

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## US bolsters East Africa counterterror efforts

*The Washington Post*

NAIROBI, Kenya — President Barack Obama on Saturday committed the United States to an intensified fight against terrorists in East Africa, announcing here that his administration would expand support for counterterrorism operations in Kenya and Somalia, including increased training and funding for Kenya's security forces.

"We have to keep that pressure going even as we're strengthening the Somali government," he said at a joint news conference with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta.

Obama acknowledged that al-Shabab terrorists retain the capacity to attack "soft targets" in both countries, even after years of American drone strikes and efforts from a regional, U.S.-backed counterterrorism force based in Somalia. But he said al-Shabab's territory had been "systematically reduced."

Obama came to office vowing to move the United States

off a perpetual war footing and promising to wage a smarter, swifter war on international terrorism.

His East African sojourn this week serves as a stark reminder that seven years into his presidency, the long, difficult fight against terrorism remains a central and vexing component of his foreign policy.

"As is true around the world, what we find is, is that we can degrade significantly the capacities of these terrorist organizations, but they can still do damage," Obama said at the news conference. "And part of our announcement today involves additional funding, additional assistance that we're providing the Kenyan security forces to deal with these very specific counterterrorism threats."

Obama's discussions with Kenyatta were dominated by the question of how best to counter Islamist extremists engaged in regular attacks against civilians. "We are deepening that democracy while fighting glob-

al terrorists who seek to destroy our way of life," Kenyatta said. "Left undefeated, they will redraw the international system and make room for violent extremism and tyranny."

Kenyatta said his country is new to the fight against terrorism and is learning from partners such as the United States, adding, "This is an existential fight for us."

Security will be similarly dominant during the president's time in Ethiopia, a nation that has worked to keep the instability in Somalia from spilling across its borders and that has dispatched peacekeeping forces to South Sudan and elsewhere.

Kenneth Menkhaus, a political science professor at Davidson College in North Carolina, said it is hard to be hopeful that closer cooperation between countries could resolve the region's problems anytime in the near future.

"The Horn of Africa presents extraordinarily complex political and security dilemmas,

for which there's no obvious answer," Menkhaus said in an interview. "The question really is which is the least bad choice, and how can you kick open doors which, down the road, could present opportunities for conflict resolution?"

Obama's decision to visit the African Union's headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — the first sitting U.S. president to do so — is part of his push to build capacity among African nations to address the problems of their region.

In 2015, Kenya received \$100 million in U.S. counterterrorism assistance — more than double the amount allocated the previous year.

As a result of this weekend's talks, the Massachusetts National Guard and the Kenyan government will sign a partnership agreement, a senior administration official said, and the administration has pledged to work with Congress to provide additional counterterrorism aid to Kenya.

## Afghan police commander joins Taliban as they take base

*The Associated Press*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban took control of a large police base in a remote part of northeastern Afghanistan after some 100 police and border guards joined the insurgents following three days of fighting, security officials said Sunday.

The loss of the Targaran base in Badakhshan province marked the largest mass surrender since U.S. and NATO forces concluded their combat mission at the end of last year. It highlighted the challenges facing Afghan security forces, which have seen their casualties soar in the face of stepped-up insurgent attacks.

The police base, in the province's Wardoj district, had been cut off as heavy rains destroyed roads into the area, said Gen. Baba Jan, Badakhshan province's police chief. It wasn't clear why reinforcements hadn't been flown into the area, though the province's steep valleys often make aircraft landings difficult.

"No reinforcements were sent to help the police at the base for the past three days when they were under the attack, and finally they had no option; they had to join the Taliban," said Abdullah Naji Nazari, the head of Badakhshan's provincial council.

Jan said the local police com-

mander also joined the Taliban and handed over the base's weapons and ammunition.

The Taliban issued a statement saying they captured the base and 110 police officers, their local commander and the head of the local border police. It did not say whether the captives joined their ranks.

Last month, hundreds of insurgents attacked security checkpoints in the province's Yangan district, forcing police to abandon them.

Elsewhere in Badakhshan, the heavy rains have left at least six people, including women and children, dead in Kofab district, said Nawid Frotan, the spokesman for the provincial

governor.

Some 130 houses had been damaged or destroyed, and authorities are trying to send relief items including food to those stranded by rising waters, he said.

In northern Baghlan province, 11 people were kidnapped Saturday after gunmen stopped their vehicle in Dahna-i Ghori district, said Gen. Abdul Jabar Perdili, the provincial police chief.

