

STARS AND STRIPES®

Monday, July 11, 2016

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

US to send more troops for Mosul fight

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — The United States will send an additional 560 troops to Iraq in the coming weeks to help that nation's forces continue to build momentum as they push toward Mosul, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said Monday.

Carter made the announcement to a roomful of U.S. servicemembers at Baghdad International Airport. He was in Iraq for meetings with Iraqi leaders and U.S. commanders to discuss the next steps in the campaign against the Islamic State group. The additional troops, approved by President Barack Obama, will bring the authorized number of U.S. servicemembers serving in Iraq to 4,657.

The announcement came just days after Iraqi security forces captured a key air field 40 miles south of Mosul that they will use as a logistics and air hub for the push up the Tigris River Valley and into the militant group's last urban stronghold in Iraq.

"At every step in this campaign, we have generated and seized additional opportunities to hasten ISIL's lasting defeat," Carter said, using an acronym for the militant

group. "These additional U.S. forces will bring unique capabilities to the campaign and provide critical enabler support to Iraqi forces at a key moment in the fight."

Seizing Qayara West Air Field was a long-standing goal of the U.S.-led anti-Islamic State coalition, known as Operation Inherent Resolve, Carter told reporters traveling with him before arriving in Iraq on Monday. It will be a "vital springboard" for the fight in Mosul, he added.

Now planning turns toward encircling and eventually capturing Iraq's second-largest city, which the Islamic State group has held since the summer of 2014. That could mean an increased role for American troops as the United States and Iraq consider embedding advisers at smaller units for the march toward Mosul.

Carter met with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi and Defense Minister Khaled al-Obaidi to discuss the "next plays in the campaign" and how Inherent Resolve can continue to accelerate the Iraqi security forces' progress. He also discussed plans for the campaign in a phone call with Masoud Barzani, the president of Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region.

"I want to hear the thoughts of Prime

Minister Abadi, ensure that we are all working from the same campaign plan," Carter said prior to meeting with Abadi.

The American-trained Iraqi security forces and the Kurdish peshmerga fighters will play key roles in the slow-moving Iraqi campaign to regain Mosul. The city of 2.5 million people fell to Islamic State forces after a lightning offensive in June 2014.

Iraqi troops are moving toward Mosul from the south, while the Kurdish troops prepare to assault from the north. Carter and other military officials in Baghdad declined to provide details about the plans for the operation.

The capture of the Qayara air base last week is the latest in a series of Iraqi victories over the Islamic State group, including the liberation of the towns of Ramadi, Fallujah, Beiji and Hit. Qayara, which includes a runway about 2 miles long that can support a C-5 Galaxy, was used by American forces between 2003 and 2010, when it was known as "Key West."

The air field is damaged, U.S. military officials in Baghdad said on Monday, but it was not immediately clear how much work would be needed to prepare it for use.

Ban on off-base drinking lifted for sailors in Japan

BY ERIK SLAVIN

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Sailors in Japan are once again allowed to drink alcohol off-base until midnight following more than a month of restrictions stoked by a series of arrests involving servicemembers and base civilians.

The Navy announcement coincides with a new U.S. Forces Japan liberty policy for all services expected to be released soon, military officials said Monday.

The latest order eases a restriction that placed a 10 p.m. cutoff on off-base alcohol consumption. Sailors in pay grades E-5 and below will still be re-

quired to go out with a "liberty buddy" when drinking alcohol on or off base, according to a Navy statement Monday.

However, sailors will no longer be required to file daily plans detailing off-base activities, officials said.

Ships and other units still retain the authority to levy restrictions.

"We expect individual commanding officers to aggressively and proactively identify sailors who lack the maturity to go on liberty and address problems before they occur," Rear Adm. Matthew Carter, commander of Naval Forces Japan, said in a statement.

For about four days in June, the Navy barred sailors from

all nonessential off-base travel. Sailors also were banned initially from drinking alcohol anywhere — including their own homes — while command officials conducted talks with the roughly 18,600 sailors in Japan, emphasizing the effect of arrests on regional security relations.

