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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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US sailor shot in Tenn. dies; toll now 5

The Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez, 24, pulled up to his military targets in a rented, silver Mustang convertible, wearing a vest with extra ammunition, wielding at least two long guns and a handgun. His once-clean-shaven face was covered with a bushy beard. A short time later, four Marines he had shot lay dead. A sailor wounded by him died Saturday.

The image of Abdulazeez described by investigators doesn't square with the seemingly ordinary man described by neighbors and classmates: a clean-cut wrestler, the brother of a tennis player, the son of parents who drove no-frills cars. A man who played with the neighborhood kids growing up and gave a lift to a neighbor in a snowstorm.

Just days before the shootings, Abdulazeez was seen dribbling a soccer ball in his yard. He told two longtime friends he was excited about his new job at a company that makes

wire and cable products.

"Everything seemed fine. He was normal. He was telling me work was going great," said Ahmed Saleen Islam, 26, who knew Abdulazeez through the Islamic Society of Greater Chattanooga and saw him at the mosque two or three nights before the attacks. "We are so shocked and angry. ... We wish he would have come to us."

Hailey Bureau, 25, recalled sitting next to Abdulazeez in high school because their last names were close alphabetically. She said she broke down when she learned he was the gunman, saying, "It's so shocking. I imagine him the way I knew him then, laughing and smiling."

Bureau recalled Abdulazeez's wry sense of humor in a quote next to his yearbook photo: "My name causes national security alerts. What does yours do?"

The Kuwait-born man opened fire on two U.S. military sites in Chattanooga in an attack that left four Marines dead at the

scene and a sailor who succumbed to his injuries later. The death of Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Randall Smith, a reservist serving on active duty at the Chattanooga center, was announced Saturday by the Navy.

It's not clear what set Abdulazeez on the path to violence that ended with him being gunned down by police.

Abdulazeez did not appear to have been on federal authorities' radar before the bloodshed Thursday, officials said. But now counterterrorism investigators are taking a deep look at his online activities and foreign travel.

"It would be premature to speculate on exactly why the shooter did what he did," FBI agent Ed Reinhold said. "However, we are conducting a thorough investigation to determine whether this person acted alone or was inspired or directed."

In the quiet neighborhood in Hixson, Tenn., where Abdulazeez lived with his parents in a two-story home, residents

and former classmates described an ordinary suburban life. However, court documents allege it was an abusive and turbulent household.

Abdulazeez's mother, Rasmia Ibrahim Abdulazeez, filed a divorce complaint in 2009 accusing her husband, Youssuf Saed Abdulazeez, of beating her repeatedly in front of their children and sexually assaulting her. She also accused him of "striking and berating" the children without provocation. Weeks later, the couple agreed to reconcile.

Abdulazeez graduated from Red Bank High School in Chattanooga, where he was on the wrestling team. A fellow Red Bank High graduate, Hussnain Javid, said Abdulazeez was "very outgoing."

"Obviously something has happened since then," said Sam Plank, who graduated two years ahead of Abdulazeez but hadn't crossed paths with him since 2006. "He was as Americanized as anyone else."

Pentagon: F-35 glitches no bar to combat

Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — Five years after the first F-35s were supposed to be declared combat-ready, the Pentagon's top weapons-buyer says the fighter jet's operating software is ready to go "with some minor workarounds" that need to be remedied later.

"All but eight" of the 243 software capabilities anticipated for the declaration of "initial operational capability" are "on track to be completed and verified" before the Marine Corps announces the milestone for its version of the plane, Frank Kendall, the Defense Department's undersecretary for acquisition, wrote in a report to Congress obtained by Bloomberg News.

The F-35, made by Lockheed Martin

Corp., is the most expensive U.S. weapons system ever, at a projected \$391.1 billion for a planned fleet of 2,443 aircraft. It's also a flying computer, with more than 8 million lines of software code in each plane.

Shortcomings, previously reported and cited by Kendall as among the eight issues still unresolved, involve software used in the fusion of data gathered from air and ground sensors, electronic warfare and air-to-air and air-to-ground data links.