Perdili said the vehicle held 18 passengers, all Shia Hazaras. Four women and one man were freed, and authorities were still negotiating the release of the others, he said.

## Marine Corps mulls new sniper rifle

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — The Marine Corps is looking to field a new sniper rifle but has yet to identify what type and caliber, according to a Marine spokesman.

“We are looking at a number of available options, to include the Mk.21 Precision Sniper Rifle,” Maj. Anton Semelroth said in an email. “The Marine Corps continues to evaluate the need for improved capabilities for our snipers and to consider solutions being pursued by the Army, other services and [Special Operations Command].”

Semelroth’s remarks come a little more than month after The Washington Post published a report detailing the shortcomings of the Marines’ current sniper rifle.

That rifle, the M40A5, has an effective range of about 1,000 yards and fires a .308-caliber bullet. The Mk.21, however, can be fitted to fire a .338-caliber bullet and can hit targets at more than 1,600 yards. The Mk. 21 is also in use by various special operations units.

The Marine Corps is the only branch in the U.S. military and in NATO still fielding a .308-caliber rifle as its primary

sniper rifle. In 2011, the Army upgraded to the M2010, a rifle chambered in .300-caliber that can fire accurately to 1,300 yards.

Although there has yet to be a firm decision on what rifle the Marines will field next, the Marine Corps sniper community has rallied to push for a new one.

“There has been more talk and proactive actions from the [snipers] than there has ever been,” said a Marine close to the acquisition process. “This is the closest we’ve come to seeing a new rifle.”

The Marine, who spoke under the condition of anonymity to discuss the program frankly, added that tentative plans have recently been made to build a 2,000-yard range at the Marine sniper school in Quantico, Va.

The range, he said, will be a welcome addition “if there’s a future rifle coming into the Corps that can fire past 1,000 yards.”

Additionally, the sniper community wants to have a “sniper summit” in the coming months to help address — in addition to acquiring a new rifle — manpower and professional development issues.

### Car bomb kills 2 Turkish soldiers, wounds 4

ANKARA, Turkey — A car bomb struck a military vehicle in southeast Turkey, killing two soldiers and wounding four others in an attack blamed on Kurdish rebels, authorities said Sunday, a day after Turkey launched airstrikes against Kurdish insurgents in northern Iraq.

The Kurdish rebel group, the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK, has said the airstrikes likely spelled the end of a cease-fire announced in 2013. Turkey has simultaneously bombed Islamic State group positions near the Turkish border in Syria, and

carried out widespread police operations against suspected Kurdish and Islamic State militants and other outlawed groups inside Turkey. Hundreds have been detained.

The car bomb exploded late Saturday in the town of Lice as a vehicle carrying military police officers was traveling to respond to Kurds who had blocked a main intersection and set cars on fire, said the governor’s office in Diyarbakir, a mainly Kurdish province.

The military said PKK militants fired on the troops, calling the attack a “treacherously pre-planned” ambush.

From The Associated Press

## Town says goodbye to Marine slain in Tenn.

*The Associated Press*

GRANTSBURG, Wis. — A small Wisconsin town said goodbye on Saturday to a Marine killed in the recent attack on a Navy-Marine reserve center in Chattanooga, Tenn.

A dozen members of a Marine Corps honor guard stood watch as fellow Marines in dress blue uniforms carried the coffin of Sgt. Carson Holmquist into Grantsburg Senior High School for a public visitation Saturday.

Holmquist, 25, grew up in the northwestern Wisconsin town of 1,300. He graduated in 2008 from Grantsburg High School, where the U.S. flag was flying at half-staff.

“We’re here for the families. That’s our priority now,” Marine Forces Reserve spokesman Capt. Andrew Chrestman told reporters. “We grieve with them, and they will not be forgotten.”

Chrestman said he had spoken with Holmquist’s father, Tom Holmquist, of Grantsburg,

who is “obviously grieving and going through difficult times.”

“When we lose a Marine, we lose a member of our family,” Chrestman said. “We really do. While our level of grief is not near his level of grief, we’re still grieving with him.”

Holmquist joined the Marines in 2009 and served two tours of duty in Afghanistan. Survivors include his wife, Jasmine, and their son, Wyatt, 2.