Monday's order largely brings to a close the restrictions that came on June 6, one day after a sailor was arrested on Okinawa on suspicion of drunken driving. Police said Petty Officer 2nd Class Aimee Mejia, 21, struck two vehicles and caused injuries while driving on the wrong side of a highway.

Mejia has since been charged

by Japanese authorities with dangerous driving resulting in injuries, which carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.

That incident came during a military-enacted period of mourning in memory of Rina Shimabukuro, 20, whose body was found in a forest on Okinawa. Kenneth Franklin Gadson, a U.S. civilian base worker, has been charged with murder and rape resulting in death in the case.

The recent incidents spurred some of the largest protests in decades on Okinawa, where about half of all U.S. forces in Japan are based.

Report: 1,200 assaults on Dec. 31 in Germany

LONDON — At first, there was complete silence from officials. As rumors spread on social media, police had nothing to say about allegations of mass sexual assaults and other crimes carried out on New Year's Eve in the German city of Cologne.

It was only days later that officials reported that hundreds of women were victims of assault in Cologne, Hamburg and other German cities.

But numbers that are now emerging are likely to shock a country still coming to terms with what happened in Cologne more than half a year ago. According to a leaked police document, published by Germany's Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper and broadcasters NDR and WDR, the previous estimates have to be dramatically revised upward.

Authorities now think that on New Year's Eve, more than 1,200 women were sexually assaulted in various German cities. More than 2,000 men were allegedly involved, and 120 suspects — about half of them foreign nationals who had only recently arrived in Germany — have been identified. Only four have been convicted, but more trials are underway.

From The Washington Post

Directive on arming GIs on base near

BY ALEX HORTON
Stars and Stripes

SAN ANTONIO — The Defense Department is close to releasing its updated policy for arming troops at facilities in the United States following several attacks, including the shooting deaths of four Marines and a sailor last July, a Pentagon spokesman said Monday.

The policy, which could be unveiled by September, will further clarify commanders' authority to allow service-members to carry and store

weapons on and off military installations. The guidance will regulate privately owned and military-issued weapons, said Army Maj. Jamie Davis, a Pentagon spokesman.

On July 16, 2015, Mohamed Abdulazeez opened fire at a recruiting station and reserve center in Chattanooga, Tenn., killing five and wounding one Marine and a police officer. Investigators concluded that a sailor at the center likely returned fire with a personal, unauthorized handgun, according to The Washington Post.

The policy that DOD put forth in October 2015, following the Chattanooga attacks, states "qualified personnel shall be armed when required for assigned duties and there is reasonable expectation that DOD installations, property, or personnel lives or DOD assets will be jeopardized if personnel are not armed."

Since 2009, 40 people were killed during single-gunman assaults at military facilities, including two shootings at Fort Hood, Texas, and one at the Navy Yard in Washington.

Family: Service changed Dallas shooter

Associated Press

DALLAS — Military service changed the Dallas gunman from an extrovert into a hermit, his parents said in an interview excerpt published Monday.

Micah Johnson's mother, Delphine Johnson, told TheBlaze website in an interview that her son wanted to be a police officer as a child. His six years in the Army Reserve, including a tour in Afghanistan, were "not what Micah thought it would be

... what he thought the military represented; it just didn't live up to his expectations." According to the military lawyer who represented him, Johnson was accused of sexually harassing a female soldier while deployed.

His father, James Johnson said haltingly and through tears: "I don't know what to say to anybody to make anything better. I didn't see it coming."

The black 25-year-old fatally shot five officers in Thursday's attack while hundreds of peo-

ple were gathered in downtown Dallas to protest recent fatal police shootings, and wounded at least nine officers and two civilians.

Dallas Police Chief David Brown clarified Monday where Johnson was killed with a bomb delivered by a remote-controlled robot, saying that it happened on the second floor of El Centro College, not in a parking garage, as authorities previously described.

Police: Aviano airman missing 9 days may have drowned

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — The Aviano airman still missing for more than a week despite a massive search effort may have drowned, Italian police said, and they were trying to identify a body found in the Adriatic Sea.

Italian police Maj. Salvino Macli told The Associated Press Monday that police were in "a phase of complete hypothesis" regarding the body, which he said appeared to have been in the water for a while and could take days to identify.

