipment such as cranes that could help them remove the piles of ice and snow more quickly.

The massiveness of the avalanche became more apparent as experts studied the area.

Lt. Col. Vincenzo Romeo, of the Carabinieri paramilitary police’s mountain weather unit, said the equivalent of the weight of “3,500 big-rigged trucks, fully loaded” had smashed into the hotel after days of heavy snowfall.

The avalanche weighed an estimated 40,000 to 60,000 tons when it first crushed the hotel, Romeo said. In the days since, the snow has become heavier as it has gotten icier, and now weighs an estimated 120,000 tons, he said.

Hungary: It could take days to ID crash victims

Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary — It could take days to officially identify the 16 people killed when a bus carrying Hungarian students returning from a ski trip crashed in Italy and burst into flames, Hungary’s foreign minister said Sunday.

There were 54 passengers and two Hungarian drivers on the bus that crashed on an Italian highway near Verona just before midnight Friday, Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto said. Two adults hospitalized in critical condition also have yet to be identified.

Szijjarto, visibly shaken by news of the accident, said the days ahead would remain emotionally challenging.

“A day has passed since the tragedy, and it is clear that the pain is even sharper,” he told reporters. “As the shock fades, the losses become even more excruciating. The long and more painful process, like the identification of the bodies, is about to begin.”

Most of the passengers were students from a Budapest high school returning from a ski trip in France.

Four passengers remained

hospitalized with serious injuries. Szijjarto said one of the unidentified adults in critical condition suffered third-degree burns on over 60 percent of his body, while the other person had undergone surgery for a serious head injury.

Szijjarto said the cause of the accident has yet to be determined. Italian officials said the bus burst into flames after hitting a highway barrier and then ramming into an overpass support column.

“The bus was practically fully destroyed by the pillar of the highway overpass,” Szijjarto said. “For now, we can’t responsibly say how exactly the bus got there and have not received any pertinent information.”

Hungarian police said they were cooperating with their Italian colleagues in the investigation and searches would take place at the headquarters of the bus company to gather information about the mechanical and technical conditions of the bus when it left Hungary and about any repairs it may have recently undergone, as well as the drivers’ qualifications.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Rotting radishes stinking up town

PA JERSEY SHORE — A television station has found the reason one central Pennsylvania town stinks: a field of decaying radishes.

WNEP-TV began investigating after residents of the town of Jersey Shore complained the odor was turning the place into Funkytown.

Some people thought their propane tanks were leaking. Others said the smell was worse than dead deer or rotting pumpkins. The station even visited the sewer plant, which smelled OK.

The culprit, it turns out, is a field of radishes planted by T.A. Seeds, a company in nearby Nippenose Township.

The company plants the radishes to scavenge for natural nutrients left in the soil. The crops normally decay before the spring thaw, but they rotted earlier this year because of unusually warm temperatures this month.

Judge cited over obscene gesture

TX EL PASO — A state district judge in El Paso is accused of shaking his middle finger at another judge in a fit of anger and now has a court date after being charged with disorderly conduct.

State District Judge Patrick Garcia is scheduled for trial in April after the El Paso County district attorney's office determined the misdemeanor case should be prosecuted.

A county court judge filed a complaint after he said Garcia gave him the finger in November outside the county courthouse.

The El Paso Times reported Garcia was angry because he believed the lower-court judge

had undermined a plea agreement being arranged in Garcia's court.

Garcia has told the newspaper he didn't want to comment.

The other judge said in his complaint that he found the incident "humiliating."

Nipple tattoo photos spur Facebook ban

MO ST. LOUIS — A woman who aids breast cancer survivors in the St. Louis area by creating tattoos of the nipple and areola after reconstructive surgery has been booted from Facebook for showing examples of her work.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that Facebook told Kerry Soraci that the photos she was sharing did not meet "community standards." Facebook told Soraci that the social media site disables accounts that solicit others or feature content that is sexually suggestive or contains nudity.

Soraci said the photos she posts promote her business and educate women about post-surgery options.

4 plead guilty in theft of dinosaur bones

UT SALT LAKE CITY — Four Texans have pleaded guilty in the theft of dinosaur bones from a desert site near a quarry in southern Utah's Wayne County during a 2015 educational trip.

Authorities have said the defendants slipped away from a geology trip sanctioned by McLennan Community College in Waco and pried loose bones at a site about 230 miles south of Salt Lake City.