After the funeral, more than 60 people in Marine, Navy and other military uniforms saluted as an honor guard of Marine pallbearers brought Holmquist’s flag-draped coffin out to a waiting hearse. Escorted by a state trooper and six motorcyclists with the Patriot Guard Riders, the funeral procession left for a local cemetery and a private burial with military honors.

Holmquist was among four Marines and a sailor who were killed in the July 16 attack. Police later killed the attacker during a shootout.

## World Special Olympics opens in Los Angeles

*The Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — Michelle Obama welcomed thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities to the Special Olympic World Games on Saturday during a festive opening ceremony filled with cheers, songs and praise for their courage and determination.

“My husband and I, we are so proud of you, so incredibly proud of you, and we love you all from the bottom of our hearts,” the first lady said. She said the athletes were an example to the millions of people watching the event on television.

She was introduced by Special Olympian Tim Harris, who owns a restaurant in New Mexico that he said serves “breakfast, lunch and hugs!”

Obama “knows the power of a hug,” he said, and shared one with the first lady.

Earlier, President Barack Obama welcomed the athletes by video.

About 6,500 athletes from 165 countries streamed into the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum to cheers and roars. The athletes will participate in 25 sports over nine days, ranging from weightlifting to the triathlon.

# Phillies' Hamels tosses 1st career no-hitter

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — The scouts packed the seats behind home plate, and Cole Hamels put on quite a show. The lanky left-hander was dominant on a picturesque afternoon at Wrigley Field.

Quite the timing, too.

Hamels struck out 13 in the first no-hitter versus the Cubs since Sandy Koufax pitched a perfect game in 1965, leading Philadelphia to a 5-0 victory over Chicago on Saturday.

The 2008 World Series MVP threw baseball's third no-hitter of the season in what might be his final start for the Phillies. Hamels has been mentioned prominently in trade talks as the July 31 deadline approaches.

"It's something where you just go out there and enjoy the moment," Hamels said. "What I want is to be successful at it. I enjoyed the moment and this happened."

Hamels (6-7) was in control right from the start against the contending Cubs, and then got some help from rookie cen-

ter fielder Odubel Herrera in the final two innings. It was the fourth no-hitter for catcher Carlos Ruiz, including the play-offs, according to STATS — tops in NL history and tied with Jason Varitek for the major league record.

"I was thinking about one inning at a time," Ruiz said. "That's what I was thinking — something special could happen today."

It was the 13th no-hitter for the Phillies, who have the majors' worst record and could rebuild their farm system with a big haul from a Hamels deal. The 31-year-old lefty also was part of a previous Philadelphia no-hitter, teaming with three relievers for another gem last Sept. 1 at Atlanta.

Since 1900, only two pitchers have thrown a no-hitter and then got traded in the same season: Cliff Chambers from Pittsburgh to St. Louis in 1951, and Edwin Jackson from Arizona to the White Sox in 2010.

"Today was vintage Cole Hamels," Phillies manager Pete Mackanin said.

Ryan Howard hit a three-run homer off

Jake Arrieta (11-6) in the third, but Herrera had the two biggest plays.

With one out in the eighth, he ran a long way into the gap in left-center to grab David Ross' fly and then spilled onto the warning track. Cubs rookie Kris Bryant launched a long fly with two outs in the ninth, but Herrera raced back and managed to lean forward for the catch after slipping on the track in front of the ivy-covered brick wall.

"It feels awesome. I feel proud to be part of it," Herrera said through a translator.

Hamels had a big smile on his face as he hugged Howard and Ruiz after the final out. The rest of the Phillies then mobbed the pitcher near the mound while the crowd of 41,863 delivered a long standing ovation.

"He looked like he was extremely focused," Mackanin said. "He looked focused in the past and I think he may have been trying too hard not to pitch poorly. I think he just made his mind up that he is going to be who he is and 'I'm going to do what I do best.' He looked like he was on a mission."

Arrieta struck out eight in six innings. The right-hander, who knows what it's like to lose a no-hitter late in the game, was 5-0 with a sparkling 0.96 ERA in his previous six starts.

"Cole was special today," he said.

Before Saturday's outing, it looked as if all the trade rumors were taking a toll on the usually dependable Hamels. He allowed 14 runs and 20 hits over 6 1-3 innings in his previous two starts. He was 0-4 with a 5.56 ERA during a nine-game winless streak, which matched a career high.

But Hamels said he likes pitching in Chicago, and it showed on the three-year anniversary of his \$144 million, six-year contract with the Phillies.