Police — aided by dogs, divers, helicopters and volunteers

— called off a three-day search on Sunday for Staff Sgt. Halex Hale, 24. Assigned to the 31st Fighter Wing at Aviano Air Base, he was last seen when he left a friend's house in Sacile, the small town near the base where Hale lived, on July 2.

"The most plausible theory for now is that he was inebriated with alcohol, left the house and fell into one of the nearby canals, which were swollen due to particularly stormy weather," Grigoletto Michele, the national police captain in charge of the search, told NBC News on Sunday.

That theory was disputed by Hale's father, who traveled to Italy last week from his home in

Indiana.

"It just doesn't make sense," Lance Hale told the network. He said he'd walked the route his son was thought to have taken from the cookout, where he was last seen about 10 p.m. "There are hard shoulders, trees, houses all along the way," Hale's father said. "One can't just slip into the water — you really have to climb into something and jump into it."

The AP quoted Macli as saying the canals empty into the Adriatic. Hale's father said that he'd been told his son planned a 15-minute walk to another friend's house, but did not take his cellphone, wallet or keys.

Hale's disappearance has

been classified as DUSTWUN — duty status, whereabouts unknown. Officials at the 31st Fighter Wing declined to provide information about the case, citing regulations regarding release of information in DUSTWUN cases.

Capt. Michael Hertzog II, 31st Fighter Wing spokesman, said in an email the Air Force became involved in the investigation on Thursday, five days after Hale disappeared. He said Hale's friends had tried to find him after he failed to turn up, then had informed Italian authorities, who mounted the extensive search. Police also widely circulated a missing persons bulletin.

Spurs' Duncan retiring after 19 seasons

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Tim Duncan spent nearly two decades as the quiet storm in the middle of the San Antonio Spurs franchise, putting the team on his broad shoulders and carrying it to heights unseen in modern American sports.

With Duncan as the focal point, the Spurs won five championships, made the playoffs in all 19 of his seasons and cemented themselves as the most enduring success story of their era.

And now, the ageless and reluctant superstar is finally calling it a career. Duncan announced his retirement on Monday, marking the end of an era for the Spurs and the NBA.

Duncan was the No. 1 overall pick in 1997 and teamed with coach Gregg Popovich, point guard Tony Parker and shooting guard Manu Ginobili to turn the Spurs from a solid franchise that could never quite get over the hump into one of the league's superpowers.

The unassuming Duncan won two MVP awards and was one of just four players to be named NBA Finals MVP at least three times. He was a 15-time All-Star, a member of the All-NBA first team 10 times and is one of only three players — joining Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Robert Parrish — to win at least 1,000 games in his career. He is fifth on the NBA's career list in blocks, sixth in rebounds and 14th in scoring.

Duncan was never one for big endorsement deals or look-at-me press conferences, which is why he was often overshadowed in the public eye

by more outsized personalities like the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant and Cleveland's LeBron James. But he leaves this game as one of the league's true giants, the best power forward to ever play and one who left as indelible a mark on his franchise as any player to come before him.

"For us as players, we just enjoy and appreciate each other," Bryant said earlier this season. "It's not a matter of who's better or who's greater. You just accept the careers that you've had. I appreciate his career, and vice versa."

The announcement comes two months after the Spurs were upset by the Oklahoma City Thunder in the Western Conference semifinals, a six-game exit that immediately had people wondering — yet again — if it was Duncan's last hurrah.

Turns out, it was. And like everything else Duncan did in his career — aside from win — he retired quietly, with a statement from the team. There will be no victory lap for Duncan, no farewell tour like the one Bryant had this season. Popovich would be available to address Duncan's decision on Tuesday, the Spurs said.

The last time Duncan spoke to reporters was on May 12, when the Spurs had just been eliminated by the Thunder in Game 6 of the Western Conference semifinals. After being ineffective for most of the series, Duncan scored 19 points and teamed with fellow 40-year-old Andre Miller to trim a 26-point lead to nine in the fourth quarter before Russell Westbrook

and Kevin Durant closed out the series.