Kendall's previously undisclosed report, dated June 22, said the Pentagon's F-35 program office plans to resolve these issues during the testing of more capable software planned for deployment in late 2017.

"These shortcomings do not interfere with" the Marines' intended missions, Kendall wrote in the report. The service

"will still be able to meet" its declaration date "with requisite weapons and mission systems."

That assessment was questioned by Michael Sullivan of the nonpartisan U.S. Government Accountability Office, who directs the agency's annual report on the F-35 program.

"Some of the capabilities that will be questionable," such as sensor fusion and electronic warfare, "are key components of the aircraft's" advantage over current planes, Sullivan said in an email. "Sensor fusion has an impact on pilot workload, and the report is vague about addressing how difficult it will be for pilots to actually perform those 'missions sets,' or how effective the aircraft will actually be," he said.

GOP hopefuls woo Iowa voters

The Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Republican presidential contenders seeking to woo evangelical voters are making their case for conservative social issues at a gathering expected to attract thousands of potential Iowa caucusgoers.

Ten candidates are scheduled to appear Saturday in Ames at the annual Family Leadership Summit. No one seeking the GOP nomination has emerged as a clear favorite among evangelical voters.

"They understand that this base has been very influential in past caucuses," said Bob

Vander Plaats, president of the Family Leader, the conservative organization sponsoring the event.

Vander Plaats, who has not endorsed any candidate in the 2016 race, expressed concern that the Christian conservative vote might be split between multiple candidates, diluting its impact.

"The goal would be in this summit, and any subsequent venue or event, that we would start recognizing a leader we could unite around and champion — and try to get the person across the goal line," he said.

Scheduled to attend are Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, Texas

Sen. Ted Cruz, South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, former Texas Gov. Rick Perry, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum, retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson and reality TV personality Donald Trump.

During the daylong event, the candidates will be questioned onstage by political consultant Frank Luntz. Iowa's evangelical voters traditionally influence the state's first-in-the-nation presidential caucuses because they tend to be organized and participate.

Republicans are Clinton's sole focus

The Associated Press

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — Ignoring her primary challengers, Hillary Rodham Clinton focused instead on the expanding field of Republican contenders as she and her fellow Democrats tried to impress influential party activists in Iowa.

The fundraising faceoff for the benefit of the state party came Friday night as the Democratic primary fight — long assumed to be just short of a coronation for Clinton — appeared to be heating up into a slightly more serious contest. In recent weeks, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders has risen in the polls and has packed arenas with voters eager to hear the message of the self-described socialist who's become Clinton's chief rival.

But rather than confront her most immediate political obstacle in a crucial primary state, Clinton took aim at the other party, vowing to never let Republicans "rip away the progress" made during the Obama administration.

"Trickle-down economics has to be one of the worst ideas of the 1980s," Clinton said, evoking Republican policy from the Reagan era. "It is right up there with New Coke, shoulder pads and big hair."

Sanders, too, refused to criticize his primary opponent directly. Earlier in the day, he edged closer to an attack when he questioned whether Clinton would back the kinds of tough regulations for Wall Street that's become a rallying call for liberal Democrats.

"You'll have to ask Hillary Clinton her views on whether we should break up these large financial institutions," he said during an afternoon appearance in Cedar Rapids.

Militant attack at Iraq market kills 115

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — An attack by the Islamic State group on a crowded marketplace in Iraq's eastern Diyala province has killed 115 people, including women and children, in one of the deadliest single attacks in the country in the past decade.

The victims, mostly Shiite, were gathered to mark the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan — which was Friday for Iraqi Shiites and a day earlier for Iraqi Sunnis.

Police said a small truck detonated in a crowded marketplace in the town of Khan Beni Saad Friday night in what quickly turned celebrations into a scene of horror, with body parts scattered across the market. At least 170 people were injured in the attack, police officials said, speaking anonymously because they are not authorized to brief the media.

Men quickly emptied boxes of tomatoes to use them for carrying the bodies of small children, witnesses said, while adult victims lay scattered around the attack scene and waited for medical assistance.