"There's a great history in this ballpark and it's a fun place to come and play," he said. "I know it's one of our top places to play. I grew up watching on WGN and the Cubs play. To be able to play in a day game just knowing I'm able to go out there and enjoy it and be myself — and obviously this is what happened — it's a special feeling."

# Bumgarner homers as streaking Giants top A's

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Madison Bumgarner hit a home run and pitched seven innings for his third consecutive win as San Francisco beat Oakland 2-1.

Matt Duffy added a tiebreaking single in the sixth while helping the defending World Series champs to their 10th victory in 11 games.

Bumgarner — a Silver Slugger award winner in 2014 — homered on a 3-2 pitch from A's starter Chris Bassitt (0-3) in the third. It was Bumgarner's third home run this season and ninth of his career.

Bumgarner (11-5) also struck out seven while working past the sixth inning — something he failed to do in each of his previous three starts.

Ben Zobrist had three hits and scored the A's only run in the fourth inning.

**Cardinals 1, Braves 0:** Pinch-hitter Stephen Piscotty got his first career RBI with a sacrifice fly in the eighth inning and Carlos Martinez outdueling former teammate Shelby Miller as host St. Louis beat Atlanta.

The Cardinals won their fifth in a row despite getting just two hits. They lead the majors with a 63-34 record.

Martinez (11-4) made his first post-All-Star break start and allowed six hits in eight innings with six strikeouts and one walk, which was intentional. He worked the last four innings and took the loss in an 18-inning setback to the Mets on Sunday.

**Rangers 7, Angels 6:** Delino DeShields capped a three-run rally in the eighth inning with an infield hit that drove in the go-ahead run, Rougned Odor homered, and visiting Texas beat Los Angeles.

Joe Smith (4-3) came on to protect a 6-4 lead for Angels starter Hector Santiago, but didn't make it out of the eighth. Elvis Andrus raced home from third as Shin-Soo

Choo grounded to first baseman Albert Pujols for a force at second, Robinson Chirinos singled home another run, and Josh Hamilton scored on DeShields' high chopper to third.

The Angels' loss was their third in a row after seven straight wins, and kept them in a virtual tie with Houston for the AL West lead.

**Yankees 8, Twins 5:** Alex Rodriguez hit three home runs in a game for the fifth time in his career and keyed a ninth-inning rally against All-Star closer Glen Perkins, sending New York over host Minnesota.

The Yankees trailed 5-0 early. Rodriguez hit Perkins' first pitch for a tying homer, and John Ryan Murphy later connected for a three-run shot.

Rodriguez hit 452-foot solo homer in the fourth and a 422-foot drive that made it 5-3 in the seventh. His 424-foot homer in the ninth cleared the center field wall.

A-Rod clapped as he trotted around first base after each homer while fans at sold-out Target Field booed. The last time Rodriguez hit three home runs in a game was Aug. 14, 2010, at Kansas City.

Rodriguez has 23 homers this season and 677 in his career. He is now 6-for-10 lifetime against Perkins with two home runs.

**Mets 15, Dodgers 2:** Michael Conforto went 4-for-4 for his first big league hits and Kelly Johnson homered into the upper deck in his Mets' debut, powering New York past visiting Los Angeles.

Lucas Duda homered twice for the Mets in their highest-scoring game since April 2013, and their biggest run total ever against the Dodgers.

Slumping at the plate most of the season, the Mets erupted for 21 hits, their most since 2010.

Conforto, playing his second game in the majors, doubled twice and scored

four runs. Kirk Nieuwenhuis got four hits and drove in four runs and Daniel Murphy homered.

Matt Harvey (9-7) doubled, singled and pitched seven innings as the Mets ended a three-game losing streak.

**Royals 2, Astros 1 (10):** Alcides Escobar singled home Paulo Orlando with two outs in the 10th inning to lift Kansas City to a victory over visiting Houston.

Orlando singled off Will Harris (4-3) with one out and stole second before Escobar's game-winning loop to shallow right gave the Royals the win and ended the Astros' five-game winning streak.

**Blue Jays 8, Mariners 6:** Chris Colabello's two-run, bases-loaded single in the ninth inning gave Toronto a win over host Seattle.

Josh Donaldson opened the ninth with a walk off Carson Smith (1-3). Jose Bautista then doubled into the right-field corner. It extended Bautista's streak of reaching base against the Mariners to 36 games, including 33 with a hit.