There were hints in that game of Duncan's plans, even though he exercised a contract option later to clear the way for his return. He had always said that he would walk away when he felt he could no longer have a significant impact on the game, and for most of the series the younger Thunder big men had their way with him and the Spurs on the glass.

With the Spurs getting blown out and the fourth quarter set to begin, Popovich and his veteran star had a brief conversation on the bench. Duncan then played all 12 minutes of the fourth quarter without coming out for a rest, perhaps soaking up every second he could in the last game he would ever play. And when the game was over, Duncan waved to the visiting crowd and pointed a finger toward the roof as he headed to the locker room, a rare signal from one of the league's most stoic superstars.

"Timmy's never been a very outspoken or emoting sort of individual on the court," Popovich said earlier this year. "Everybody does it differently."

And Duncan was truly one of a kind. In 1997, after an injury to star David Robinson, the Spurs plunged in the standings and ended up with a chance at the No. 1 overall pick. They won the lottery, and it was a no-brainer to choose Duncan, the polished, two-way big man who had spent four years at Wake Forest.

The Spurs won 36 more games in Duncan's rookie year than they had the previous season and were NBA champi-

ons in his sophomore campaign. They also won titles in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2014, the last one a dominant run to redemption over James and the Miami Heat after losing to them in seven games the previous season.

For at least the last five seasons of his career, Duncan would face retirement questions. But he never really changed. You could see a few gray hairs near his temples as the years wore on, but his face, his body, his game all bore a striking resemblance to the 21-year-old who averaged 21.1 points and 11.9 rebounds in his first year in the league.

Here's how long he was with the Spurs: He had 140 different teammates there.

He was a 38-year-old All-Star in 2014-15 and even as his minutes were reduced to save the wear and tear on his body for the playoffs, he remained a force on the defensive end and on the glass. He used an exhaustive workout regimen of boxing, swimming and diet to help him keep pace with the younger, faster, stronger players that kept coming at him year after year.

The Spurs won a franchise-record 67 regular-season games this past season. Despite Duncan's individual statistics dipping to career lows, coaches and teammates said the impact his leadership, intelligence and defensive presence had continued to be elite.

And now he steps away.

UFC sold for \$4 billion; White will stay on as president

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The UFC has been sold for approximately \$4 billion to a group led by Hollywood talent agency WME-IMG.

UFC President Dana White confirmed the sale of the mixed martial arts promotional company in text messages to The Associated Press on Sunday night.

WME co-CEO Ari Emanuel also announced the sale early Monday in an internal company email that included SNTV — a joint venture between The Associated Press and IMG.

"We've been honored to have UFC and a number of its athletes as clients and couldn't be happier to take our relationship to this next level as the organization's owner and operating partner," Emanuel said.

White will stay on to run the UFC, which has grown from a money-losing promotion in a minor sport into a global entertainment brand. UFC owners Lorenzo and Frank Fertitta have tapped out of the company after nearly 16 years, although they'll retain a minority interest. The Abu Dhabi government still owns 10 percent of the UFC as well.

The New York Times first reported the

completion of the long-rumored deal. It has financial backing from private equity firms Silver Lake Partners, which owns WME-IMG, and Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, along with the investment firm of billionaire Michael Dell, founder of Dell Computers.

"UFC has experienced tremendous growth over the last decade and we are looking forward to helping the organization and its athletes identify new opportunities to develop and further establish their global footprint," Emanuel said.

The UFC was founded in 1993 as the Ultimate Fighting Championship, staging violent fights that were banned or unregulated in many areas. The Fertitta brothers and White, their high school friend, purchased the promotion for \$2 million in 2001.

With White as the promotional face and Lorenzo Fertitta as its chairman, the Las Vegas-based UFC was kept afloat by the Fertittas' casino fortune while the sport once labeled by Sen. John McCain as "human cockfighting" gradually gained widespread acceptance and popularity.

The UFC used cable television and the internet to get its intriguing product in front of young fans, and they also sought legitimacy by welcoming regulation by

athletic commissions. New York finally lifted its ban on MMA earlier this year, putting the sport in all 50 states.

After helping Chuck Liddell, Randy Couture and Tito Ortiz become stars who straddled the line between sports and entertainment, the promotion now boasts a stable of elite athletes with mainstream fame, including Conor McGregor, Brock Lesnar and Ronda Rousey, who is represented by WME.