"Khan Bani Saad has become a disaster area because

of this huge explosion," Diyala resident Sayif Ali said. "This is the first day of Eid, hundreds of people got killed, many injured, and we are still searching for more bodies."

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement posted on Twitter accounts associated with the militant group.

Iraq's speaker of parliament, Salim al-Jabouri, said Saturday that the attack has struck an "ugly sectarian chord." The government is making "attempts to regulate Daesh's terror from destabilizing Diyala security," he added, referring to the militant group by its Arabic acronym.

But anger is rife in the volatile province, where a number of towns were captured by the Islamic State group last year. Iraqi forces and Kurdish fighters have since retaken those areas, but clashes between the militants and security forces continue.

"We went out to the market for shopping and preparations for the holiday, Eid, in order to receive holiday cheer," said another resident, who spoke anonymously for fear of retribution. "But this joy has turned to grief,

and we have lost family, friends and relatives, all because of this government's failure to provide us with security."

Security forces were out in full force across Diyala on Saturday, with dozens of new checkpoints and security protocols immediately implemented in the wake of Friday's attack.

"This horrible carnage is truly outside all boundaries of civilized behavior," Jan Kubis, the special representative of the United Nations mission in Iraq, said Saturday.

The Sunni militant group has been behind several similar, large-scale attacks on civilians or military checkpoints as it seeks to expand its territory. The group currently controls about a third of Iraq and Syria in a self-declared caliphate.

In August last year, at least 64 people were killed in an attack on a Sunni mosque in Diyala in what locals believed was a retaliatory attack against Diyala tribes that refused to proclaim loyalty to the Islamic State group.

Diyala, which borders Iran, is the only province in Iraq where Iranian jets are known to have conducted airstrikes against the Islamic State group.

Cubs fans put trust in Epstein

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Don't bother asking whether this is the year.

Theo Epstein's answer to the question that's haunted Cubs fans for a century-and-counting hasn't changed. It's the same one he gave four years ago, when Epstein was introduced as the franchise's latest savior to great fanfare and pleaded for patience: He has no idea. Neither does anyone else.

When the club broke training camp back in spring, 2016 seemed like a reasonable guess, or maybe '17. But if Epstein's suddenly fast-filling schedule is any indication, this just might be the one.

For the first time since he took over as the club's baseball operations boss, Wrigley Field is on full alert. Chockfull of young talent and now managed by wily Joe Maddon, the Cubs finally made it to midseason without being mathematically — or just realistically — eliminated from the postseason.

Small as that accomplishment seems, especially measured against their high-flying division rivals in St. Louis and Pittsburgh, there is the whiff of real possibility in the air on Chicago's North Side and the anticipation that reinforcements are on the way. With the trade deadline looming at the end of the month, Epstein is thinking about buying players instead of simply swapping or selling them.

All of a sudden, just like it used to be back in Boston at this time of year, he is crazy busy. And not just with baseball: Epstein found time in the days before the All-Star break to step onstage at a nearby club alongside good friend Eddie Vedder and contribute backup guitar licks and

vocals to a pretty good rendition of "Rockin' in the Free World." Good enough, anyway, to raise \$425,000 for a youth charity he began in Boston and expanded to Chicago.

When he sat down for an interview, Epstein looked at ease, but he was still hoarse.

"If somebody came up to me in spring training and said here's where you'll be (47-40) at the end of the first half," he began, clearing his throat one more time, "I'd have taken it in a heartbeat."

No doubt. Back then, youngsters Kris Bryant and Addison Russell had yet to make their major league debuts and there were plenty of questions about how a handful of added veterans like reliever Jason Motte, catcher Miguel Montero and returning starter Jason Hammel would fit in. Epstein turned that job over to Maddon and he did not disappoint.

"Because we play just about every day, you get into a rhythm right away and then the season becomes a kind of blur," Maddon said. "So if your veterans don't buy in early, it only gets harder and harder to flip the culture."

"I was mostly lucky with this group, because to a man, they bought in really fast," he added. "Made my life a lot easier."