The Utah Attorney General's Office said Philip Bukowski, of Crawford, pleaded guilty to third-degree felony theft, Paige

Bukowski, of College Station, pleaded guilty to misdemeanor theft and Travis York, of Waco, pleaded guilty to misdemeanor criminal mischief.

They entered their pleas in state court Friday. A fourth defendant, Crystal Webster, of Georgetown, previously pleaded guilty to misdemeanor theft.

The Attorney General's Office said the college cooperated in the investigation.

Engagement ring lost at estate found in Ga.

NC ASHEVILLE — An engagement ring that a man lost before proposing has been found in Georgia.

Daniel Frye of Rock Hill, S.C., was set to pop the question to Lauren Williams on Jan. 7 at the luxury Biltmore Estate in Asheville when he couldn't find the ring. He had it on a shuttle bus but lost it on the way to the building.

The couple turned to social media to find the \$5,000 ring.

Williams got a message Thursday from a woman in Athens, Ga., who told Williams she'd been shopping at Biltmore that day. She said as she got off the shuttle, a man told her she had dropped a box and put into in her bag.

She didn't see the ring until Wednesday and then reached out to Williams.

DNA collection from defendants to resume

MN HASTINGS — A southeastern Minnesota sheriff's department will resume collecting DNA samples from people who have been charged with certain violent crimes but have not yet been convicted.

The move follows a recent Minnesota Supreme Court rul-

ing that reversed an earlier order to stop the practice. The Supreme Court ruled Jan. 11 that Dakota County District Court exceeded its authority when it stopped Sheriff Tim Leslie and his department from collecting the DNA samples.

The Pioneer Press said that in 2015, the department started taking DNA from defendants after a judge made a probable cause determination. The samples are sent to the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension for analysis and entered into a database.

The district court order resulted from a road-rage incident in which a man was charged with assault. His attorney asked a judge to block DNA collection.

Woman guilty of swindling organ group

IL CHICAGO — A federal jury has convicted a Lockport woman of scheming to swindle \$650,000 from an unidentified not-for-profit organization that coordinated organ donations in Illinois and northwest Indiana.

The Chicago jury convicted Debra A. Schultz, 46, on Wednesday of three counts of wire fraud.

Prosecutors said that from 2008 through 2010, fraudulent invoices requested payment to Schultz and an associate for organ and tissue procurement work that wasn't performed.

Many of the false invoices specified that Schultz's son and another individual were doctors who performed organ and tissue procurement, when in reality neither did such work. When the fraud began, Schultz's son was 17 years old and attending high school.

Schultz faces up to 60 years in prison.

From wire reports

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Royals pitcher Ventura dies in Dominican wreck

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic — Kansas City Royals pitcher Yordano Ventura, 25, and former major leaguer Andy Marte, 33, died in separate traffic accidents early Sunday in their native Dominican Republic.

Highway patrol spokesman Jacobo Mateo said Ventura died on a highway leading to the town of Juan Adrian, about 40 miles northwest of Santo Domingo. It was not clear if Ventura was driving.

Metropolitan traffic authorities say Marte died when the Mercedes Benz he was driving hit a house along a road between San Francisco de Macoris and Pimentel, about 95 miles north of the capital. Both were playing in the Dominican winter league with the Aguilas Cibaenas team.

German Olympic official proposes Russia ban

BERLIN — The president of the German Olympic Committee has called for Russia to be banned from the 2018 and 2020 Olympics if sports bosses there are found to have known about state-sponsored doping.

Alfons Hoermann told Die Welt newspaper that bans from the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang and the 2020 summer games in Tokyo would provide a “clear signal” of zero tolerance for doping. Twelve Russian medalists from the 2014 Sochi Olympics were accused of benefiting from a massive doping cover-up scheme.

Ortiz chokes out Sonnen to wrap up MMA career

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — Tito Ortiz choked out Chael Sonnen midway through the first round at Bellator 170 on Saturday night, putting a remarkable finish to a two-decade MMA career.

Ortiz (19-12-1) hadn't fought since September 2015, and he claims this fight was his last. He stepped into the Forum cage two days before his 42nd birthday to face Sonnen (28-15-1), who made his Bellator debut after a 3½-year absence from MMA.