Edwin Encarnacion was intentionally walked, drawing the infield in with no outs. Colabello then bounced his go-ahead single up the middle.

**Nationals 9, Pirates 3:** Rookie center fielder Michael Taylor had a home run and three RBIs and Gio Gonzalez won his fourth straight decision to lead visiting Washington to a victory over Pittsburgh.

Taylor capped the scoring with a two-run home run, his seventh, in the eighth inning off rookie Arquimedes Caminero.

Gonzalez (8-4) lasted just five-plus innings and gave up three runs, one earned, and five hits with no walks and five strikeouts. Yet the left-hander stayed unbeaten in his last five starts and improved to 4-0 lifetime against the Pirates.

**Padres 3, Marlins 1:** Ian Kennedy, being mentioned in various trade scenarios, pitched six strong innings and host

San Diego defeated Miami.

Kennedy (6-9) allowed a run and five hits. He matched a season high with seven strikeouts and walked one.

Kennedy has attracted interest from contending teams heading toward Friday's trading deadline.

**Reds 5, Rockies 2:** Johnny Cueto shrugging off trade rumors and pitched eight scoreless innings, Todd Frazier connected for his 100th career home run, and visiting Cincinnati beat Colorado.

Cueto (7-6), who was reportedly dealt to Kansas City on Sunday, put on a dominating display in hitter-friendly Coors Field, limiting the power-hitting Rockies' lineup to four singles before being lifted for a pinch-hitter in the ninth. He struck out five and walked one ahead of the July 31 trade deadline.

**Diamondbacks 2, Brewers 0:** Rubby De La Rosa pitched eight effective innings and Brad Ziegler held on for his 14th straight save, lifting host Arizona to a victory over Milwaukee.

It was Arizona's first shutout since beating the San Francisco Giants 4-0 on June 14, and sixth of the season.

**Orioles 5, Rays 1:** Chris Davis hit his fifth career grand slam and Miguel Gonzalez took a shutout into the eighth inning as visiting Baltimore ended a four-game losing streak with a victory over Tampa Bay.

**Tigers 5, Red Sox 1:** Nick Castellanos drove in three runs with a solo homer and double, Alfredo Simon pitched six solid innings and Detroit bounced back after consecutive extra-inning losses with a victory over host Boston.

**White Sox 10, Indians 3:** Chris Sale allowed two runs in seven innings and visiting Chicago used a five-run first to power past Cleveland.



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# Froome earns 2nd Tour win

*The Associated Press*

PARIS — Resplendent in yellow and riding a canary yellow bike, Chris Froome won his second Tour de France in three years on Sunday, with a leisurely pedal into Paris to wrap up a spectacular three-week slog of furious racing that culminated with a thrilling late fight-back by the British rider's toughest rival, Colombian Nairo Quintana.

Cheered on the Champs-Élysées under suitably rainy skies for Britain's third win in the 112-year-old race, Froome took it easy on the last Stage 21, his work done having grimly resisted Quintana's last-ditch assault on his hard-won Tour lead the previous day on the final Alpine ascent.

Just as when Froome first won in 2013, Quintana was again runner-up, although the margin between them was much smaller this time.

Third-placed Alejandro Valverde, Quintana's Movistar teammate from Spain, made the podium for the first time, moving up from fourth last year.

On rain-soaked roads that caused numerous spills in the women's race on the Champs-Élysées before the men rode in, the tired riders didn't bother racing for much of the largely flat 68-mile final stage from Sevres, in the French capital's southwest.

To minimize the risk of crashes, Tour organizers stopped the race clock early, on the first of 10 laps up and down the Champs-Élysées' slick cobblestones.

That locked in Froome's Tour lead to guarantee his victory, generating a broad smile as he rode up the avenue lined with flag-waving spectators. He still had to ride the 10 laps to complete the full race distance, but could do so without nerves, knowing the

title was his. He didn't have to panic when a paper bag got stuck in his back wheel. He simply stopped and changed bikes.

Froome and his teammates finished together linked in a line, their arms over each other's shoulders, with the yellow jersey winner grinning in the middle.

Germany's Andre Greipel made it four stage victories this year with a sprint win in the final stage, edging past France's Bryan Coquard in second.

The powerful 33-year old Lotto-Soudal rider also collected the 10th Tour stage win of his career, and gave Germany a total of six stage wins including ones by Simon Geschke and Tony Martin — the most of any country at the race.