Of course, it wasn't that simple. Maddon also proved masterful at managing a bullpen-by-committee and made sure understudies like Chris Denorfia and David Ross got enough at-bats to be pressed into starting roles when needed. After Bryant struck out three times in his first big-league game, Maddon made sure he didn't worry about it.

"That's how Joe is," Russell said. "He

always says, 'If you're going to make a mistake, make it on the aggressive side.' ... When you're young, you just want to go, go, go and I was down on myself because I wasn't stealing as many bases as I thought I should."

"I talked to Joe and he said instead of worrying about that, start picking spots where you can take the extra base," Russell added. "It changed how I looked at running. I think it made me smarter and better on the base paths all the way around."

Successful as the mix has been so far, Epstein is considering mixing it up even more. Back in 2004, when he helped deliver Boston's first World Series title in 86 years, he was portrayed as the leader of a pack of young general managers determined to build baseball teams that resembled the statistical models they assembled with computers. The truth, at least in Epstein's case, was never that simple.

His greatest strength was striking a balance between the old and new ways of cobbling together teams and being unafraid to rattle the believers in either camp. During his tenure in Chicago, which has aligned with a shift in the game from hitting to pitching, Epstein has taken the long view and loaded up on dynamic young position players.

Just don't bet he won't change course. Epstein can't know whether this is the year, but he may be willing to roll the dice at the halfway point to find out.

"We'd like to add starting pitching. We're already running the risk of being thin heading into the dog days," Epstein said, breaking into a wide smile after sneaking a glance at his phone. "We'll see."

Minnesota relying on Hunter, 40

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Torii Hunter turns 40 this weekend. He's been bracing for trouble.

Not from his body or mind, despite that daunting number for a professional athlete, but from his Minnesota Twins teammates.

"I don't know what they're going to do to me, but it doesn't sound good because they keep saying, 'When is it? When is it?'" Hunter said. "When the guys start talking about your birthday a week out, they're up to something. I'm scared."

The special occasion was actually Saturday, and his concern ought to be limited to potential pranks. The way his season has gone, Hunter needn't be worried about an age-related regression. Returning to his original team in a mentoring role has been energizing. He even said being back in Minnesota has made him feel younger.

The Twins, though, have been the ones experiencing the rejuvenation. Their 49-40 record was the second-best in the American League before the All-Star break, and Hunter's presence has played a real part.

"He's a very funny guy. He knows how to play the game. He's a leader, you know?" Twins pitcher Ervin Santana said. "Everybody follows him, because he's doing a lot of the right things."

Signing Hunter to a one-year, \$10.5 million contract gave the Twins a durable right fielder, a five-time All-Star who has played just as well if not better in his 30s than in his 20s. Another reason: Leadership for a team that averaged 96 losses over the last four seasons.

"The mentality that he brings in, that we've kind of embraced, of that short memory, forgetting about yesterday, forgetting about the game that happened an hour ago, that's something that's really helped us," third baseman Trevor Plouffe said. "That's kind of been the difference in the team from the years past."

For outfielders Byron Buxton and Aaron Hicks, having another fellow former Twins first-round draft pick has been invaluable. Hunter's impact has transcended his position group, too.

His affable, jokester nature has given the Twins clubhouse the kind of life it hadn't had since, well, Hunter was here the last time a decade ago. He has initiated an elaborate ritual following victories by the Twins at home, featuring fog machines, laser lights and dancing in the middle of the room for the unofficial player of the game.

"I just go out there and do what I have to do that's a part of me, and I always want to make guys around me better," Hunter said.

Hunter is the second-oldest active position player in the majors, behind only Ichiro Suzuki, who at 41 is a part-timer for the Miami Marlins. Two of the seven 40-plus pitchers are currently on the disabled list.

Trout's ninth-inning homer lifts Angels

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Mike Trout proved once again that he knows as much about ending games with a dramatic flair as he does starting them.

Trout returned from his second straight All-Star MVP performance with a two-out walkoff home run in the ninth Friday night, lifting the Los Angeles Angels to a 1-0 victory over the Boston Red Sox after they were no-hit through six innings by Wade Miley.