From the Associated Press

Top seeds tumble down under

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — There was some symmetry about the fourth-round exits of top-ranked Andy Murray and Angelique Kerber at the Australian Open.

Both had the top seeding for the first time at a Grand Slam tournament. Both went out on the same court and, at least on paper, the same day.

It was tough at the top on Sunday: Five-time finalist Murray lost 7-5, 5-7, 6-2, 6-4 to No. 50-ranked Mischa Zverev in the afternoon match on Rod Laver Arena, and defending women's champion Kerber lost 6-3, 6-2 to CoCo Vandeweghe in an upset that finished at six minutes past midnight.

It was the first time since the French Open in 2010 that both top-seeded players went out in the same round. In the quarterfinals at Roland Garros that year, Roger Federer lost to Robin Soderling and Serena Williams lost to Sam Stosur.

Murray and Kerber didn't make it to the second week.

“Of course, they are new experiences ... new challenges,” Kerber said of being the defending champion and top seed at a major for the first time. “I can learn from all the other stuff which is new for me.”

“I was trying everything, but I missed a lot and I make a lot of unforced errors. So this was not my game.”

Vandeweghe had never been past the third round at the season-opening Grand Slam, and lost in the first round here last year. But she pounded Kerber with a powerful forehand, clubbing 13 of her 30 winners from that wing.

“First time I've ever beaten a world No. 1,” Vandeweghe said, when asked to rate the win in terms of career highlights, “especially at a Grand Slam — it's pretty high.”

Kerber saved a match point in the first round last year before winning her first major title, beating Serena Williams in the final. Kerber replaced Williams

atop the rankings after winning the U.S. Open. Now Williams can regain the top spot — if she wins the title here.

Murray lost the final here to six-time champion Novak Djokovic last year, but finished 2016 at No. 1 after a strong finish to the season that included titles at Wimbledon, the Olympics and the ATP Finals.

He was undone by some old-school serve and volley from Zverev, who played the match of his life. He'll now meet 17-time major winner Federer in the quarterfinals.

In between the upsets was pretty rocky, too. Federer was down 5-1 in the first set against Kei Nishikori but found a way to fend off the 2014 U.S. Open finalist, who was cramping and needed late treatment on his back, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3.

It was Federer's 200th career win over a top 10 player.

He was ecstatic. “It was about staying with him. ... almost going down 6-0, I thought ‘It's not going to get any worse from there,’” said Federer, on the comeback from six months on the sidelines to repair his injured left knee. “Huge win for me in my career.”

For Murray, the overwhelming feeling was painful.

“Right now I'm obviously very down because I wanted to go further in this event,” Murray said. “I've had tough losses in my career in the past. I've come back from them. This is a tough one.”

Murray's exit follows the second-round departure of Djokovic, beaten in the second round by No. 117-ranked wildcard entry Denis Istomin.

It's the first time since 2002 that the top two seeds in the men's draw haven't reached the Australian Open quarterfinals, and the first time at a Grand Slam since the French Open in 2004.

The absence of Djokovic and Murray certainly opens up it up for others.

U.S. Open champion Stan Wawrinka, who had his major breakthrough here in 2014, is a

growing contender after beating Andreas Seppi 7-6 (2), 7-6 (4), 7-6 (4). He'll play a quarterfinal against 2008 Australian Open finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, who beat Dan Evans 6-7 (4), 6-2, 6-4, 6-4.

In the bottom half of the draw, 14-time major winner Rafael Nadal is the only man still in contention who has won a Grand Slam title.

The top half of the women's draw is open, too. Venus Williams returned to the quarterfinals for the ninth time with a 6-3, 7-5 win over No. 181-ranked Mona Barthel.

The seven-time major winner next plays No. 24-seeded Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, who beat No. 8 Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-3, 6-3.

French Open champion Garbine Muguruza beat Sorana Cirstea 6-2, 6-3 and will next play Vandeweghe — they're both in the quarterfinals at Melbourne Park for the first time.

Kerber's loss continued a poor run since she won the U.S. Open last September. She's played seven tournaments without winning a title, only reached one final, and was 5-7 against top 50 players.

The bigger upset of the day, then, was produced by Zverev, the older and apparently lesser-talented brother of Alexander who had never gone past the third round of a major and was appearing at only his third Grand Slam in six years.

Zverev attacked Murray, unsettling his natural baseline game, and won 65 of 118 points at the net.