Hours before the final arrival of the cyclists, Paris police officers opened fire on a car that tried to crash through barricades.

The car and its two occupants escaped apparently unharmed after coming under fire in the Place de la Concorde, where the cyclists make their final triumphant rounds to conclude the race, according to Luc Poignant, a spokesman with the SGP police union.

Poignant said officers were finishing setting up the barricades for the race when the car tried to crash through the barriers. Officers opened fire on the car, which ultimately drove away.

The team's powerful effort, chasing down rivals in the mountains and protecting Froome on the flats, was vital for his win.

Also important was the meticulous planning and attention to detail of Dave Brailsford, the organizational brains at Sky. Having set the goal in 2009 of nurturing Britain's first Tour winner within five years, Sky has won three of the last four, with Bradley Wiggins in 2012 and now two with Froome.

# Kyle Busch wins again in Xfinity

*The Associated Press*

INDIANAPOLIS — Kyle Busch spent the last 10 laps desperately chasing Ryan Blaney.

When the old pro finally caught up, the 21-year-old youngster flinched.

As Blaney attempted to pass a slower car in the back straightaway Saturday on the final laps, Blaney's car wiggled, Busch ducked inside, raced past and held on to win the Xfinity Series race at Indianapolis for the second time in three years.

The 0.421-second victory margin was the closest of the four races held on Indianapolis' historic 2.5-mile oval. Rookie Daniel Suarez of Mexico finished third.

"It's cool and it's great and all, and made for an exciting last lap," Busch said. "We just never should have been in that position to begin with. If it wasn't for a mistake by the car in front of us, we would have lost today."

Since missing the first three months of the season after breaking his right leg and left foot in the Xfinity opener at Daytona, the 30-year-old Cup regular has reached Victory Lane five times — twice on the Xfinity circuit and three in the Sprint Cup Series. He also won the pole Saturday, his third straight at Indy, and has won two of NASCAR's last three undercard races here.

Blaney, meanwhile, was distraught.

After Busch took the outside line on the final restart of the race, Blaney outraced Busch into the first turn, took the lead on Lap 76 and held it — until he encountered the slower car of Derrick Cope.

Blaney moved toward the wall with Busch near his tail end. That forced Blaney's car to bobble and gave Busch the chance to slip inside.

"Not many can say they had a chance to win at the Brickyard and gave it away," Blaney said. "But I did just that, so I think I'm the only one in that category. So I'm leading that category. That's definitely going to sting for a long time."

**Formula One:** Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel won an action-packed Hungarian Grand Prix for the first time on Sunday, while Nico Rosberg blew his chances of catching Lewis Hamilton in the title race when he punctured a tire near the end.

Four-time F1 champion Vettel started third on the grid. It was his 41st career win and first since the Malaysian GP in the second race of this season.

Red Bull took advantage of late chaos as Russian driver Daniil Kvyat placed second and Daniel Ricciardo, who clipped Rosberg, took third.

Vettel's win put the German driver back into the title race, as Hamilton finished sixth and Rosberg placed eighth.

"Merci Jules, cette victoire est pour toi," (Thank you Jules, this win is for you)," Vettel said in French on race radio, before continuing in English. "You are always in our hearts, sooner or later we know you would have been in this team."

A poignant minute's silence was held in honor of Bianchi before the race, with drivers forming a ring and placing their race helmets on the ground. Bianchi's mother Christine and father Philippe, brother Tom and sister Melanie joined them.

The race completely changed after German driver Nico Hulkenberg crashed and the virtual safety car came out, with Vettel in total control at that point.

It is the first time Hamilton has failed to finish on the podium since the Belgian GP last August, where he was nudged off the track by Rosberg and retired.

# Panama tops US on PKs Trinidad up first for USA

*The Associated Press*

CHESTER, Pa. — Music and shouts of celebration blasted from the Panama locker room next door as U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann tried to put another positive spin on another loss.

Backup goalkeeper Luis Mejia saved two penalty kicks in the shootout, and an inspired Panamanian team ended a trying week with a medal, beating the Americans in the CONCACAF Gold Cup third-place game Saturday. Panama won the shootout 3-2 after extra time ended with the score 1-1.

Mejia saved DaMarcus Beasley's shot in the fifth round in what might have been the veteran defender's last game for the national team.

In Wednesday's semifinals, Panama was on the verge of beating Mexico despite being down to 10 men — until a disputed hand ball was called in the area. Mexico converted the penalty kick in stoppage time then scored on another penalty kick in extra time for the 2-1 win.