"It's been crazy, for sure. One of those weeks I'm definitely going to remember," said the reigning AL MVP, who led off Tuesday's All-Star Game with a home run against major league ERA leader Zack Greinke. "It's been fun, though. It's just why we play the game, to have fun and try to win ballgames."

Trout drove an 0-1 pitch from Red Sox closer Koji Uehara (2-4) way over the fence in left-center for his league-leading 27th homer. Unfortunately for C.J. Wilson, it didn't come in time to help him get credit for the victory.

Yankees 4, Mariners 3: Alex Rodriguez returned from the All-Star break with a boom, hitting a tiebreaking home run

in the seventh inning as host New York overcame two homers by Seattle's Kyle Seager.

Royals 4-0, White Sox 2-2: John Danks pitched four-hit ball into the seventh, and host Chicago beat Kansas City to split a day-night doubleheader.

Phillies 6, Marlins 3: Jeff Francoeur hit a pinch-hit three-run home run in host Philadelphia's four-run eighth inning.

Blue Jays 6, Rays 2: Josh Donaldson hit a two-run home run, Justin Smoak added a three-run shot and Toronto beat visiting Tampa Bay.

Tigers 7, Orioles 3: J.D. Martinez made a terrific catch against the wall in right field, then homered two innings later to help host Detroit beat Baltimore.

Braves 4, Cubs 2: Eury Perez drove in two runs with a bases-loaded, tiebreaking single in the eighth inning and host Atlanta snapped a five-game losing streak.

Nationals 3, Dodgers 2 (5 innings, suspended): A game delayed three times because of a lighting malfunction was suspended after five innings with host Washington leading Los Angeles. The game was scheduled to be completed Saturday.

Twins 5, Athletics 0: Trevor Plouffe hit a grand slam against All-Star Sonny Gray

in the sixth inning after Brian Dozier led off the game with his 20th home run, and Minnesota beat host Oakland.

Padres 4, Rockies 2: James Shields won for the first time in six weeks, and Matt Kemp, Jedd Gyorko and Justin Upton homered to lead San Diego over visiting Colorado.

Brewers 4, Pirates 1: Mike Fiers scattered three hits over seven solid innings and Gerardo Parra had two hits to lead host Milwaukee.

Cardinals 3, Mets 2: Jhonny Peralta hit a tiebreaking home run in the sixth inning, Lance Lynn outpitched Noah Syndergaard and St. Louis held on to beat visiting New York.

Astros 3, Rangers 2: Jose Altuve and rookie Carlos Correa drove in a run apiece to help their team to an early lead and host Houston held on to snap a six-game skid.

Reds 6, Indians 1: Mike Leake pitched six effective innings and drove in three runs to lead host Cincinnati.

Giants 6, Diamondbacks 5 (12): Arizona shortstop Cliff Pennington's throwing error allowed the go-ahead run to score in the 12th inning and visiting San Francisco won its fourth straight.



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Weather pushes Open final to Monday

The Associated Press

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland — The British Open was stopped just 32 minutes after it resumed Saturday morning when gusts of up to 40 mph blew golf balls across the green and contributed to Dustin Johnson making bogey to fall into a share of the lead.

The second weather delay — rain on Friday, wind on Saturday — meant the first Monday finish in the British Open since 1988.

After a delay of nearly 10½ hours, the second round finally resumed late Saturday at the Old Course.

Dustin Johnson is tied for the lead with Danny Willett at 9 under, but still has three more holes to play including the tough 17th. Willett got the day off, having finished the rain-delayed second round on Friday.

There are 39 players who still need to complete the second round. That group also includes Jordan Spieth, winner of the last two majors and four shots off the pace.

The third round is set for Sunday and the final round on Monday. The last major to end on Monday (without a playoff) was the 2009 U.S. Open at Bethpage Black won by Lucas Glover.

The R&A was criticized for even resuming the second round. Louis Oosthuizen, who got the good end of the weather when he won at St. Andrews in 2010, had a tap-in for par when a gust blew his golf ball a few feet away. As he stopped and smiled in disbelief, another gust moved it even further away.