He made some stunning, lunging volleys on clutch points, but for him it was all a blur.

“It was like I was in a little coma, I just served and volleyed my way through,” Zverev said. “Honestly there were a few points where I don't know how I pulled it off.”

Trier, Arizona shut down No. 3 UCLA

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Boosted by the return of Allonzo Trier, No. 14 Arizona showed off a potent offense to go along with its swarming defense.

Trier led a late run in the first half and finished with 12 points in his first game of the season, helping the Wildcats topple No. 3 UCLA 96-85 Saturday.

Trier's status was resolved Friday night after he tested negative for a performance-enhancing drug.

The sophomore from Seattle — who averaged nearly 15 points per game last season — had been practicing and traveling with the Wildcats, but the school had refused to say why he wasn't playing.

Trier said last week that he had inadvertently taken a substance with a trace amount of PED in it. He said the NCAA wouldn't allow him to play until his system was completely cleared of the drug.

UCLA fans chanted "steroids" at him.

Trier wasn't made available to the media afterward.

"I don't think we win without him," coach Sean Miller said. "It means a lot, especially for this team and his family."

The Wildcats won their 12th in a row, putting up 21 more points than they average. Arizona (18-2, 7-0 Pac-12) has the top-rated defense in the conference.

Kobi Simmons scored 20 points and Lauri Markkanen added 18.

"We've had big goals all along," Markkanen said. "This gives us an extra boost."

So do the Bruins (19-2, 6-2), who hope to be playing for a national championship in April.

"If we want to become great, we've got to play as unselfishly defensively together as we do at the offensive end," UCLA coach Steve Alford said. "You could be awfully special by the time we get to March, but your defense has got to grow."

Lonzo Ball scored 24 points for UCLA, which had its 11-game home winning streak

snapped in front of a sellout crowd that included Hall of Famers Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (NBA), Cris Carter (NFL) and Dave Winfield (MLB).

"It's a wakeup call," Ball said. "The places we want to go we have to play defense."

It was the first time the longtime Pac-12 powers faced each other while both were ranked in the top 15 since Jan. 20, 2007, when UCLA won at home.

Simmons scored consecutive baskets that pushed Arizona's lead to 14 points early in the second half.

UCLA's defense faltered as the second half wore on, with the Wildcats scoring on nearly every possession. That prevented the Bruins' speedy transition game from getting going.

"It's a big win. It means a lot them being ranked number three," Markkanen said. "We knew their transition offense was really tough. We focused on getting back after crashing the offensive glass. It worked extremely well at times."

Minus Watson, Creighton falls to Marquette

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Marquette turned to its three seniors to quiet Creighton's home crowd on an emotional afternoon when the seventh-ranked Bluejays were playing their first full game without their star Maurice Watson Jr.

Katin Reinhardt scored 17 of his season-high 21 points in the first half to help the Golden Eagles get out to a big lead, and Luke Fischer and Jajuan Johnson added 18 apiece as they picked up their first Big East road win with a 102-94 upset Saturday.

Reinhardt scored 10 straight points during a key 12-0 run, and Fischer made 8 of 9 shots to break out of a mini slump and blocked six shots for Marquette (13-6, 4-3). Marcus Foster scored a season-high 30 points to lead the Bluejays (18-2, 5-2).

Watson, who watched from the bench, tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee Monday against Xavier.

No. 1 Villanova 78, Providence 68: Josh Hart scored 25 points, Kris Jenkins had 19 for host Villanova.

No. 2 Kansas 79, Texas 67: Devonte' Graham scored 18 points and Frank Mason III added 17 for host Kansas (18-1, 7-0 Big 12).

No. 4 Gonzaga 73, Portland 52: Nigel Williams-Goss scored 15 points as host Gonzaga beat short-handed Portland to remain the only unbeaten Division I team.

No. 5 Kentucky 85, No. 24 South Carolina 69: Malik Monk scored 27 points, Bam Adebayo added 18 and host Kentucky overcame an ankle injury to starting guard De'Aaron Fox to beat South Carolina and take over first place in the Southeastern Conference.

No. 6 Baylor 62, TCU 53: Manu Lecomte scored 17 points and visiting Baylor beat TCU in a game that was back-and-forth for most of the second half until a late run by the Bears (18-1, 6-1 Big 12).