Although the UFC has received occasional criticism from fighters for its pay scale, its ability to control talent costs is a major factor in its profitability. Its position atop MMA also allows it to match the sport's top fighters against each other consistently, setting it apart from the hopelessly fractured world of boxing.

The UFC's price tag has drawn gasps since it was first rumored earlier this year, but the consortium is getting a sports property with a unique niche and ample growth potential.

WME purchased IMG, the sports and event management group, in 2013, and the talent agency has evolved into a multifaceted entertainment company. The organization already made moves into niche sports properties last year by

buying Professional Bull Riders and forming an e-sports gaming league with Turner Broadcasting.

With more than 500 athletes under contract, the UFC stages roughly 40 events per year and is broadcast in more than 150 countries, reaching 1.1 billion television households. The promotion has built a large roster of endorsement deals and sponsorships, and its subsidiary ventures include everything from a digital streaming service to more than 100 branded fitness centers.

The UFC also recently began construction in Las Vegas on a 180,000-square-foot, campus-style corporate headquarters that also will house training and rehabilitation facilities for its fighters.

The UFC appears regularly on Fox under its seven-year broadcast deal, which ends in 2018. The next contract is expected to be extraordinarily lucrative.

On Saturday night, the promotion staged the landmark UFC 200 show in its hometown. The event drew 18,202 fans to T-Mobile Arena and took in \$10.8 million in ticket sales, both Nevada records for the company.



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Bumgarner shines in 1-hitter

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — For the third time in his career, Madison Bumgarner took a no-hitter into the eighth inning. For the third time, it slipped away.

No worries, though.

The San Francisco Giants are headed to the All-Star break with the best record in the majors and a comfortable lead in the NL West, so Bumgarner didn't seem bothered that he lost yet another bid at the milestone achievement.

Bumgarner allowed Arizona's only hit to Jake Lamb with one out in the eighth inning and matched a career high with 14 strikeouts to lead the Giants over the Diamondbacks 4-0 on Sunday night.

"I don't think a one-hit shutout ever stings," Bumgarner said. "It felt good. It felt good all the way around."

Bumgarner (10-4) retired 25 of the 28 batters he faced, including two double plays, and walked one while going the distance for the third time this season.

Lamb broke up Bumgarner's bid with a lined single to right field. Lamb also reached on an error in the fifth when right fielder Gregor Blanco dropped a fly ball.

Beyond that, San Francisco's four-time All-Star was nearly untouchable while notching his fourth career one-hitter.

"He was on with all of his pitches and wasn't putting a lot of effort into it," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "He was on top of his game. I know he's thrown one-hitters before but this was as impressive as any of them."

The Giants lefty struck out Arizona's first five hitters twice apiece, and the Diamondbacks didn't hit a ball out of the infield until Lamb's fly ball in the fifth.

After Lamb's single in the eighth, Bumgarner got Brandon Drury to ground into an inning-ending double play.

Rickie Weeks Jr. drew a leadoff walk in the ninth, but Bumgarner retired Nick Ahmed on an infield pop-up then got Jean Segura to ground into a game-ending

double play.

"When you get through seven and you've got six more outs to get you feel like you have a pretty good chance," Bumgarner said. "It hasn't worked out for me. That's all right. I'll take the complete-game shutout anytime."

San Francisco was attempting to become the first team with no-hitters in five consecutive seasons. Matt Cain threw a perfect game in 2012, Tim Lincecum no-hit the Padres in 2013 and 2014 and then-rookie Chris Heston had one in 2015.

Nationals 3, Mets 2: Daniel Murphy keeps turning those Citi Field boos into booms.

Murphy hit his seventh home run this year against the team that let him go last winter, lining an early drive off the facing of the upper deck and leading Washington.

Murphy tops the majors with a .348 batting average at the All-Star break, boosted by the damage he's done to the Mets. He homered three times and drove in 10 runs as the NL East leaders took three of four in this series, opening a six-game edge over New York.

Murphy connected in the first inning for his 17th homer of the season. He is 22-for-52 (.423) with 21 RBIs against his former club.