About that time, Brooks Koepka tried to mark his ball five times on the 11th green — the most exposed on the golf course with the Eden Estuary on one side and St. Andrews Bay on the other — when play was halted.

R&A rules director David Rickman said his staff spent an hour on the 11th green without seeing a ball move, leading to the decision to try to play.

“What we weren’t expecting when we made the decision to go was the wind picked up,” he said. “We picked up 10 percent — 4 mph — in the half-hour after we started. We were close to the edge,

anyway. That was the difference. As an administrator, my heart sank. Because I thought, ‘This has changed.’ It was always going to be a difficult day.”

All it took was a half-hour for the wind to wreak havoc on the Old Course.

Johnson was at 10-under par and played his third shot from just short of the green on the par-5 14th. He chose to pitch it up a steep bank instead of using the putter, stubbed and barely reached the flat level of the green some 50 feet from the flag. His coin was a fraction away from marking his ball when it rolled away, down the slope and right toward Spieth’s ball. Spieth ran over, then quickly moved out of the way as Johnson’s ball rolled by.

Johnson putted the next one to about 15 feet and missed that for a bogey to fall into a tie at 9 under with Danny Willett, the clubhouse leader at 9-under 135. Spieth rolled his putt up to 8 feet and missed the birdie try. It was his fourth three-putt of the round. He was four shots out of the lead.

Up ahead, Brendon Todd had three holes to finish. He three-putted the 16th and 17th for bogeys and made par on the

last hole to assure making the cut.

The temperature was cold in the wind. Todd was running hot, especially after play was halted right when he finished.

“I was pretty frustrated,” he said. “I three-putted 16 and 17, and then they’re going to call play. Why did we even start in the first place? Everyone is going to play in difficult conditions. With links golf, you get different draws and that’s the nature of the game. What I don’t like is when they make a bad decision to start in the first place.”

The real trouble was at the loop — holes 7-11 that are the most exposed.

The incident with Koepka was one thing. But when word came in that wind was affecting the inward holes — Oosthuizen on No. 13, for example — it was clear it had to stop.

The last time the Open finished on a Monday was in 1988 at Royal Lytham & St. Annes because of rain. Seve Ballesteros won his third claret jug over Nick Price, Nick Faldo and Fred Couples, all of whom are in the Hall of Fame.

New deal caps big week for Thomas

The Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Demaryius Thomas hit the jackpot this week — 48 hours before signing his \$70 million contract.

The Denver Broncos star receiver awoke Monday morning to see he’d missed two calls from the Federal Correctional Institution in Tallahassee, Fla.

He jumped out of bed. His heart and mind both raced.

Suddenly, footballs and fortunes were no match for faith and family.

Could this really be happening? “I knew it was something because I’ve never seen her call me that early,” Thomas said Friday.

He stared at his phone, awaiting another call.

Ten minutes crept by before his phone buzzed again.

“Hello, mama.”

Katina Smith, who’s been jailed since

1999 after she and her mother were busted on drug trafficking charges in Georgia, had great news: President Barack Obama was commuting her sentence.

Instead of getting out of prison in 2017, she’ll be released to a halfway house in Macon, Ga., by the end of this month.

And sometime this season, she’ll get to see her son play football for the first time in her life.

“She’ll probably be nervous,” Thomas said. “She’s never flown.”

She’ll even get to wear one of her son’s orange No. 88 jerseys. An authentic one this time — not like the ones she and her mother, Minnie Pearl Thomas, who’s serving a life sentence in the same minimum-security prison in Florida, had to craft with strips of tape on their prison-issued garb as they gathered around the TV set to watch Broncos games.

Smith was one of 46 non-violent drug offenders whose sentences were cut by the president this week.

“It was a blessing,” Thomas said. Thomas said he spoke again with his mother after signing his big deal that includes \$43.5 million guaranteed and is the largest in franchise history and “she’s still happy she’s about to get out, she’s not worried about the contract.”

Neither, it seems, is Thomas.