Kansas State 79, No. 7 West Virginia 75: Kamau Stokes and Barry Brown each scored 13 points to help host Kansas State rally to upset West Virginia.

No. 9 North Carolina 90, Boston College 82: Kennedy Meeks scored 20 points with

nine rebounds and Justin Jackson scored 22 points for visiting North Carolina.

No. 10 Florida St. 73, No. 12 Louisville 68: Jonathan Isaac and Dwayne Bacon both scored 16 points for host Florida State.

No. 11 Oregon 69, Stanford 52: Chris Boucher had 16 points and 10 rebounds, Dylan Ennis scored 15 points and host Oregon rolled to a victory.

No. 13 Butler 70, DePaul 69 (OT): Kethan Savage scored 20 points for visiting Butler (17-3, 6-2 Big East).

No. 15 Notre Dame 84, Syracuse 66: V.J. Beachem scored a career-high 30 points for host Notre Dame, which snapped a four-game losing streak against Syracuse.

No. 16 Virginia 62, Georgia Tech 49: Marial Shayok scored a career-best 19 points as host Virginia used a 22-7 run spanning halftime.

No. 17 Wisconsin 78, Minnesota 76 (OT): Ethan Happ scored a career-high 28 points and grabbed 12 rebounds to lead visiting Wisconsin.

No. 18 Duke 70, Miami 58: Matt Jones scored all 13 of his

points in the second half, hitting three three-pointers during the run of 20 consecutive points that lifted host Duke (15-4, 3-3) over Miami.

Vanderbilt 68, No. 19 Florida 66: Matthew Fisher-Davis scored 19 points and Nolan Cressler came up big in the final minute for visiting Vanderbilt (9-10, 3-4 Southeastern Conference).

No. 20 Cincinnati 78, Tulane 61: Jacob Evans scored 15 points as visiting Cincinnati won its 10th consecutive game.

No. 21 Purdue 77, Penn St. 52: Caleb Swanigan had 19 points and 12 rebounds for host Purdue (16-4, 5-2 Big Ten).

No. 23 Saint Mary's 85, Pepperdine 65: Joe Rahon scored 17 of his 22 points in the first half for host Saint Mary's.

Navy 96, Army 80 (OT): Shawn Anderson scored a career-high 30 points, Bryce Dulin tallied 21 points and 17 rebounds, and Navy outscored host Army 21-5 in overtime to salvage a win after losing a 10-point lead in the final minute of regulation.

Leonard leads Spurs with 41 points

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Kawhi Leonard scored a career-high 41 points, LaMarcus Aldridge had 16 points and 12 rebounds, and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 118-115 in overtime Saturday night despite missing starters Tony Parker and Pau Gasol.

Leonard scored six in OT, including a game-sealing dunk with 4.9 seconds left, as the Spurs regrouped after a late collapse in regulation.

LeBron James and Kyrie Irving scored 29 apiece for the Cavs, who had the last shot in regulation and had plenty of opportunities in the extra five minutes. Cleveland still had a chance to tie it in the final

second of overtime, but Kevin Love missed a three-pointer.

Bulls 102, Kings 99: Dwyane Wade had 30 points and two key steals in the final minute, Jimmy Butler added 23 points and host Chicago overcame a 42-point performance by DeMarcus Cousins for a victory over Sacramento.

Trail Blazers 127, Celtics 123 (OT): Damian Lillard had a three-point play with 47 seconds left in overtime and finished with 28 points to lift visiting Portland over Boston, snapping its four-game losing streak.

Rockets 119, Grizzlies 95: Sam Dekker scored a career-high 30 points, James Harden added 29 points and 10 assists and Houston leaned on its usual

three-point offense to beat host Memphis.

Suns 107, Knicks 105: Devin Booker scored 26 points and made a go-ahead three-pointer with 31 seconds left, and visiting Phoenix beat New York.

Nuggets 123, Clippers 98: Nikola Jokic scored 19 points and host Denver beat short-handed Los Angeles.

Heat 109, Bucks 97: Dion Waiters tied a career high with 33 points and last-place Miami won a season-best third game in a row by beating visiting Milwaukee.

Jazz 109, Pacers 100: George Hill scored a season-high 30 points and host Utah led wire-to-wire in a win over Indiana.

Pistons 113, Wizards 112: Marcus Morris scored 25 points and tipped in the winning basket at the buzzer, leading Detroit over visiting Washington for its third straight win.