Cubs 6, Pirates 5: Kris Bryant hit an RBI single in the eighth inning, sending visiting Chicago to a sorely needed victory.

Chicago stopped a five-game losing streak. Pittsburgh lost for just the second time in 11 games heading to the break.

Marlins 7, Reds 3: Giancarlo Stanton's 20th homer helped host Miami complete its first series sweep of Cincinnati since 2003.

Yankees 11, Indians 7: Jacoby Ellsbury hit a three-run homer as visiting New York overcame a shaky outing by Masahiro Tanaka.

Tanaka took an 11-1 lead into the fifth, but was charged with seven runs (three

earned) and fell one out short of qualifying for his seventh win.

Red Sox 4, Rays 0: David Price pitched eight innings in his best start with host Boston, and David Ortiz hit a two-run homer.

Price (9-6) struck out 10, allowed four hits, walked one and hit two batters in snapping a personal two-game losing streak.

Blue Jays 6, Tiers 1: All-Star Josh Donaldson hit a three-run homer for host Toronto, and R.A. Dickey won back-to-back starts for the first time in a month.

Donaldson is the sixth player in American League history to hit at least 20 home runs and score 80 runs or more before the All-Star break.

Dodgers 3, Padres 1: Kenta Maeda struck out a career-high 13 in seven innings, leading host Los Angeles to the victory.

Mariners 8, Royals 5: Robinson Cano and Adam Lind homered during visiting Seattle's five-run seventh inning.

Orioles 4, Angels 2: Chris Tillman pitched seven innings of three-hit ball, Chris Davis and J.J. Hardy homered and host Baltimore beat Tim Lincecum.

Twins 15, Rangers 5: Max Kepler hit visiting Minnesota's first grand slam this season, one of its four homers.

Cardinals 5, Brewers 1: Right-hander Mike Leake struck out a season-high 10 in seven innings, and Matt Adams and Randal Grichuk homered for visiting St. Louis.

Braves 2, White Sox 0: Mike Foltynewicz struck out a career-high 10 in seven innings, leading visiting Atlanta to the victory.

Astros 2, Athletics 1 (10): Jake Marisnick scored the winning run on an errant throw in the 10th inning, helping host Houston rally for the win.

Phillies 10, Rockies 3: Maikel Franco and Cameron Rupp hit long home runs for visiting Philadelphia, and rookie Zach Eflin got his second big league win.

Biles tops women's Rio roster

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, California — Simone Biles wouldn't let herself believe it. Not until she heard from national team coordinator Martha Karolyi, even if the Olympic dream she had been chasing for most of her life was locked down long ago.

So the three-time world champion waited for Karolyi to call her name late Sunday night at the end of an emotionally draining Olympic Gymnastics Trials. It didn't matter that Biles' spot was already secure after capturing the all-around, extending a long streak that shows no signs of abating. Biles needed to hear Karolyi say the words.

"It's very unreal," Biles said. "I'm sure it will hit me."

The 19-year-old pegged as the next It Girl when the Rio Games begin next month has about three weeks to deal with it. It shouldn't be a problem. Modesty aside, she has been prepping for this moment since she turned her first back handspring.

Besides, after what she and the rest of the five-woman team endured over the weekend, what awaits in Rio doesn't seem so tough.

"A lot of athletes say the Olympic Trials is the hardest part and once you get to the Olympics it's autopilot," Biles said. "You turn on a switch and you go."

Something Karolyi is counting on. She relied on equal parts experience and potential while putting together a squad expected to come home with copious amounts of hardware.

Biles will be joined by defending Olympic champion Gabby Douglas, three-time Olympic medalist Aly Raisman and newcomers Madison Kocian and Laurie Hernandez to form a team that will arrive in Brazil as the gymnastics equivalent of the Dream Team that Michael Jordan led to basketball gold 24 years ago, long before any members of Team USA were born.

Ashton Locklear, Ragan Smith and MyKayla Skinner will be the alternates after getting through what Karolyi called one of the most difficult selection processes of her remarkable career.