The Panamanian federation's president later alleged the match was fixed, and players were seen arriving at PPL Park on Saturday wearing T-shirts that read, "Dignity isn't bought."

On Saturday, the president of CONCACAF said the referee in that match acknowledged making mistakes. They did not say what those mistakes were.

Referee Mark Geiger "accepted that officiating errors had been made" and they "impacted the outcome," CONCACAF President Alfredo Hawit said in a statement. Hawit added that "such human errors are part of the game."

Panama and Costa Rica have formally asked for reviews of CONCACAF's referee procedures, according to a person in the governing body with knowledge of the requests.

"Give Panama credit, they played better than we did today from top to bottom," Beasley said. "They definitely deserved to win. They played good football today. We just didn't bring it."

That was a problem often in a disappointing Gold Cup for the Americans, who came into the tournament as favorites to repeat as champions after they beat Panama in

the 2013 final. But they were stunned by Jamaica in the semis and had their worst Gold Cup finish since losing to Colombia, an invited guest, during a shootout in the 2000 quarterfinals.

After the U.S. squandered a two-goal lead in a 4-2 loss to Mexico in the 2011 Gold Cup final, Bob Bradley was fired as coach, leading to Klinsmann's hire. U.S. Soccer Federation President Sunil Gulati said there were no parallels between that situation and this year's, noting recent exhibition victories over Germany and the Netherlands.

"It's obviously a disappointment," Gulati said. "I wouldn't call it a step back."

Roberto Nurse scored for Panama in the 55th minute, and Clint Dempsey evened the game in the 70th with his tournament-high seventh goal.

With the shootout tied 2-2 in the fourth round, Mejia saved captain Michael Bradley's shot. Harold Cummings then beat Brad Guzan inside the left post to put the pressure on Beasley to keep the U.S. alive. It was the Americans' first shootout since they beat Panama in the 2005 Gold Cup final.

"This is going to hurt for a while for me," said the 33-year-old Beasley, who had announced his retirement from the national team only to agree to play in the Gold Cup.

This time around, he's not going to make any such proclamations, and he acknowledged Saturday's ending would be a tough way to go out.

Panama was missing several key players because of injury or suspension, including its top goalkeeper. But it dominated play against a sluggish U.S. team, with 13 shots on goal to the Americans' two.

"We really worked for this game," coach Hernan Gomez said, "and we faced the world out there with our heads held high."

With the Americans trailing and scuffling, Klinsmann used DeAndre Yedlin and Dempsey as subs in the 60th minute, and they combined for the tying goal.

As the 2013 Gold Cup champ, the U.S. can still reach the 2017 Confederations Cup if it beats the winner of Sunday's Mexico-Jamaica final in a playoff Oct. 9.

"This team will grow," Klinsmann insisted. "This team will get better. The youngsters will learn from their mistakes on the field."

*The Associated Press*

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — The United States' road to the 2018 World Cup opens in November with a four-nation group that includes Trinidad and Tobago.

Given a bye in the first three rounds along with the other powers of the North and Central American and Caribbean region, the 34th-ranked United States was drawn into Group C for the fourth round. In addition to the No. 64 Soca Warriors, the group will include 105th-ranked Guatemala or No. 107 Antigua and Barbuda, and 135th-ranked Aruba or No. 115 St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Seeking its eighth straight World Cup appearance, the Americans start with a pair of games on Nov. 13 and 17. Play resumes March 25 and 29, and then takes a six-month break before concluding Sept. 2 and 6, 2016. The top two nations advance to the final round Hexagonal, which will produce three qualifiers and determine the fourth-place team that meets Asia's No. 5 team in a playoff for a berth. The Hexagonal starts Nov. 7, 2016, and ends Oct. 10, 2017.

Qualifying could offer some intrigue in goal for the U.S. Tim Howard took a break from the national team for a year after starring in the World Cup but now says he wants to return.

Brad Guzan has played well in his place, and coach Jurgen Klinsmann praised his performance in Saturday's loss in the CONCACAF Gold Cup third-place game.

"I'm hopefully coming into the best years of my life in terms of goalkeeping," Guzan said. "I feel ready; I feel confident. I'm excited about the future."

Mexico is in Group A with Honduras, Canada or Belize, and El Salvador or Curacao. Group B includes Costa Rica, Jamaica or Nicaragua, and Haiti or Grenada.