Hornets 112, Nets 105: Michael Kidd-Gilchrist had 17 points and 14 rebounds, Nic Batum made two clutch three-pointers in the fourth quarter and host Charlotte defeated Brooklyn for its third straight win.

Hawks 110, 76ers 93: Paul Millsap scored 22 points and combined with Dwight Howard to help Atlanta dominate the boards as the Hawks beat visiting Philadelphia 76ers for their ninth win in 11 games.

Eberle, Brossoit help Oilers sweep Flames

Associated Press

CALGARY, Alberta — In an up-and-down season, Jordan Eberle is producing goals again.

Eberle had two goals and two assists, Laurent Brossoit stopped 38 shots for his first NHL win and the Edmonton Oilers beat the Calgary Flames 7-3 on Saturday night to sweep the four-game season series for the first time.

The 26-year-old Eberle has three goals and six points in the last four games. That comes on the heels of an 18-game goal drought in which he was limited to five assists.

“That’s how it works. You go through hot and cold streaks,” said Eberle, who has 11 goals and 32 points this season. “This was one of the colder streaks I’ve ever been on. It was frustrating. Once the puck goes in it starts to go in.”

Eberle’s wrist shot at 5:58 of the first period made it 3-0 and prompted Flames coach Glen Gulutzan to swap Brian Elliott in goal for Chad Johnson, who allowed three goals on four shots.

“The biggest thing was we started well. We capitalized on our chances early and got them behind the 8-ball,” Eberle said.

The Oilers kept taking advantage of Calgary’s mistakes in the second period. After Connor McDavid’s power-play goal at 3:57, Eberle scored again at 12:24, making it 5-0 when he was left open in the slot to deflect in Matt Benning’s pass.

“It’s embarrassing,” Gulutzan said. “I don’t talk to the guys after the game. Win or lose, I talk to them the next day. But certainly in the coaches’ room, emotions are high.”

Anton Slepyshev, Mark Letestu, Oscar Klefbom and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins also scored for Edmonton. The streaking Oilers are 5-0-1 in their last six and have moved within one point of the first-place Anaheim Ducks in the Pacific Division.

Sean Monahan extended his goal streak to five games, and Matthew Tkachuk and Lance Bouma also scored for Calgary.

The 23-year-old Brossoit won in his seventh career start. He was a sixth-round draft pick of the Flames in 2011 and was part of a November 2013 trade in which Calgary acquired defenseman Ladislav Smid.

“It’s a great feeling, especially with how last year went down with my call-up. It’s nice to contribute in a positive way,” Brossoit said.

Blue Jackets 3, Hurricanes 2: Scott Hartnell scored his second goal of the game midway through the third period to push host Columbus over Carolina.

Hartnell scored in the first period and got the tiebreaker in the third, helping the Blue Jackets overcome a terrible second period to beat the Hurricanes for the second time this week. Carolina has lost three straight.

Wild 5, Ducks 3: Ryan Suter, Erik Haula and Jason Zucker scored in a two-minute

span late in the third period, and host Minnesota rallied to beat Anaheim.

Capitals 4, Stars 3 (OT): Jay Beagle scored 19 seconds into overtime and Washington rallied to beat host Dallas.

Jets 5, Blues 3: Bryan Little scored twice on the power play, Ondrej Pavelec set a franchise record for saves in a period and host Winnipeg handed St. Louis its third straight loss.

Islanders 4, Kings 2: Anders Lee scored two power-play goals to lead host New York.

Devils 4, Flyers 1: Miles Wood scored twice, Keith Kinkaid stopped 35 shots and New Jersey beat slumping host Philadelphia.

Sabres 3, Canadiens 2 (OT): Zach Bogosian scored his first goal of the season in overtime and Buffalo beat host Montreal in the second game of a back-to-back for both teams.

Senators 3, Maple Leafs 2 (SO): Mike Hoffman scored the tying goal with 1:11 left in regulation, Tom Pyatt had the shootout winner and visiting Ottawa beat rival Toronto.

Coyotes 5, Lightning 3: Nineteen-year-old Christian Fischer scored in his first NHL game and host Arizona dominated for the first two periods.

Sharks 3, Avalanche 2 (OT): David Schlemko scored his second goal of the season with 3:42 remaining in overtime and host San Jose won its fourth straight game.