Karolyi jotted down a list when the process began months ago, the same one she presented on Sunday night. While there was temptation to change it — particularly as Douglas struggled to regain the form that made her a champion in London — she never did.

"When you really put everything, you put down what lineup you have for the team and what will be (in the finals) we still felt, all of us on the selection committee, that this is the best combination," Karolyi said.

A combination that includes Douglas, who hopped off beam during both rounds at trials and has openly talked about her sagging confidence. The 20-year-old adjusted her coaching staff between last month's national championships and the trials, a move Karolyi said caused "confusion" in Douglas' training.

There will be no confusion when Douglas arrives to work out with the team later this week. Karolyi will be in charge and she will expect Douglas to respond as she did last fall, when she shook off sluggish preparations to capture silver at the 2015 world championships behind Biles.

The Americans haven't lost a major international competition in six years, the gap between themselves and the rest of the world hardening along the way.

Portugal stuns France for Euro crown

Associated Press

SAINT-DENIS, France — Portugal overcame the loss of injured captain Cristiano Ronaldo to beat France 1-0 in the European Championship final on Sunday, with a goal in extra time from substitute Eder securing their country's first soccer title.

Just as the final looked destined for a penalty shootout, Eder cut through the French defense and struck a low shot from 25 yards past goalkeeper Hugo Lloris in the 109th minute at the Stade de France.

Twelve years after losing to Greece on home soil in their last appearance in the final, it was Portugal's turn to spoil the host nation's party. And they achieved it after winning only one of their seven games at Euro 2016 inside 90 minutes, and after losing the inspirational Ronaldo midway through the first half.

"It was tough because we lost our main man and we had all our hopes pinned on him because he's a player who can score a goal at any minute," Portugal defender Pepe said. "When he said he couldn't go on, I tried to tell my teammates that we have to win it for him. That we were going to fight for him."

Red and green confetti descended from the roof onto Ronaldo and his victorious teammates as supporters of the hosts flooded out of the stadium, denied a third

victory on French soil to add to Euro '84 and the 1998 World Cup.

"Football can be very cruel," said Lloris, France's captain. "The overriding emotion is a lot of sadness."

It was a mostly dull and stodgy final but the record books will only show that Portugal went from third-place in its group to champion, and with little help from Ronaldo in its last match.

European soccer's biggest game lost its biggest name after 25 minutes of a cagey final.

"Today I had bad luck because I had a small injury in the beginning of the teams, but my colleagues did their part — they run, they fight ... nobody believed in Portugal but we won," Ronaldo said.

After years of planning, the championship's first 24-team tournament became a reality over the last month, but the quality of football deteriorated. Such a sterile showpiece — the first European Championship final to be scoreless after 90 minutes — seemed a fitting climax.

Even France forward Antoine Griezmann, the tournament's leading scorer, couldn't rise to the big occasion. There was no seventh goal of Euro 2016 from the Atletico Madrid forward, who also lost out in the Champions League final six weeks ago to Ronaldo's Real Madrid.

Griezmann was the first player to find the target, but his header was tipped over

by Rui Patrício, who was formidable in the Portugal goal. When Kingsley Coman delivered a cross in the 66th, Griezmann missed with a free header.

Only once was Patrício beaten, when Andre-Pierre Gignac's shot hit the inside of the post but it came back out.

Luck was on Portugal's side, and Eder was able to strike the decisive blow.

For the unheralded striker, who plays in France for Lille, it was only his fourth goal in 29 appearances for Portugal.

"Cristiano told me I would be scoring the winning goal," Eder said. "He gave me strength and positive energy."

The energy didn't seem to be going Portugal's way in the ninth minute when Dimitri Payet's right knee clattered into Ronaldo's left leg.

Ronaldo went down in agony — writhing, grimacing and screaming. He was able to return, but this was one injury he could not run off.

Ronaldo fell to the turf again in the 17th. One of the moths infesting the national stadium fluttered over Ronaldo's tearful right eye. Teammates tried to help in vain to help, with Nani tending to the knee.

Unlike his great rival Lionel Messi, the Argentina and Barcelona forward, the 31-year-old Ronaldo has now filled the medal void on the major international stage.

"It's something unbelievable in my career, something I deserve," Ronaldo said.