Thomas said his mother’s big news made his big payday secondary. After all, he said he was prepared to play this season on the \$12.823 million franchise tag if the sides didn’t reach a long-term deal by the deadline Wednesday.

“I was like, whatever’s going to happen, I’m still going to be playing here no matter what and if it had to go down to franchise, I would be in the same situation next year, trying to get the deal done,” he said.

Although Thomas skipped the Broncos’ offseason program, he said he would have shown up for the start of training camp July 30 even without a long-term deal.

Froome cushions Tour lead

The Associated Press

MENDE, France — British riders ruled Saturday at the Tour de France, with Stephen Cummings taking the win on Stage 14 and Chris Froome extending his already comfortable race lead.

Cummings got South African team MTN-Qhubeka its first win, on the day that South Africans celebrate as International Nelson Mandela Day.

Cummings ambushed two French riders, Romain Bardet and Thibaut Pinot, on a short flat section after the steep final climb.

Bardet and Pinot reached the summit together on the short but very sharp final ascent, only for Cummings to speed past them and take the win on an airfield above the town of Mende.

Bardet said he and Pinot were guilty of watching each other too much, neglecting the danger from Cummings catching them from behind.

“He was very crafty,” Bardet said. “Very disappointed.”

There were changes in the overall standings.

Tejay van Garderen, who had been second overall, struggled on the final ascent and couldn’t stay with Froome and Nairo Quintana, who had been third overall at the start of the stage in Rodez.

Froome beat Quintana to the line with a finishing sprint. The Sky team leader now has an overall lead of 3 minutes, 10 seconds over Quintana, who vaulted into second place. Van Garderen is third, 3:32 behind Froome.

Steve Morabito broke a collarbone in a crash and is out of the race. The Swiss rider’s French FDJ team said he was taken back to the stage start where doctors diagnosed the fracture.

Established in 2009, Mandela Day is meant to encourage South Africans to emulate Mandela’s humanitarian legacy and recognize the decades he spent fighting apartheid.

Bills’ Ryan skydives with Army team

The Associated Press

NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. — Rex Ryan’s first touchdown as Buffalo Bills coach came from 3,000 yards in the sky.

Ryan descended more than 9,000 feet Friday in a tandem skydive with members of the United States Army Golden Knights parachute team at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station.

“That was awesome,” Ryan said moments after landing. “I’m ready to go again.”

Known for his “ground and pound” football, Ryan readily accepted an invitation to take to the air with the Golden Knights. The group frequently performs at Bills’ games at the annual Thunder of Niagara Airshow.

After free falling for about a minute at a speed approaching 300 mph, according to U.S. Army officials, Ryan landed safely on a grass field, though he did slip upon

hitting the ground.

At a rare loss for words, Ryan had difficulty describing the experience.

“You guys need to do it,” he said. “Unless you do it, I don’t think people can do it justice on how to describe it.”

Ryan, however, discouraged his Bills players from following his lead.

“I don’t have to play,” he said. “So, yeah, not recommended for the players. But for a coach, go for it.”

After landing, Ryan greeted one of his former players, New York Jets wide receiver Eric Decker, who rode along on an F-16 fighter jet with the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.

Ryan was hired by the Bills in January after his dismissal following six seasons with the Jets.

Ryan declined to comment on offensive line coach Aaron Kromer, who has been put on paid administrative leave after he was arrested last weekend on a misde-

meanor battery charge in Florida.

“I’m not going to add anything to what we’ve already released as a team,” Ryan said. “A lot of the process is still going on.”

In other NFL news:

■ Bill Arnsparger, the Miami assistant coach who directed the “No-Name Defense” that helped the Dolphins win Super Bowl titles in 1973 and 1974, died Friday. He was 88.

The Miami team that won the Super Bowl in January 1973 had the only perfect season in NFL history.

Arnsparger left the Dolphins after the 1974 Super Bowl to become head coach of the New York Giants, where he was 7-28 before he was fired after an 0-7 start in 1976. He returned to Don Shula’s Miami staff and remained with the Dolphins until 1983, helping them reach another Super Bowl.